



UNIVERSITY OF PIRAEUS

DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

MSC IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL MODELS IN PROJECTS: FOCUS ON ORGANIZATIONS AND VIRTUAL TEAMS

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to identify the cultural dimensions that can be found in a multicultural project team and help project managers become effective project leaders.

People learn how to interact and behave to different situations from the society they are nurtured in. By analyzing seven different cultural models, we try to examine all the important cultural dimensions that can be found in a group of individuals. Their attitude toward all these dimensions indicates the value system and the social structure they are familiar with. These behavioral patterns will help the project manager learn how to lead a group consisted of diverse cultures.

In order to determine how a project manager will manage a multicultural team, we create three categories of leadership styles. Each leadership category is consisted of similar leadership styles, and we categorize them in accordance with the way leaders act toward their inferiors. We present the characteristics of every category, their connection with several cultural dimensions and their advantages and disadvantages.

Furthermore, we try to identify the challenges a project manager faces in a multicultural working surface. These challenges, contribute to our exploration of the team goals a project manager must accomplish. Team goals and team challenges are translated to practices for the project manager, so as to have a successful project team and become an effective leader.

After analyzing the cultural dimensions and establishing the challenges, goals and practices of an effective leader, we create 15 case studies. Each case study demonstrates different issues found in a multicultural team. After every case study we conduct a case study analysis to examine the issues and determine the best approach to resolve them.

I, Evanthia Gousi, certify that this portfolio and the included works are that of my own, and that any ideas or quotations from the work of others are fully acknowledged. All work is to be kept confidential and cannot be used without written permission from myself.

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Introduction

Project teams are groups of skilled individuals, united to achieve a specific goal. Their goal is to fulfill all project objectives, led by a project manager. In recent years, projects are executed by increasingly diverse teams. Organizations tend to include individuals from different origins, mostly due to the globalization of the business world. What is more, multinational teams might be created for an international project, or on account of using individuals' skills as an asset for the project, but the outcome itself is a multicultural team that needs to fulfill project objectives. Hence, for a project manager to head such a group, he needs to understand and comprehend the features that connect and separate individuals. The characteristics, values, social behavior, ideas, customs and norms a group of people shares, depict their Culture.

Cross-Cultural studies exist since the 19th century, where scientists such as anthropologists Edward Burnett Tyler and Lewis H. Morgan, tried to analyze global cultures. In the last 80 years, several scientists have built their own cultural models, so as to determine the particular characteristics defining every culture and discover the scope of human behavior. Every cultural model has its dimensions, that distinguish a group. A dimension highlights an aspect of a culture, for instance people's perception of time, and the way people behave based on this aspect. This way a project manager can better categorize individuals when trying to lead his team.

The project manager can choose the best approach for every member and the team as a whole, when he recognizes the various cultures included to his project team. Through his leadership style, he directs and motivates his team and he is responsible for adopting the most suitable leadership style. Team members' experience, the urgency of the project and the complexity of the tasks are some of the elements to consider when choosing a leadership style. Nevertheless, the way people perceive team unity, hierarchy, collectivism or performance are some of the cultural characteristics that highly influence the leadership of a multicultural team. Multicultural Leadership is *"an inclusive approach and philosophy that incorporates the influences, practices, and values of diverse cultures in a respectful and productive manner"* [1].

A multicultural project manager has to take into account all of the above if he wants to become an effective leader for his team. When managing a multicultural group, the project manager faces not only project-related challenges that might disrupt the project process, but also cultural-related challenges. Usual challenges such as team building and communication are magnified when one perceives the idea of team differently than the others or when there are communicational boundaries between the team. The project manager has to define all the challenges and the goals regarding his team and identify the best practices to achieve said goals effectively.

According to Marko Makilouko there are three basic types of multicultural teams. The first one is a project team including members from different cultures, but working in the same country. The second type is a multicultural team that is

totally or partially spread to different countries, but meets face-to-face. The third type of multicultural teams, refers to project teams with geographically distributed members that work through electronic medias, but have never met each other (virtual teams) [2]. This study tries to identify the best ways to lead all three types of multicultural teams.

In this paper we present an overview of cultural models, in order to lead each and every one of these multicultural project teams. Thus, in Chapter 1 we present seven cultural theories that divide cultures based on different dimensions. Chapter 2 includes the four Leadership Styles we established for this thesis, based on the way leaders act toward their inferiors. Chapter 3 demonstrates our aspect regarding the Challenges of Multicultural project teams, the Team Goals and the Best Practices of an Effective Leader. In Chapter 4 are presented 15 Case Studies built for this thesis, in order to be used as a manual for issues concerning multicultural project teams. Lastly, Chapter 5 offers the conclusion of the paper and propositions for further research.

Chapter 1: Cultural Models

Culture is the values, characteristics, ideas, customs, social behavior and norms of a group of people. It affects people's attitude, way of thinking and all the aspects of their life and it diversifies them from other groups. In order to understand the ways and reasons behind this diversification, we searched for several theories that deal with culture. There are many scientists that have built their own cultural models, categorizing people depending on specific characteristics called cultural dimensions. In this chapter we will present the most important theories of seven different scientists, and their unique approach on cultural diversity.

1.1 GLOBE

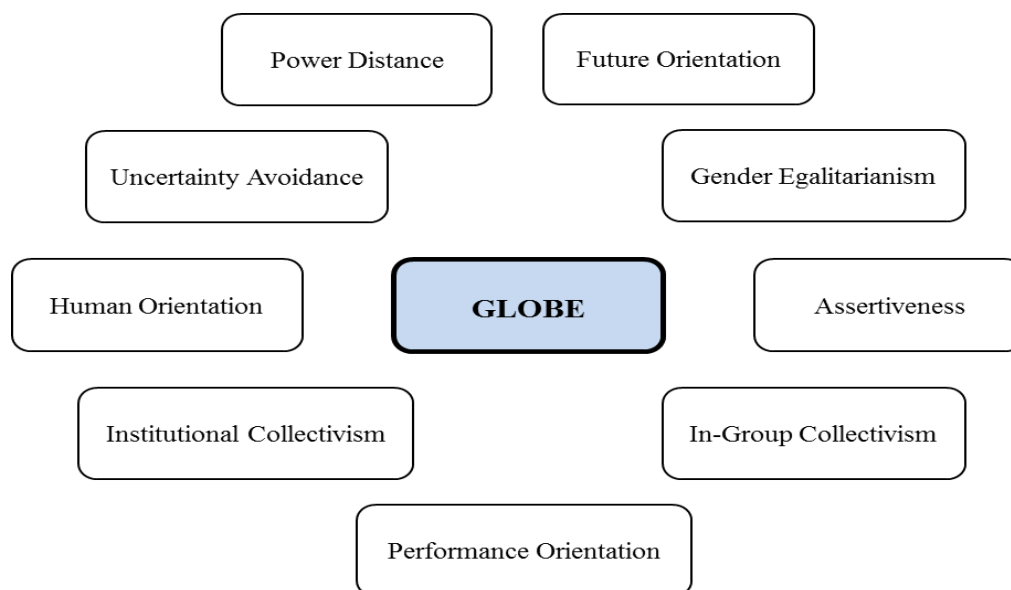


Figure 1: GLOBE Cultural Dimensions

GLOBE is the acronym for Global Leadership & Organizational Behavior Effectiveness, a survey led by Robert House that was founded in 1991. The GLOBE study focuses on understanding the influence of cultural differences on leadership processes. House with his international researching team (170 researchers) collected data from 62 countries worldwide. They identified nine cultural dimensions: Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Human Orientation, Institutional Collectivism, In-Group Collectivism, Assertiveness, Gender Egalitarianism, Future Orientation and Performance Orientation. Admittedly, several of these dimensions have been identified by other studies (e.g. Individualism-Collectivism), but others are unique (e.g. Performance Orientation and Gender Egalitarianism).

The first dimension is Power Distance, representing the degree to which people expect power to be distributed equally. Ergo, GLOBE identified High Power Distance societies and Low Power Distance societies. High Power Distance societies are divided into classes and power is used to provide social order. Positions of power are few and stable, hence upward mobility is restricted. Information and resources are hoarded and available to only a number of individuals. Oppositely, Low Power Distance societies have a large middle class.

Power is associated with dominance, corruption and authority. It is common for individuals to move upward in the social ladder. Information is widespread and there is availability of resources to almost everyone.

The second dimension is Uncertain Avoidance. According to the GLOBE researching team Uncertain Avoidance is “*the extent to which a society, organization, or group relies on social norms, rules, and procedures to alleviate unpredictability of future events*” [3]. People in societies with high Uncertain Avoidance tend to keep things in order, keep records meticulously, formalize social intercourses and document agreements for legal contracts. That level of dependence on procedures and policies demands calculated risks and shows strong resistance to change. On the other hand, in low Uncertain Avoidance societies, procedures and social interactions are more informal. People keep fewer records, count on informal norms of behavior, and rely on worth of people they trust. All in all, they show mediocre resistance to change and take risks easily.

The third cultural dimension is Human Orientation, referring to the degree to which societies or organizations encourage and reward fairness, altruism, friendship, generosity, care and kindness. Human Orientation divides societies to High and Low, according to their approach toward human interrelations. To High Human Orientation societies, people are motivated by a need for connection and belonging. Individuals are interested in others’ well-being and society urges them to be sensitive to all forms of racial discrimination. Pathological and psychological problems are rare in these societies. On the contrary, people are more self-centered in Low Human Orientation societies. They are motivated by materials and power, value comfort, pleasure and self-enjoyment. There are more psychological and psychical problems and insensitiveness to racial discrimination.

Institutional Collectivism is the fourth dimension of the GLOBE study. This dimension depicts the level to which society encourages collective action and collective distribution of resources. Individuals in High Institutional Collectivism societies feel highly interdependent with their group/organization. Society’s economic system tends to increase the interests of collectives, ergo group loyalty is encouraged sometimes undermining individual goals. Rewards are directed by personal needs, seniority and/or with-in group equity. Critical decision-making is made by groups. Contrarily, Low Institutional Collectivism societies support individualism and independence. Pursuit of personal goals is encouraged, even against group royalty. Rewards are based largely on individual success to tasks and critical decisions are made by people themselves.

Another type of collectivism presented in this study is called In-Group Collectivism. The definition of In-Group Collectivism is “*the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families*” [3]. The data derived from this dimension are of high importance, because they are a strong predictor of successful leaders. High In-Group Collectivism means that social behavior is determined by people’s obligations and duties. In-groups and out-groups are strongly divided. Members seek to contribute to their organization/group and assume they are interdependent. Employers and employees have long term relationships and they care deeply about each other’s welfare. Decision making takes place within the group. On the contrary, in Low In-Group

Collectivism societies, personal needs and attitudes are the ones determining social behavior. There is little distinction between out-groups and in-groups. Members feel independent and want to outstand in their organization. Relationships between employers and employees are short termed, organizations are focused on the work performed, but not on the people performing it and their welfare.

The sixth cultural dimension is Assertiveness. According to GLOBE, Assertiveness is “*the degree to which individuals are assertive, confrontational and aggressive to their relationships with others*” [3]. High Assertiveness means that people value success, progress, competition, direct and unambiguous communication. Individuals sympathize for the strong and believe in success through tough work, hence they want their inferiors to take initiative. All in all, in these societies control over the environment is wanted and trust is based mostly on calculation. Contrary to that, Low Assertiveness societies appreciate relationships and cooperation. Tenderness and modesty are preferred but loyalty, meanly from subordinates, is expected. Individuals have sympathy for the weak, value indirect communication and often associate competition with punishment and defeat. People try to harmonize with the environment and lastly trust is built based on predictability.

The next dimension is associated with gender discrimination and is called Gender Egalitarianism. Gender Egalitarianism by definition is “*the degree to which a collective minimizes gender inequality*” [3]. This dimension is also a significant predictor because it is a highly valued characteristic of successful leaders. In societies with High Gender Egalitarianism there is less sex segregation, thus more females uphold positions of authority and have equal status in society. Males and females have similar educational levels and women participate greatly in decision making. In opposition, in Low Gender Egalitarianism societies females neither have positions of authority nor take part in decision-making. Sex segregation is high, and that can be identified in the level of education of female population in comparison to the male one.

GLOBE’s dimension associated with the perception of time is Future Orientation. Future Orientation is “*the degree to which a collectivity encourages and rewards future-oriented behaviors such as planning and delaying gratification*” [3]. On one hand, High Future Orientation means propensity to collect for the future and emphasis to long-term success in work. Organizations with such orientation tend to be adaptive and flexible. Individuals strongly believe that spiritual fulfillment and material success are an integrated whole. On the other hand, people in Low Future Orientation societies tend to spend now rather than save for the future and prefer gratification shortly. Materialistic success and spiritual fulfillment are two separate things. Maladaptiveness and inflexibility define organizations that are in other words past-oriented.

The last dimension of this survey is Performance Orientation. It “*reflects the extent to which a community encourages and rewards innovation, high standards, excellence, and performance improvement*” [3]. In High Performance Orientation societies value materialism, competitiveness, training and development. Communication is direct and explicit hence formal feedback is as wanted as necessary in order to improve performance. In consideration, someone’s

work is more valued than someone's being. To the contrary, Low Performance Orientation societies put emphasis on family and societal relationships and harmonize with the environment. What one does is less important than who one is. Subtle and indirect communication is expected; thus, formal feedback is viewed as discomforting and judgmental. [3] [4]

1.2 The Hall theory

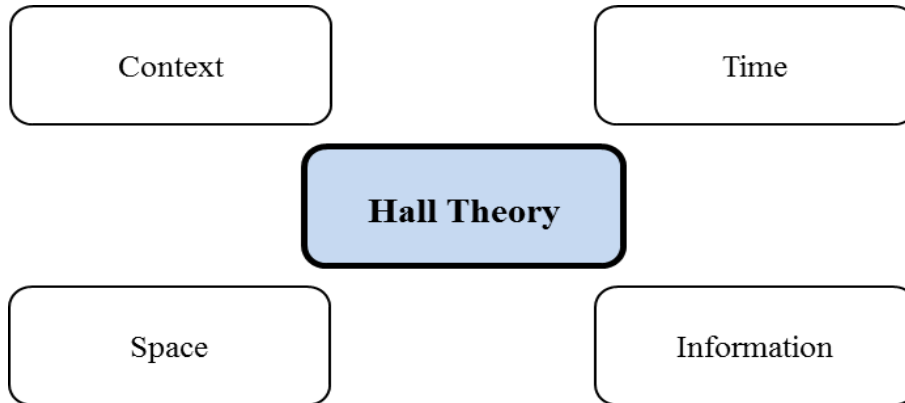


Figure 2: Hall's Dimensions

American Edward T. Hall was an anthropologist and cross-cultural researcher. During his service in the U.S. Army as director of the Foreign Service Institute training program in World War II, Hall observed that failure in intercultural communication led to several difficulties. Hall began to believe that, members from different cultures had different perspectives of reality, leading to miscommunications. Hall and his wife Mildred Reed Hall have published practical and academic books on cross-cultural communication [5]. In his research, Hall identifies four cultural dimensions: Context, Space, Time and Information. All of them are used as tools to communicate and pass information interpersonally.

Firstly, he divides culture by context. This division occurs by the number of contextual elements of a message and what is the true meaning of it. According to Hall's book «Beyond Culture» (1976) there are High-Context and Low-Context cultures [6]. In High-Context cultures, people have to consider many contextual elements, so as to understand the rules. Much is taken for granted, metaphors and reading between the lines are used for messages that are not openly displayed. Sometimes, there is nonverbal communication such as body language, gestures and proxemics. People in High-Context cultures tend to be reserved, accept failure as a personal one and their time is flexible. They create deep bonds with others, have strong sense of family and their ingroup, and they are highly committed to long term relationships. Countries with such culture are France, Spain, Italy, Middle East, Japan and Russia. In Low-Context cultures, ideas are thoroughly explained and straightforward spoken. People tend to express their feelings, communicate verbally and messages are as clear and simple as possible. Official documents such as contracts and written instructions are more important in negotiations. People are connected with weak bonds, thus there is little sense of loyalty and grouping patterns change when needed. In general, people are more committed to tasks rather than relationships, tend to blame others for their failures and their time is

highly organized. Countries with low-context culture are Germany, Switzerland, USA, Scandinavia. [6] [7] [8] [9]

Hall was the first cross-cultural researcher that categorized cultures based on the dimension of Space. In his book «The Hidden Dimension», he focuses in the perception of social and personal space. He was the first to introduce the notion of proxemics as *"the interrelated observations and theories of humans use of space as a specialized elaboration of culture"* [10]. Hall identifies cultures with High Territoriality and Low Territoriality. In cultures with High Territoriality people need clearly defined personal space and boundaries. They tend to mark their territory and possessions. Concerns for ownership extend to material things. The need for territoriality can be translated as the need for security. Additionally, people with High Territoriality tend to be of Low Context. On the other hand, in cultures with Low Territoriality space and boundaries are less important. They share with little thought and they are not concern about ownership of any kind, material or other. [10] [9]

The next dimension of Hall's theory is Time. With his book «The dance of life: The other Dimension of Time», he analyzes the impact of time in culture. The book addresses the way *"people are tied together yet isolated from each other by individual threads of rhythm and hidden walls of time"* [8]. Time is used as a language, a way of prioritization and categorization of experience. It is used also to get feedback for the way things are going and for people to communicate their feelings for each other. Hall categorized cultures by the attitude of its' members in the concept of time. According to his theory, there can be Monochronic and Polychronic cultures.

In Monochronic cultures, people usually do one thing at a time and their concept of time is precise. Scheduling and planning are really important aspects of their everyday life. In these cultures, focus is on the job at hand, thus people have difficulty in starting a new one when they still have not finished the first activity. There is separation between personal and professional life, with prioritization to work. All in all, such cultures put emphasis on promptness. USA, Scandinavian countries and Germany are countries with such cultures. In Polychronic cultures, people do many things simultaneously and have relative approach over time. Punctuality has low importance and people have no problem doing several things at the same time. Human relations and social interaction are valued over material things and time, hence work and personal life are integrated. Polychronic cultures can be found in Middle East, Russia and Latin America. [8] [7] [9]

The last dimension in Hall's theory is Information Flow. It shows how quickly or how slowly information travels from one point to another. The way information flows in a culture is maybe the most important aspect for an outsider to learn, because it can create obstacles in international understanding. Cultures are divided based on information in High-Flow and Low-Flow. In High-Flow cultures, information is spread rapidly. People recognize crucial importance on keeping in touch with each other and keep themselves posted on the latest news. High-Flow cultures are also High-Context cultures, on the grounds that individuals are highly involved and information flows easily. On the contrary, in cultures with Low-Flow of information people plan and structure information carefully. Information is

divided to small portions and people tend to give what is absolutely necessary and not more. These cultures are connected with Low-Context and Monochronic cultures. [9]

1.3 Hofstede: Cultural Dimensions

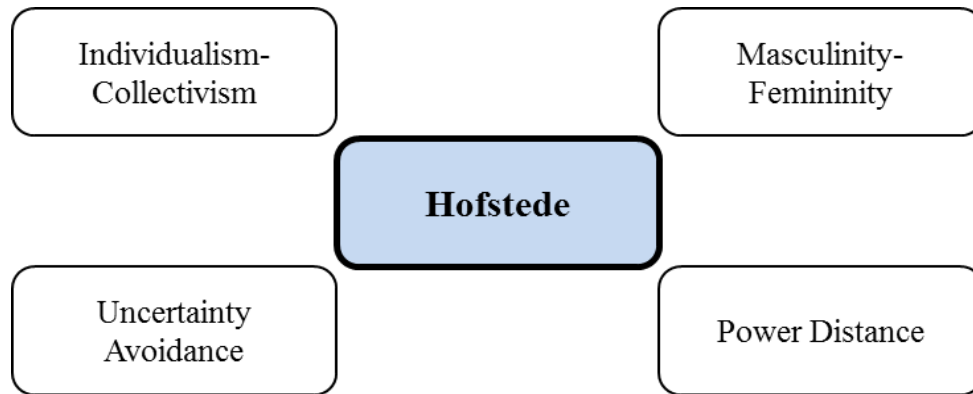


Figure 3: Hofstede Cultural Dimensions

Geert Hofstede is a management researcher that developed a widely used model of cultural differences in organizations. Hofstede derived the information for his study from a worldwide survey. Between 1967 and 1973 he conducted a survey to the employees of the large multinational company: International Business Machines (IBM). The research was focusing on the effects of society's culture to the members and the relationship between values and behavior. The theory originally proposed four dimensions: Individualism-Collectivism, Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance and Masculinity-Femininity. A new research led to a fifth dimension, Long-Term Orientation. Lastly, in 2010 Hofstede added one more dimension, Indulgence-Self-restraint, leading to a six-dimension model.

The first dimension is Individualism-Collectivism (IDV) and refers to the relationship between an individual and the group he belongs (society, organization etc.). The one side of this dimension, Individualism applies to people who value more their personal interests than group interests. They are expected to mind the welfare of themselves and their immediate family only. The other side of this dimension, Collectivism represents individuals that value group interests more than their personal ones. As a part of a group, for example their family, they expect assistance and loyalty by the other members. As far as society is concerned, this dimension (IDV) reflects the mentality of its members. It depicts whether the self-image of the members is defined in terms of "I" or "we".

Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI) is the second dimension in Hofstede's theory. Uncertainty Avoidance is the degree to which society tolerates ambiguity and uncertainty. The main issue in this dimension is the way society deals with the fact that future cannot be known and controlled. Societies with high UAI need laws, guidelines, rules and codes of behavior. Also, they do not tolerate eccentric ideas and behavior. Societies with low levels of UAI have a more relaxed attitude, have tolerance for uncertainty and there is little need for rules.

The third dimension in this theory is Power Distance (PDI). Power Distance is defined as *“the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally”* [11]. High Power Distance means that people accept and respect society’s hierarchy. Everyone has a place on the societal pyramid and they do not doubt it. Positions of authority hold the majority of power. On the contrary, in Low Power Distance societies it is believed that effective leaders do not have to possess great amount of power compared to their inferiors. A more relaxed attitude is sustained, people try to distribute power equally and demand explanation for inequalities on power.

The fourth dimension Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS) refers to *“the distribution of values between the genders which is another fundamental issue for any society”* [11]. The business context of this dimension is often translated as tough versus tender. The Masculinity depicts a preference for assertiveness, heroism, achievement and materialistic rewards. There is great social-emotional role difference between genders, thus men occupy positions of power both in society and their family. Femininity represents a tendency for modesty, cooperation, quality life and desire to help the weak. Society is in general more consensus-oriented and there is balance between work and family.

Long-Term versus Short-Term Orientation (LTO) is a dimension showing the attitude toward life, relationships and work. Societies have to be connected with their past while handling the challenges of the present and the future. Different societies prioritize their goals differently. Long-Term Orientation in other words means future orientation societies that value hard work, dedication and thrift. A pragmatic approach is preferred; therefore, societies encourage modern education in order to prepare for the future. Antithetically, Short-Term Orientation refers to societies that are past and present oriented. Individuals in these societies value and maintain traditions and norms and in general view all kinds of changes with suspicion.

The last dimension of Hofstede’s theory is Indulgence versus Restrain. Indulgence stands for *“a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun”* [11]. It is important for individuals to have all kinds of freedom and leisure so as to live their life as they please. Contrarily, Restraint stands for *“a society that controls gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms”* [11]. Generally, in these societies people live a more constrained life without much freedom and yearning for pleasure. [11] [12] [7] [13]

1.4 Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck: Values Orientation Theory

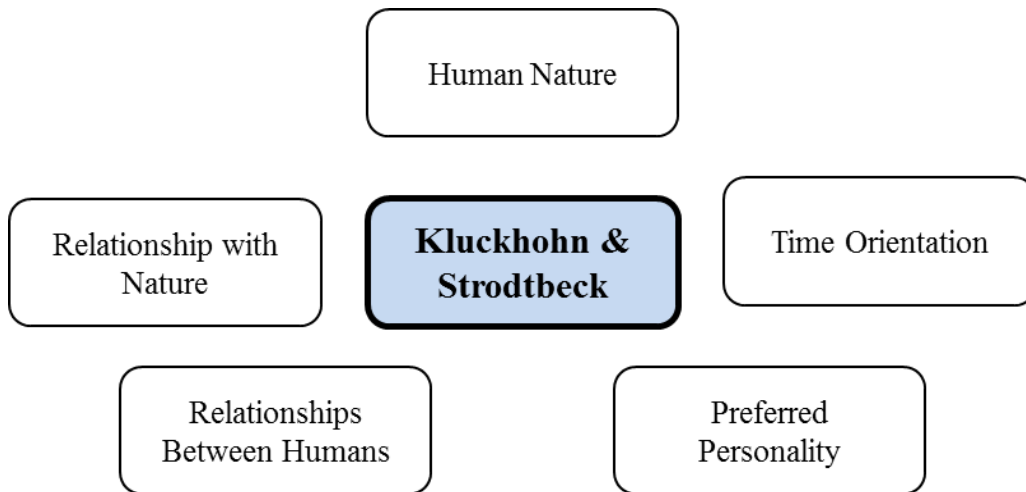


Figure 4: Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck Dimensions

Cultural anthropologists Florence Kluckhohn and Fred Strodtbeck presented one of the earliest cultural models, based on the research of Florence’s husband Clyde Kluckhohn (1949-1952). Their cultural theory was based on value orientations, claiming that there is a small number of problems common to all human societies and consequently a small number of solutions. Furthermore, they suggested that there is a domain value system in every society because of the way values are distributed. Using anthropological theories, they identified five dimensions: Human Nature, Relationship with nature, Relationships between humans, Preferred Personality and Time Orientation.

The first dimension is Human Nature referring to the inherent nature of man. The main issue here is if man is basically good, bad or neutral. Such distinctions are made by societies and this kind of predispositions are either mutable or immutable.

The second dimension of this theory is Relationship with Nature meaning the responsibility or need to control nature. There are three scales: Mastery, Harmony and Subjugation. Mastery indicates the belief that individuals are over nature; hence, they need or feel responsible to control her. Harmony means that people cooperate with nature in order to maintain balance and harmony. In the last scale called Subjugation, people accept passively the forces of nature and their inevitability.

Relationship Between Humans is the third dimension and it focuses on the beliefs about social structure. Likewise, it has three different orientations: individual, collateral and lineal. Individual orientation means that people put emphasis only on themselves and their group. Decisions are made independently from other groups, the concept of “nuclear family” is dominant and social structure is generally arranged based on individuals. Collateral orientation is the perspective that *“social structure should be based on groups of individuals with relatively equal status”* [7]. People have more intense family bonds than in individual orientation and there is a more extended version of family (grandparents, cousins,

uncles, etc.). At last, linear orientation emphasizes on hierarchical principles and acknowledges authority. Family means all the people related by blood and even extended in time to include ancestors.

The fourth dimension is Preferred Personality referring to beliefs about appropriate goals. Being is the first scale and it means that people concentrate to themselves and living in for the moment. Motivation is internal and people put emphasis on activities they value even if these activities are not valued by others. In the second scale, Growing (being in becoming) people's motivation is derived from the development and growth of themselves to an integrated whole. The developed abilities are valued by them but not certainly by other people in the group. Lastly, Doing is the scale where motivation is external and people emphasize to activities that are valued both by themselves and others in their group.

The last dimension of Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck's theory is Time Orientation. All societies have a sense of the dimensions of time but they have different ways to deal with it. Hence, they might emphasize in the past, present or future. Past orientation means that people focus on the past and base their decisions on past events and traditions. They also preserve and cherish traditional beliefs and teachings. Present orientation focuses on what is now and on adapting to changes in traditions and beliefs. Decisions are influenced by present circumstances. Finally, Future Orientation focuses on the future, people look for new ways to replace the old and plan ahead. Decisions are based on future prospects. [7] [14] [15]

1.5 Lewis: The Lewis Model

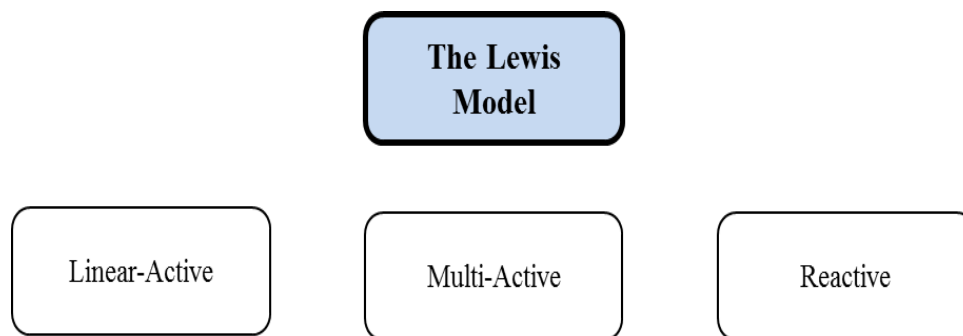


Figure 5: The Lewis Model

Richard Lewis is an English social theorist and communication consultant. After traveling in 135 countries and working in more than 20 of them, he concluded that people are divided in three clear categories, based on Behavior rather than on religion or nationality. These three categories are named: Linear-Active, Multi-Active and Reactive.

The first category called Linear-Active refers to a group of people that have similar characteristics such as doing on thing at a time, planning ahead step by step, speaking the truth before diplomacy, rarely interrupting others and sticking to facts. As far as work is concerned, they are job-oriented, respect officialdom and separate their social and professional life. Generally, they are polite but direct, impatient

and logical. There is limited body language and they partly conceal their feelings. In this group belongs the English-speaking world (North America, Australia, New Zealand) and Northern Europe (Scandinavia and Germanic countries).

The second category of Lewis's model is Multi-Active and it refers to individuals that do several things at a time, plan only the outline, believe that truth is flexible, often interrupt others and put their feeling above the facts. In their work environment, multi-active groups are people-oriented, seek the key person to get the job done and their professional and social life are mingled. They are emotional, impatient, display their feelings and use body language to communicate. In this group belong: Southern Europe and Mediterranean countries, sub-Saharan Africa, South America, other cultures in the Middle East, Pakistan, India and most of the Slavic countries.

The third and final category of this model is called Reactive. People in this group tend to react to partner's action, base their plans on general principles, prefer diplomacy over truth, do not interrupt others and their statements are promises. Regarding work, they are very people oriented, use connections and combine their professional and social life. In general, they are polite but indirect, patient, never confront others, use subtle body language and all in all they conceal their feelings. The Reactive group of behavior extends to almost all the countries in Asia (except the India sub-continent that belongs to the Multi-Active group). [16] [17]

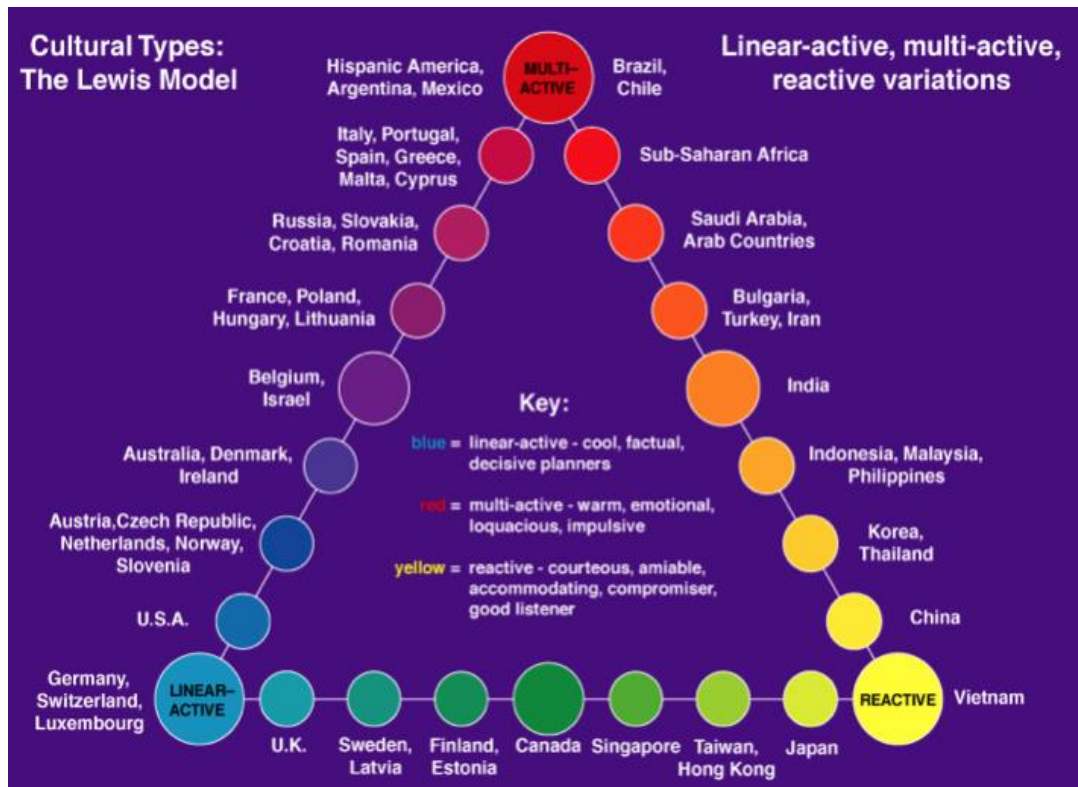


Figure 6: The Lewis Model Triangle of Variations



Figure 7: The world map according to The Lewis Model

1.6 Schwartz: Cultural Dimensions

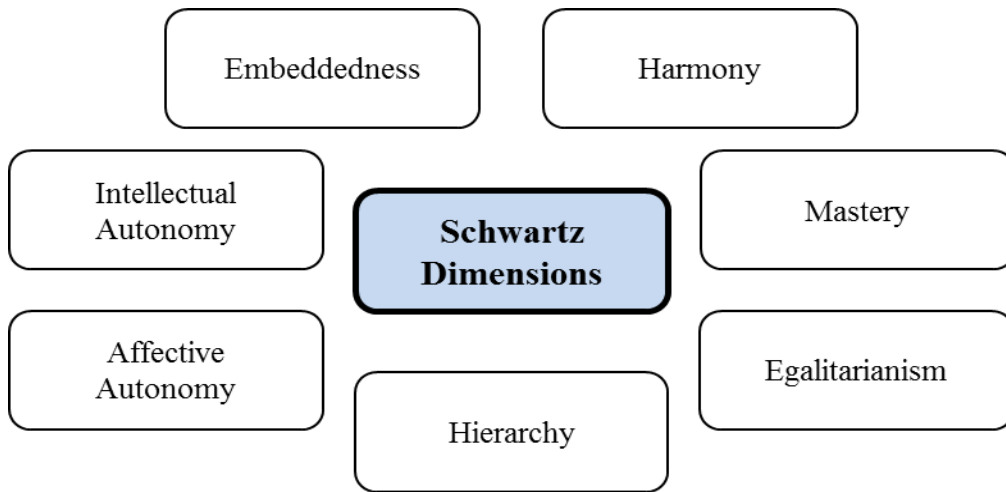


Figure 8: Schwartz Dimensions

Shalom H. Schwartz is a cross-cultural researcher and social psychologist. Schwartz defines culture as “*a rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices, symbols, norms and values*” [18]. He is really interested in the role of values in culture and he believes that values can be identified among the individuals of a society, expressing its cultural ideals. Schwartz suggested that universally societies have three main problems needed to be resolved. Thus, his perspective of cultural dimensions can be used as a description for alternative resolving methods depicting different societies.

The first problem is to what extent are people dependent on or autonomous to their group, what is the nature of the relation and the boundaries between them. The dimensions referring to the problem are Embeddedness versus Autonomy. Embeddedness refers to individuals embedded to a group, that are really focused on social relationships by identifying, sharing their life goals and way of life with the group. Personal interests are highly intervened with social ones, attitudes and actions follow the traditional order of things and in general changes are avoided. Embedded societies appreciate respect of tradition, social order, security, wisdom and obedience. Autonomy on the other hand, refers to individuals viewed as bounded entities. They are expected to express and cultivate their own unique ideas, feelings and preferences. Autonomy is further divided in two categories:

1. Intellectual Autonomy: referring to the individual pursuit of intellectual directions, ideas and rights.
2. Affective Autonomy: referring to the individual pursuit of affectively positive experiences. Important values consist of varied life, exciting life and pleasure.

The second problem is to what extent people value equality and personal responsibility is guaranteed so as to maintain social order. The dimensions dealing with this problem are Hierarchy versus Egalitarianism. In Hierarchical societies, individuals are socialized so as to fulfill the specific roles assigned to them and they are subjected to penalties if they fail to achieve their goals. On

the other hand, in Egalitarian societies people are considered moral equals who share basic interests as human beings. People are committed to cooperate and they deeply care about others' welfare. Values associated with these societies include honesty, sympathy, social justice, caring for the weaker members, equality, social responsibility and cooperation.

The third and last problem in Schwartz's theory is to what extent society's members want to change their relationship with nature and the social world so as to take advantage personally or as a group. The dimensions facing this problem are called Mastery versus Harmony. Mastery represents societies where individuals want to succeed, get through self-assertion and seek to master, direct and change the social and natural world to advance their personal interests and the interests of their group. Some of the values associated with Mastery are: fearlessness, independence, daring hard work, ambition, competence and drive for success. On the other hand, Harmony represents the situation where individuals accept and fit into the social and natural world. They try to understand the world, protect and preserve it instead of changing, exploiting or directing it. Some values associated with Harmony are: unity with nature, world at peace and look after the environment. [18] [7]

1.7 Trompenaars: 7 Cultural Dimensions

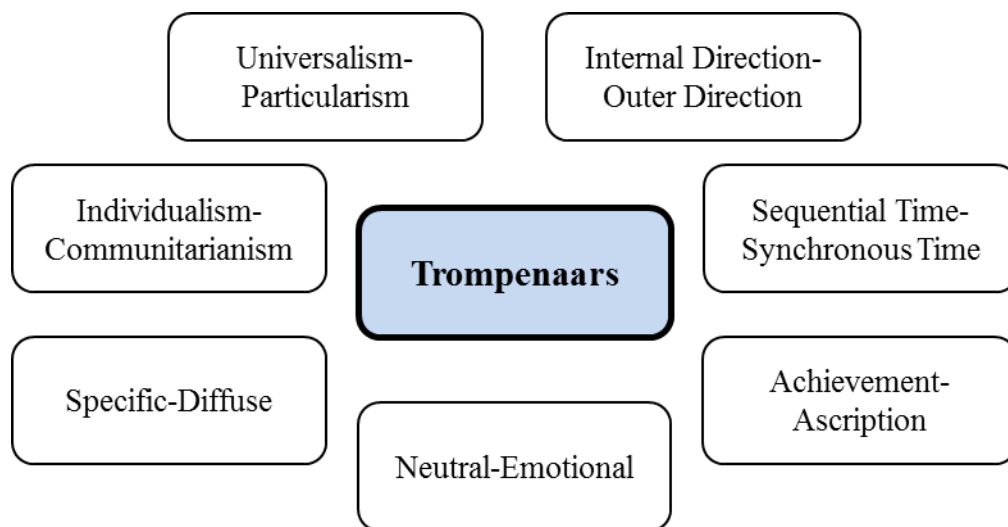


Figure 9: Trompenaars: 7 Cultural Dimensions

Alfonso (Fons) Trompenaars is a Dutch-French management consultant and organizational theorist. In his book "Riding the Waves of Culture" (1997), Trompenaars and Charles Hampden Turner developed a cultural model so as to understand better cultural differences. According to them, different cultures are not randomly different, they differ in predictable and specific ways. This is because every culture has its own values, beliefs, way of thinking and preferences. They identified seven cultural dimensions. The first five of them focus on relationships among people: Universalism vs Particularism, Individualism vs Communitarianism, Specific vs Diffuse, Neutral vs Emotional and Achievement vs Ascription. The other two dimensions focus on society's relationship with nature

and time management: Sequential Time vs Synchronous Time and Internal Direction vs Outer Direction.

The first dimension, Universalism versus Particularism, presents the importance of rule implementation and relationships across societal members. Universalism indicates societies where rules, values, laws and obligations are of high importance. Rules come before relationships thus they are applied to everyone equally. In Universalistic cultures, clear instructions are provided, promises are kept and objective processes are used to make decisions. On the contrary, Particularism refers to cultures where people believe that each relationship and each circumstance dictates the rules they live by. Their response to a situation may differentiate, based on who is involved and what is happening in the moment. People in Particularistic societies are autonomous but also flexible in decision making, considering others' needs. They need time to build relationships and better understand their desires and exigences.

The second dimension, Individualism versus Communitarianism, depicts the extent to which individuals derive their identity from within themselves or their group. Individualism focuses on independence and personal achievement. Individuals strongly believe in making their own decisions and taking care of themselves. Hence, individualistic societies allow people to learn from their mistakes and to be creative. Individual performance is praised and rewarded and people's needs are linked with those of the group they belong to. Antithetically, Communitarianism stands for people's belief that the group is more important than the individual. Safety and help are provided by the group, in exchange for loyalty. Group always comes first, thus group performance is praised and rewarded. Moreover, showing favoritism is avoided and others are allowed to be involved in someone's decision making.

The third dimension, Specific versus Diffuse, deals with the extent to which people get involved with others' life. In Specific cultures, work and personal life are two separate things. As a result, people believe that relationships do not affect work objectives and despite the fact that relationships are important they believe that individuals can work together and not have good relationship. As far as Diffuse cultures are concerned, work and personal life are highly integrated. Good relationships go hand in hand with business objectives and people's relationship with others is the same at work or at social encounters. All in all, people tend to spend their free time with clients and colleagues.

The fourth dimension, Neutral versus Emotional, presents the degree to which people express their feelings freely in public. Individuals in Neutral societies try very hard to control their emotions. Actions are influenced mostly by reason rather than feelings and people do not reveal their thoughts and feelings. In general, all interactions have a "stick to the point" mentality where emotions do not come out and body language conveys negative emotions. Individuals in Emotional societies try to express their emotions in different ways even at work, something that is totally acceptable and welcomed. Body language is used to express positivity, conflict is managed before it becomes personal and relationships are built in rapport and trust.

The fifth dimension, Achievement versus Ascription, stands for “*the manner in which respect and social status are accorded to people*” [7]. In Achievement-oriented cultures, someone’s worth is based on what he does. Performance is valued no matter who you are and recognition and reward are appropriate. It is important to be a good role model and use titles only when it is suitable. In Ascription-oriented cultures, people believe that someone should be valued for who he is. Behavior is defined by the power, the title and the position. Titles are used to clarify the status in an organization, thus making it easier to show people in authority respect.

The sixth dimension refers to the time perspective of a culture, whether it is focused on the past or the future. Sequential Time is concentrated on the past and the present. In these cultures, “time is money” is a typical expression that represent them and people do not appreciate alterations on their schedule. Individuals prefer events to happen in order, thus they plan, value punctuality and stay on schedule. They stay focused on one activity at a time and they keep to deadlines. Synchronous Time is concentrated on the future, although people think that the past, present and future are entwined periods. In these cultures, people often work on several projects at the same time and they consider their commitments and plans as flexible. Punctuality and deadlines are of low importance and only used when it is absolutely necessary to achieve certain objectives.

The seventh and last dimension in Trompenaars’s theory explores how people relate to their Environment. This dimension is divided into two categories the Internal Direction and the Outer Direction and they analyze the extent to which individuals control or are controlled by the Environment. In Internal Direction cultures, people believe that they can control nature/environment to accomplish their goals. This also includes the way they work within organizations and with teams. People are self-focused (their self, their team, their organization), winning is of high importance, hence aggressive personalities are prevalent. As far as Outer Direction cultures are concerned, people believe that their environment or the nature control them, consequently they have to work with it to accomplish their goals. In relationships or at work, they avoid conflict at all costs, give people reassurance and in general they focus their actions on others. Strong relationships are used to achieve goals and they are more important than winning. [19] [7]

Chapter 2: Leadership Styles

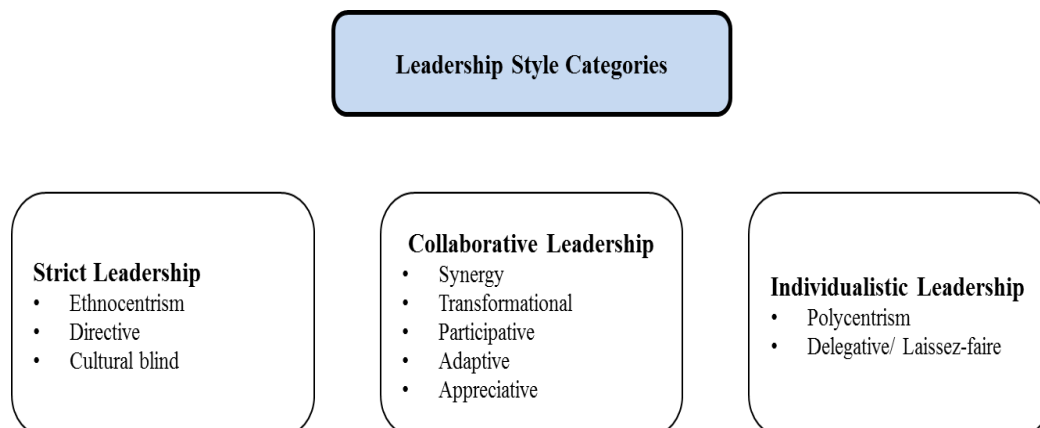


Figure 10: The leadership Styles included to each category

Leadership Style is the method a leader uses to motivate people, implement plans and provide direction. As far as multicultural teams are concerned, *“it is helpful to be aware that different cultures may have different approaches to hierarchy and power”* [20]. Juana Bordas defines Multicultural Leadership as *“an inclusive approach and philosophy that incorporates the influences, practices, and values of diverse cultures in a respectful and productive manner”* [1]. There is a plethora of different leadership styles, thus we categorized the styles based on the way leaders act toward their inferiors. We created three basic categories each including similar leadership styles. The categories are: Strict Leadership, Collaborative Leadership and Individualistic Leadership. Our goal is to find out how problems are solved and also in what extend do teams benefit. Moreover, we search the effectiveness of each category and the connection between leadership and cultural dimensions of the team.

2.1 Strict Leadership

Strict Leadership refers to leadership styles where leaders are rigorous, do not consider others ideas and all in all impose their opinion. There is a plethora of researches introducing their conception of Strict Leadership. In many, researchers focus on the way leaders cope with decision making and their team members, where in others the main focus is cultural acceptance or the lack thereof. Some of these leadership styles are: Directive Leadership, Autocratic Leadership, Ethnocentrism and Cultural Blind Leadership.

To begin with, in Strict Leadership the leader is the one who holds all the power. Tasks, ideas and projects are only initiated by him. He takes the entire responsibility of every decision and outcome. For instance, in Directive Leadership as described by Robert House, the leader exercises firm rules and inferiors are expected to work within those boundaries [19]. Subordinates are given detailed instructions, deadlines and specifying standards. Their only responsibility is to finish the tasks as instructed. Relationships between team members are formal and typical; hence, communication is direct and to the point. There is neither social nor emotional involvement. Every team member’s aspiration is to complete his/her work, be rewarded and fulfill his/her personal goals. Taking everything into account, firstly we conclude that in Strict Leadership leaders do not entertain

suggestions from their team and expect full conformity to their commands. Secondly, it's a task-oriented leadership where people focus on their work, themselves and their aspirations.

As far as culture in Strict Leadership is concerned, there are several leadership styles focusing on it. Some of them are indifferent about culture such as Culturally Blind Leadership, where the leader pays no attention to the different cultures within the team. There are no adjustments in leadership, so as to help foreign team members to fully integrate [21] [22]. Other styles are more extreme like Ethnocentrism. In this style introduced by M. Makilouko, leaders are not only culturally blind but also ethnocentric with parochial attitudes [2].

Analyzing all the characteristics of the leader and the team, one can find several cultural dimensions related with Strict Leadership. To begin with, there is clearly the dimension of Hierarchy in the project team or organization. Individuals follow thoroughly the rules and commands and respect their superiors [18]. Additionally, there is high Uncertain Avoidance derived from the need of rules, codes and formality. As mentioned before, individuals base their actions on the boundaries that are set [3], [12]. Strict Leadership is also related to the Specific dimension of Trompenaars, as a result of individuals not mixing their personal and professional life [19]. Low In-Group Collectivism and Low-Context are also cultural dimensions found in this Leadership. They are associated with organization's/leader's task-orientation and people's need to outstand in their group [4], [7]. Lastly, low Human Orientation is connected with individuals' personal ambition and the insensitiveness to racial discrimination between team members [3].

Effective Leadership is a key element for a team to fully integrate and fulfill project's or organization's mission. Strict Leadership can be both effective and ineffective depending the circumstances. On one hand, Strict Leadership effects negatively the team members because they do not get to use their talents to the maximum and they might feel unfulfilled and stifled. Besides, individuals might be afraid to express their concerns and thoughts because of the fear or repercussions. Furthermore, according to Slevin and Pinto high cognitive capacity, need for power and task orientation make leaders inflexible in dealing with the demands of the leadership [23]. In addition, cultural blind and ethnocentric leaders concentrate on formal negotiation within their team, resulting team disintegration [18].

On the other hand, several researchers have underlined situations where Strict Leadership can be immensely effective. In project teams constituted of inexperienced or/and unskilled individuals, the leader needs to direct and monitor them so as to avoid potential mistakes. The same need for leadership exists when the task at hand is unstructured and/or complex. What's more, when an emergency occurs quick decision making is crucial, hence leader has to act fast and give clear instructions to his team. Last but not least, in a theory called the Path goal theory, it is assumed that directive or in other words strict leaders' behavior increases inferiors' acceptance, thus helping them operate smoothly. In addition, highly stressed employees have greater acceptance when a leader is directive [24].

2.2 Collaborative Leadership

Collaborative Leadership refers to several leadership styles where the leader considers others ideas and uses his team members appropriately so as to create a well structured team and to fulfill the project's and organization's objectives. This Leadership category includes: Synergy, Transformational, Participative, Adaptive and Appreciative leadership.

Collaboration is the key word in Collaborative Leadership as the leader urges the team members to participate and express their honest opinion in decision making. The leader tries to identify all the project and team needs by asking questions and considering others' opinion with the aim of making choices for the whole good. In order to create a bonded team with openness to speak, the leader builds longstanding personal relationships within the team, thus interaction is informal and direct. Furthermore, the leader inspires, motivates and poses as a role model to enhance individuals' job performance and challenge them to take responsibility of their actions. As far as culture is concerned, collaborative leaders indicate high levels of cultural empathy. They understand that different cultures have different perspectives on issues and they show willingness to learn about them.

Collaborative leadership represents several cultural dimensions. First and foremost, this leadership shows High Human Orientation. Team members, including the team leader, care about each other, they feel the need for connection and they are sensitive to all forms of cultural discrimination [3]. The need to cooperate and care about others welfare are connected with the dimension of Egalitarianism [18]. The dimension of High In-Group Collectivism is related with the desire to contribute to the team and create long term relationships [4]. In addition, the Preferred Personality: Doing as introduced by Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck is referring to leader's motivation toward activities valued by the individual that fulfills them [15]. The connection between work and personal relations emerges from the Diffuse dimension of Trompenaars. Whereas, emotional expression, conflict management and trustful relationships are related with the Emotional dimension of Trompenaars [19] [7].

Collaborative Leadership can be highly effective when a leader wants to develop long term and meaningful relationships with all the project team members. They have to be based on trust, commitment and loyalty. For example, according to researches "*transformational leadership is positively associated with employee outcomes including commitment, role clarity, and well-being*" [25]. Furthermore, it can be a useful leadership when the leader desires the expertise and talent of the team members so as to have a unique perspective of a situation. Moreover, in many projects there are consequential changes and uncertainty. Collaborative leaders can assist the individuals and the organization to deal with these changes by reassuring, collaborating and constantly working at building the capacities of the organization and the team. Multicultural surfaces can also be positively affected by this leadership, because the leader is aware of the practical differences between cultures, such as different needs for autonomy and communication.

However, Collaborative Leadership can be ineffective for several reasons and situations. First of all, decision making is slower because many individuals are involved. It is time consuming to gather all the feedback and inputs; thus, the process is considerably slowed down. Consequently, it is difficult to adopt

Collaborative Leadership in larger project teams. What is more, it is a less effective leadership style for unskilled employees, considering their inability to provide knowledge and experience to aid in the development of the project. Another issue, is that in order to adapt to a new environment, individuals must alter their behaviors, attitudes and values. This shift is hard for individuals because it requires to be disloyal to their former behaviors, attitudes and values. Finally, by letting all the members participate in decision making the leader might share sensitive business information. It might be vital information for the project, but by sharing it the possibility of a leak multiplies, jeopardizing the whole project.

2.3 Individualistic Leadership

The last category of leadership styles is called Individualistic Leadership. It includes styles where team members act as individuals within the group and the leader performs as their supervisor. The two styles in this category are: Polycentrism and Laissez-Faire /Delegative leadership.

To begin with, the leader provides little guidance to team members and he gives them freedom to make their own decisions. He only supplies them with all the resources and tools he has on his disposal. Thus, they must be autonomous, so as to be a part of an individualistic team. Team members solve problems, make decisions and act but the weight of responsibility is on the leader. Furthermore, the leader does not put any effort on team building or developing interaction between members. Hence, the leader must have great experience in leadership, in order to develop commitment, trust and motivation. What is more, communication between team members is direct and clear without implications. All in all, he has to create a supportive team design and effective communication channels to achieve project goals.

Individualistic leadership is really sensitive and considerate towards culture. The leader tries to learn, understand and relate to different cultures and consequently adjust his leadership style to the differences. The leader often acts as an integrator between members with different cultural backgrounds. The team might be divided based on divergent cultural groups within it. Each group is treated differently and sometimes team members are even allowed to keep their old working habits rather than adapting new ones.

Plenty of the cultural dimensions analyzed in chapter one can also be found on this leadership category. One of the most important characteristics, is the need to be autonomous, which is linked with the Autonomy dimension of Schwartz [18]. Particularism is another dimension including autonomous individuals, but it is also associated with flexibility in decision making and adaptation to different situations and relationships [7]. The lack of team bonding and its' affecting in work objectives is related with the Specific dimension of Trompenaars. Individualism, High Assertiveness and High-Performance Orientation are associated with independence, taking initiative, personal development, creativity, learning from one's mistakes and unambiguous communication [3], [7], [19]. All of the above are characteristics found in Individualistic Leadership.

This leadership category can be effective to various situations. Firstly, it is appropriate for highly experienced individuals specialized to their work, so they are in no need of guidance from their leader. This way, they can demonstrate their skills, achieve their goals and simultaneously fulfill project's objectives. Secondly,

Individualistic Leadership is efficient in projects where team members are located in various countries. For example, in virtual teams the leader cannot supervise individuals' every day work, hence the need for independency and excellent communication channels between team members. Thirdly, taking about Polycentrism, an Individualistic leadership style, M. Makilouko said that "*the polycentric leadership style is the most effective multicultural leadership strategy*" [26]. Because of the cultural empathy, the leaders have knowledge of cultural differences and preferences; thusly, they adjust their leadership styles accordingly.

On the contrary, Individualistic Leadership can also be ineffective. As far as the leader is concerned, he is required of a high level of experience. It is of vital importance to build a detailed communication plan or else he might create a communication chaos leading to work delays. Moreover, this leadership is not suitable for less competent subordinates. Unskilled individuals do not have neither the knowledge nor the experience to make decisions and act independently as this leadership demands. Another problem in this category causing ineffectiveness is the lack of role awareness. Little to no guidance combined with poorly defined roles do not help members understand what to do with their time.

2.4 Switch Leadership

Sometimes as the project evolves the leader has to alternate his leadership style in order to produce high project performance, this change is called Switch Leadership. As Prabhakar defined it, "*Switch leadership is the conscious ability to maneuver from one leadership approach to another to enhance performance in a project situation*" [27]. It is not a new leadership style but a methodology to successfully employ existing leadership styles. Whereas the other leadership styles put emphasis on task and team assessments, Switch leadership is more dependent on time requirements. Time clearly impacts the choice of style. Too slow progress or wrong direction of the project are important reasons for a leader to switch styles. Leaders develop through experience their ability to use various styles to accomplish higher project success. According to Slevin & Pinto "*successful project managers have been shown to employ a great deal of flexibility in their use of leadership approaches*" [28].

Chapter 3: The Effective Multicultural Leader

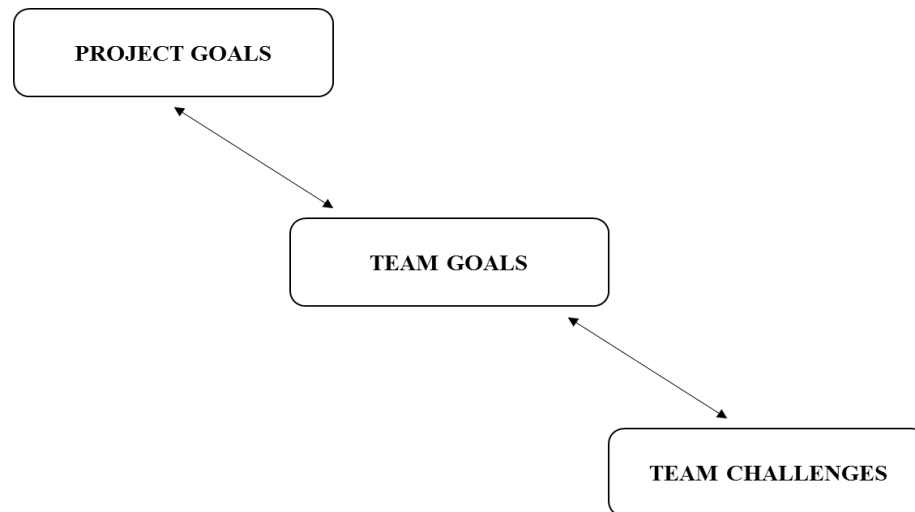


Figure 11: The connection between Project Goals, Team Goals & Team Challenges

Having an effective leader as head of a project is critical to its success. According to McShane & Travaglione “*the leaders can be called effective when they are helpful to a group of people for defining their goals and finding certain ways through which these goals can be achieved*” [29]. The leader faces many challenges during a project let alone when he has a multicultural team to lead. Multicultural teams have additional difficulties because of the cultural diversity between team members. All in all, the leader has to find the right practices and choose his leadership style, so as to fulfill his teams’ needs and aid them accomplish all project objectives. In this chapter, we will present all the challenges faced by the project manager, his goals and the practices he can use to become an effective leader.

3.1 Challenges of multicultural teams

Building a new team of diverse individuals can be really challenging for managers. They might face cultural, social, behavioral or other kinds of differences between team members. Multicultural teams are much more challenging because the project leader has to shape a team of individuals with different backgrounds, needs, education etc., and in general team members that might perceive situations differently.

In order to understand better all the challenges that affect the project team we classified them in three categories. Every category is consisted of challenges derived from the same origin. The categories are:

- A. Relational Challenges,
- B. Cultural Challenges,
- C. Project-Related Challenges.

3.1.1 Relational Challenges

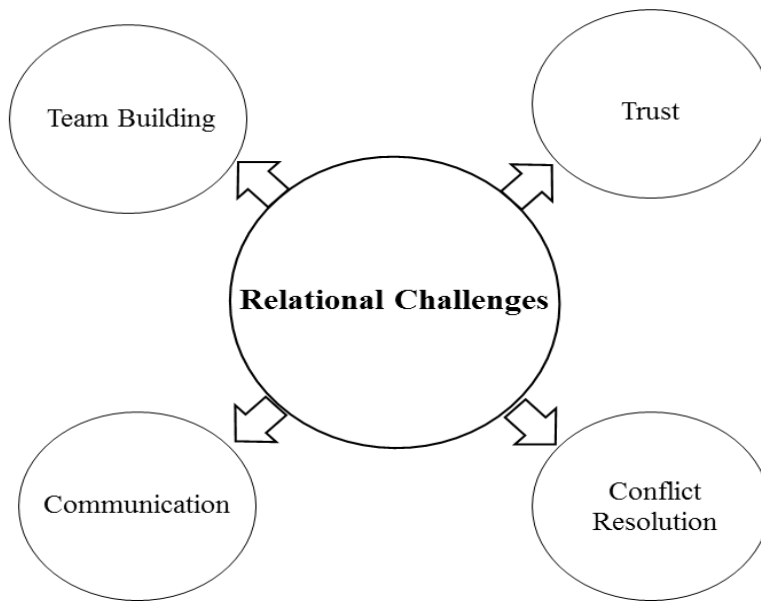


Figure 12: Relational Challenges of Multicultural Teams

The first category refers to the challenges concerning the relationships within the project team. The team leader has to assemble a project team consisted of individuals that can be vastly different from each other. Team building, Trust, Communication and Dealing with conflict are the challenges the leader has to deal with to establish and improve his team's relations, and consequently lead effectively.

The first thing a leader has to do when undertaking a project is Team Building. Team building is an aggregation of techniques used to help teams develop, learn and grow into more effective teams. These techniques, can be applied throughout the project lifecycle. The leader can use various activities, usually involving collaboration, to enhance social relations and define clearly the roles within the team. Many times, individuals find it difficult to collaborate with a variety of personalities and accept different opinions and behaviors. Thus, the leader has to act as the mediator of any arising issue between team members in order to help individuals work in harmony. For instance, job-oriented individuals separate their personal and professional life and have a hard time being part of a team. They might also refuse to collaborate, because their personal goals and aspirations do not match with the project's goals. Hence, the leader has to create a team bond where people depend and work with its other so as to fulfill not only the project's objectives but also their personal goals. There is absolute need of openness and respect between team members, as well as motivation and guidance from the leader. Other ways to develop team building are Communication and Trust that will be discussed thoroughly below.

The second relational challenge, Trust, is an essential element in team productivity and should be treated as project imperative. The leader needs to earn his inferiors trust, in order to develop good relations within the team and to have honest and open communication. It is the base of a successful team, as it helps in connecting and bonding. Project leaders that lack of trust, suffer on decision-making and following timelines, due to the additional time they put on communication and persuasion. Suspiciousness leads individuals to adopt a

defensive posture and to have a less efficient collaboration. Cummings & Bromiley determined that a team member trusts his peers when he believes that: a) others make a genuine effort to behave according to any commitments both implicit and explicit, b) others are honest in negotiations preceding such commitments and, c) they do not take advantage of their peers even when the opportunity arises [30]. In multicultural project teams, as a consequence of cultural diversity, the concept of trust can be perceived differently, thus it is much more difficult to be earned. Jarvenpaa & Leidner talking about virtual teams argued that “*trust is more difficult to develop in such teams in comparison with teams whose members are involved in frequent face-to-face interactions*” [30]. Virtual teams come up against several obstacles that might incommode trust [31].

Less social clues Fewer opportunities for social control	Risk of conflicts Due to overlook elements and delayed responses
Great risk of role ambiguity Harder to target own duty	Poor understanding of events When virtual context lacks boundaries

Table 1: The role of Trust in Virtual Teamwork

Communication is one of the most challenging issues in a project. It is not only important for team building, but it can also help team members express their thoughts, ideas and feelings and in general it helps the process of decision-making. The leader has to create effective communication channels for team members to exchange knowledge. Information flow, reports and feedback are needed to all project stages so as to avoid misconceptions and delays. Due to miscommunication, conflict and confusion might erupt, resulting arguments between team members and low employee morale.

What is more, the leader must understand the information richness, meaning he has to decipher the hidden context when communicating. Written and Verbal communication, might be of high, medium and low information richness. The table below depicts the information channels and their richness [32].

Information Channel	Information Richness
Face-to-face conversation	High
Video conferencing	High
Telephone conversation	High
E-mails	Medium
Handheld devices	Medium
Blogs	Medium
Written letters and memos	Medium
Formal written documents	Low
Spreadsheets	Low

Table 2: Information Channels & Information Richness

Apropos of team building and creating relations, there cannot be a team that does not face problems. Throughout the whole project, there are arising issues for the leader to deal with and conflicts to resolve. *“Conflict on teams is defined here to mean a struggle, or state of disharmony or antagonism, or hostile behaviors, resulting from contradictory interests, needs, or beliefs, or mutually exclusive desires”* [33]. There is a type of conflict called relationship or emotional conflicts that is related with values, feelings, preferences, etc. [34]. Conflict might be initiated by lack of trust and communication, differences between team members or even ineffective leadership by the project manager. Issues within the team might cause detrimental effects on project progress, such as missing deadlines, task failure and obstruction of project’s schedule.

3.1.2 Cultural challenges

Due to the globalization, organizations are becoming more and more diverse. Hence the demand for multicultural and virtual teams to projects. *“A multicultural team is one composed of members who have spent their formative years in different countries and thus have learned different values, demeanors, and languages”* [35]. The project leader must perceive the cultural challenges thoroughly, so as to cope with the issues derived from the cultural diversity of the project team. This category includes: multicultural communication challenges, multicultural conflicts and cultural shock.

It is easily understood that multicultural communication is additionally challenging for the leader of a multicultural team. The way team members communicate in some cultures might differ from others. For instance, in indirect communication individuals have a hidden meaning in every information they share, whereas in direct communication individuals are explicit and straightforward. Having individuals from both of these communication categories in a team can lead to many project complications. Another communicational issue is the language barriers between team members. Lack of fluency, nonnative speakers’ accent, problems with translation and different perceptions of competence or status are some of these barriers. All of them might cause frustration, misunderstandings, impatience and reduction of nonnative speakers’ contribution. What is more, communication challenges in multicultural teams, not only diminish the effectiveness of information sharing, but they also give individuals the opportunity to initiate interpersonal conflicts. Consequently, in multicultural project teams and in teams that members are geographically distributed, such as virtual teams, communication is more demanding due to distance, cultural diversity and language barriers. According to Matveev & Nelson *“an effective communication within the project team can assist conquering the number of challenges that multicultural project teams face”* [36].

Another issue of multicultural teams is Culture Shock. Hofstede defined Culture Shock as a “*state of distress following the transfer of a person to an unfamiliar cultural environment*” [13]. The process of adjusting in an unfamiliar culture can be really upsetting for an individual. His previous learning might not apply to the new social environment; thus, he might be uncertain of what to expect from others and what is expected of him. An individual going through Culture Shock might feel: anxiety, hostility, isolation, depression, confusion and dissatisfaction. Leaders have to take their time reaching the new members, understanding their needs and embodying them to the team. These are the stages an individual undergoes when in Culture Shock.

Stage 1: Happiness and fascination

Stage 2: Disappointment, confusing feelings, frustration and irritation

Stage 3: Slow adjustment or recovery

Stage 4: Acceptance and adjustment

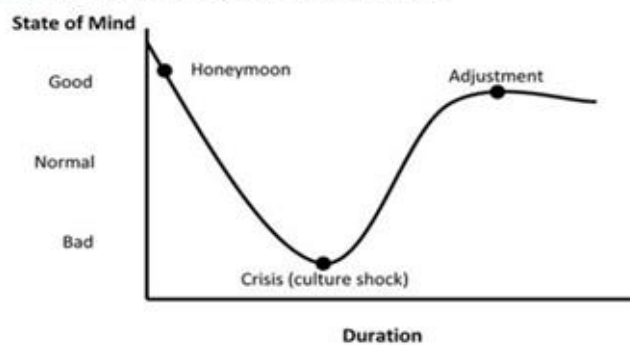


Figure 13: Adapting to a new environment: Culture Shock

We have already established the challenge of conflict the project leader faces as far as his team is concerned. However, a multicultural team can be more resourceful regarding conflicts, because of the diversity of its' team members. Cheung & Chuah in their article presented thirteen sources of conflict faced in a project and connected them with several cultural dimensions. Each dimension can have a negative effect on the team conflict. All of the dimensions demonstrated to the table can be found at Chapter 1 of this paper. Below is the table presenting the Sources of Conflict [37].

Sources of project conflict	Cultural dimensions which may influence level of conflict
Scheduling: sequencing, timing, feasibility and duration of project	Sequential time vs. Synchronous time (Hall, Trompenaars) Internal vs. External control (Trompenaars)
Managerial & administrative procedures: reporting relationships, plan of execution, project scope, responsibilities	Power Distance (Hofstede and House) Uncertainty Avoidance (Hofstede and House) Universalism vs. Particularism (Hofstede)
Communication: poor communication flow between manager and team members	Neutral vs. Emotional (Trompenaars) Context (Hall)
Goal or priority definition: Project goals, priorities and missions are not clearly defined	Masculinity vs. Femininity (Hofstede) Long term vs. Short term orientation (Hofstede) Individualism vs. Collectivism (Hofstede, Trompenaars)
Resource allocation: competition for limited resources	Individualism vs. Communitarianism (Hofstede, Trompenaars)
Reward structure/ performance appraisal or measurement: inappropriate reward and performance appraisal structure	Achieved vs. Ascribed status (Trompenaars) Long term vs. Short term Orientation (Hofstede) Specificity vs. Diffusion (Trompenaars)
Personality and interpersonal relations: ego-centered, personality differences or those caused by prejudice or stereotyping	Individualism vs. Communitarianism (Hofstede, Trompenaars) Specific vs. Diffuse (Trompenaars)
Costs: lack of cost control authority, or dispute over allocation of funds	Power Distance (Hofstede and House)
Technical opinion: disagreement over	Uncertainty Avoidance (Hofstede and

technical issues and performance specification	House)
Politics: problems of territorial power or hidden agendas	Power Distance (Hofstede and House)
Leadership: poor input or direction from senior manager	Uncertainty Avoidance (Hofstede and House)
Ambiguous roles/structure: overlapping assignments or roles particularly in matrix organizations	Power Distance (Hofstede and House) Universalism vs. Particularism (Trompenaars)
Unresolved prior conflict: disagreements stemming from prior unresolved conflicts	

Table 3: Cultural Dimensions inducing project conflict

Taking everything into account, in multicultural teams, members have different perceptions of society, values and representation of norms. All that combined with language ambiguity can result to communication breakdowns, increase stress levels and create conflicts. Moreover, team unit and integration are more demanding; thus, the team leader has to be culturally sensitive and accept the divergence of the group and use it for the project's advantage.

3.1.3 Project-Related challenges

Last but not least, all project managers face challenges that are project related and affect directly their team. Time is an important aspect of project management; therefore, the project manager must use time to his advantage. The duration of the project is predefined, so the leader has little time available for the team to fully integrate and learn how to interact before the beginning of the project. Without a bonded team and effective communication channels, individuals might find it difficult to cooperate and consequently the project goals cannot be met. Another time-related issue is the unrealistic deadlines that cannot be met by the team. This issue can increase stress levels, create conflicts and postpone project's process.

Task conflicts are also project-related challenges. It is a type of conflicts related with procedures, tasks resources, etc. [34]. Because of the cultural diversity and sometimes complexity of tasks, the leader has to make sure the team members understand what exactly needs to be done and how to be done according to project's objectives. Hence, the coordination and might lead to delays and misunderstandings. Other project challenges effecting the team are scope changes (scope creep) and poorly defined goals. Both of them, can cause problems not only to the project but they can shift the balance of the team and break down the team unity.

3.2 Team Goals

Having analyzed all the team challenges, we have to define the team goals a leader has to accomplish in order to deal with all the challenges and ultimately become an effective leader. The main purpose of every project manager is to meet the project objectives/ goals. In order to fulfill all of them, firstly he has to achieve the goals related to the project team. Defining team goals is demanding, because the leader has to understand all the team challenges and needs. The team goals we introduce below, are derived from the challenges of multicultural teams presented in Chapter 3.1.

- **Team Identity:** The project team must have complete clarity of its' purpose. Thus, the leader has to clarify the working relations and the team members' roles and define clearly his expectations, the mission and the vision of the project. What is more, he has to establish guidelines and ground rules before the start of the project. Most of all, he must create common values that drive individuals to act as a unity and boost their performance.
- **Team Building:** When the team identity is clearly defined, the leader must focus on building his project team. A bonded team must be based on trust and collaboration. Trust is the force that leads individuals to creativity, engagement and innovation, and consequently composes an effective team. As far as collaboration is concerned, project leader has to motivate his team to rely on each other and work together throughout the project life. Collaboration and trust are important when building a team, because they help individuals feel and act as a team with common purpose.
- **Effective Communication:** One connotation of this goal is the need of team members to communicate easily, freely and honestly with each other. Individuals must have the opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns without fear. The leader can use their thoughts as an insight to deal with project challenges and complications. Effective communication also refers to the communication tools the leader provides to his team in order to interact properly. The team is equipped with:
 1. Written communication such as e-mails, memos, operating policies, training manuals etc.,
 2. Oral communication such as conference calls, phone calls, face-to-face meetings etc., and
 3. Non-verbal communication such as body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, eye contact, proxemics [10] etc.

All of the above are information channels needed so as to interact and exchange information. The leader has to choose the right channel to use so as to provide information according to its' information richness.

- **Issue Resolution:** The leader's goal is to recognize any malfunction and problem of his team. He needs to communicate, listen and trust his team so that he can resolve and avoid any repetition of the problem.
- **Individuals' Skills:** The project team should be consisted of skilled individuals, each of whom brings different elements to the team. The leader needs to determine their strengths and weaknesses and place them to the most suited position in order to maximize the team's effectiveness.

- **Cultural Empathy:** The project manager of a multicultural team has to be culturally sensitive and acceptive towards individuals' divergence. He should know the different cultures coexisting in his team, so as to make individuals feel as part of the team and motivate them to commit to the project's cause.
- **Cultural Advantage:** In multicultural teams, the leader can also use the divergent cultural background of his team to bring new ideas for the project processes.

3.3 Practices of an Effective Leader

Leadership is a process affecting not only the team members, but also the leader himself. His decisions and actions are the ones that can transform him to an effective leader guiding his team to surpass their cultural differences and become a fully integrated unity. Our aim was to gather all the practices that help the leader achieve the goals and face the challenges regarding his multicultural team. Below we present all the practices a manager should demonstrate to lead effectively his multicultural project team.

- **Create Team Identity:** One way to achieve team building is by creating team identity. Common values based on project goals and commitment to results help team members move to the same direction.
- **Goal Definition:** a leader must define clearly all the goals, whether they are organizational, team or individual ones. He must identify what exactly each party wants to achieve and what is the project objective. Hence, all project goals should answer the five W's (who, what, where, when, and why) concerning the project.
- **Determine Roles & Responsibilities:** Everyone must know what to expect and what is expected of them. The leader must assign all the roles and responsibilities from the beginning so as to set up barriers between individuals' work and avoid conflict.
- **Embrace Cultures:** Multicultural and virtual teams combine individuals with different backgrounds, giving the opportunity to the project manager to use diversity to the project's advantage. He has to understand others' cultural perspective of the world and he must not judge the way other cultures operate. As a leader of a multicultural group, he has to exhibit a spirit of inquiry about others' values, beliefs and operating norms. He has to act as a communication bridge between team members, especially at the early stages of the project, to give them time to learn each other's communication patterns and how to cooperate effectively.
- **Use Individuals' Skills:** When creating a multicultural team, the leader can find a plethora of different talents. He has to get to know all the team members, talk with them and learn about their ambitions, their level of education and their past experience to projects. That way, he can delegate tasks to suitable individuals so as to take the most out of it and to have not only a successful project but also satisfied team members.
- **Establish Trust:** Trust can provide fundamental foundation for effective project teams. The leader can build trust by cultivating and building an open and collaborative way of work. Trust is built through: communicating the

project vision, encouraging people to interact, spending time together as a team, creating shared experiences, listening team members opinion, getting people involved and most importantly leading by example, meaning the leader must be the first to show trust to his team members.

- Institute Communication:** Communication is not only useful for sharing knowledge but also for engaging the team. The leader must initiate face-to-face communication, especially when building a multicultural team, so as to give individuals the opportunity to learn each other’s patterns and to establish trust. Furthermore, he has to be inclusive of all the interested parties during communication. It is preferable to share information even if an individual should not be included, rather than being ignorant. Lastly, the team members have to use all the communication channels available (emails, meetings, videoconferences, etc.), in order to have more effective and less time-consuming communication.
- Ways of communication:** It is important not only to exchange info but also to choose the best channel to do it so as to not loose vital context. According to Barry & Fulmer *“the key to effective communication is to match the communication channel with the goal of the message”* [38]. When choosing a channel, the leader has to consider the purpose of the communication and the prospect to use the information in the future. Barry & Fulmer presented a guide that can help leaders choose either verbal or written communication according to information context.

Written Communication	Verbal Communication
Conveying facts	Conveying emotions & feelings
The information needs to become part of a permanent file	The information does not need to become part of a permanent file
Complicated ideas	Simple ideas or made simple with explanation
Low time urgency	High time urgency
No need for immediate feedback	Need for immediate feedback

Table 4: Written VS Verbal Communication

- Communicate Challenges:** The leader must speak honestly with his inferiors about all the challenges during the project life. He has to be open to new ideas, ask others’ opinion on matters and clarify the importance of every issue to avoid misconceptions.

- **Maintain Direction & Focus:** In order team members not to lose sight of the project objectives, the leader has to always keep them on track. One way to achieve that is by establishing milestones to measure progress. Such tools are checklists, progress reports, task lists, etc. What is more, he can use regular meetings to brief and be briefed, to reinforce the team motion and to redefine all the tasks, responsibilities and roles.
- **Develop Team Members:** It is the leader's responsibility to evolve his team members and help them achieve their goals throughout the project. Development can be attained by motivating, inspiring, challenging individuals to get better and widening their horizons. Moreover, positive feedback enlivens and stimulates individuals' performance and raises their spirits. Issuing additional responsibility is a development technique that boosts members' efficiency and helps them become invested in the project's outcome, therefrom increasing their efforts to deliver better results.
- **Resolve Conflicts:** Conflict is a project issue that cannot be avoided and when it is kept unresolved impacts deeply the team. First of all, the leader has to accept the need for change and demonstrate flexibility and open-mindedness in order to deal with conflict. After identifying and prioritizing the conflict areas, he has to discuss with the team, listen carefully for their opinion and take it into account when developing the plan of action. Lastly, he has to restore trust within team when relationships are on edge.

Taking all the challenges and goals previously analyzed into account, the leader must choose rightly and act accordingly, to lead effectively his multicultural team. All the practices we introduced above, can be a helpful guide for the project manager to create a united team, to help team members evolve, to cope with cultural diversity.

Chapter 4: Case Studies on Multicultural Project Teams

The purpose of this chapter is to connect all the information analyzed previously about multicultural teams. Thus, we created 15 case studies about different issues that occur during a project and they are influenced by the cultural diversity of team members. In these case studies, we will present teams in different environments and situations. After each case, we will conduct a case study analysis, in order to detect any misconceptions of the leader, the cultural dimensions showed by the team and we will suggest the right approaches to solve the issues.

1. Stereotyping team members

In March 2012, a Swedish marketing company undertook the campaign of a Greek company promoting its dairy products in the Swedish market. During the three-month project, five members of the Greek company had to be included to the team so as to build the campaign. At the beginning of the project, the project manager organized a team meeting in order for the members to interact with each other, but it was met with indifference from the Swedish members. The first month of the project, the manager realized that the Swedish members were highly suspicious and stricter towards the Greek ones and the new members kept on collaborating only with each other. Asking about their behavior, the Swedish side of the team talked about Greek laziness and corruption, whereas the Greek one did not want to try change their opinion about themselves. This led to the division of team into two subgroups, both working only with their compatriots and the leader to act as a bridge between them. Consequently, communication between the team members was time consuming and there were conflicts about tasks, responsibilities and behaviors.

Analysis:

Someone can find clear signs of stereotyping towards the new members. Stereotyping is the act of attributing a set of features to a person or group based on cultural preconceptions. In this case, they based their opinion on preconceived notions presented by politics and media, but they did not try to draw their own conclusions about their new peers.

The first step to deal with stereotyping is for the manager to step in and address these attitudes. He must show no encouragement or acceptance of mistreatment and he must have zero tolerance policy against discrimination. He has to address any arising issue in private, and in general he has to promote openness to others' thoughts and problems. He could institute a Collaborative Leadership style, so as to help team members deal with the change, become more sensitive and acceptive to cultural discrimination. The goals of the leader should be team building, cultural empathy and effective communication. Team meetings and role-playing can help establish trust, meliorate in-group communication and resolve conflicts for the group to evolve and achieve project goals.

2. Targeting Individuals

David Winston, a project manager of a warehouse logistics project, was informed during a meeting with two team members about racial discrimination

issues. He was leading a multinational project team consisted of Americans, Canadians and Mexicans. The project team was divided to 3 teams working on 8-hour shifts and every team had a team manager. The project was evolving according to plan, when two Mexicans working on the night shift requested a private meeting with the project manager. They claimed that the team manager of the night shift behaved differently towards the Mexican members of the team. They said that the manager talked insultingly about their origin and commented the language difficulties they had. After a certain event they decided to speak with the project manager because they felt insecure about their position in the project. After the meeting the leader spoke with all the members of the night shift to ask about their opinion on the topic. Team members confirmed those allegations, saying that he was targeting from the beginning of the project all the Mexican members, talking about their ineffectiveness and their inferiority compared to the rest of the team. They also commented that the manager was overusing his power so as to achieve his personal goals, often adopting others' work as his.

Analysis:

This team manager is targeting individuals in his team because of their country of origin and simultaneously abusing power over his team. He could be regarded as a workplace bully using a continuous pattern of mistreatment causing emotional harm to his inferiors. He has a Low Human Orientation meaning he is self-centered, motivated by power and he is insensitive to racial discrimination, thus this individual might be the worst choice for a position of power within a project. As far as the project manager is concerned, he was not aware of the matter prior to the meeting, indicating lack of overseeing team managers effectively on his behalf. In order to avoid such incidents in the future, he must ameliorate his supervision techniques and impose stricter behavioral policies. In this case, the leader should strongly consider the removal of the team manager.

3. Resistance to change

A multicultural team creating international campaigns took over the new campaign of a sports brand. The team has already done similar work for other brands, thus there were established plans and policies for such projects. When the team undertook this new project, the leader decided to change the status quo in order to use new tools for the team to communicate and redefine the roles of some team members. He introduced a chat application to share information in real time and a file hosting service for all the members to add data. Moreover, he promoted some members as regional supervisors giving them more responsibilities. Many times, team members conveyed that they did not want to change their patterns of work and they were hesitant to use the new tools claiming they did not provide additional help. The supervisors had difficulty in adjusting to their new roles and their inferiors showed unwillingness cooperate and follow the new procedures.

Analysis:

Change can be really difficult to accept because the known equals to comfortable. There are plenty of reason for individuals to resist change. Firstly, they might be surprised and afraid of something new in their work environment. The fear for the unknown can be diminished by preparing the team for the forthcoming change. The most essential tool is ongoing communication which means that the leader not only speaks his mind about the advantages of the change

but also, he listens the concerns and thoughts of the team members. Team members are the ones that will use all these new tools and sometimes they might now better what can help them on their everyday work and what might slow down their progress. Secondly, meaningful change can actually occur in a climate of trust. Trust, includes faith in the intentions and actions of others. An effort to change, even the smallest thing in a procedure, without trust is doomed from the beginning. The project leader must build or in some cases rebuilt trust in his team. Team bonding exercises, individuals interacting and involvement to as many project plans as possible can be some of the ways to create or reestablish trust between members. Thirdly, resistance to change might originates from individuals' doubt for their capabilities. They might be worried that they cannot adapt to the new requirements or that they lack in skills. Hence, the leader has to show his belief and trust to their ability to adjust and embrace the changes. Progressive implementation and training can also help individuals get accustomed to alternations.

Inspecting the subject from a cultural perspective, one can say that resistance to change indicates high Uncertain Avoidance. This cultural dimension includes people fond to procedures, policies and records. They keep things in order and prefer formal intercourses [3].

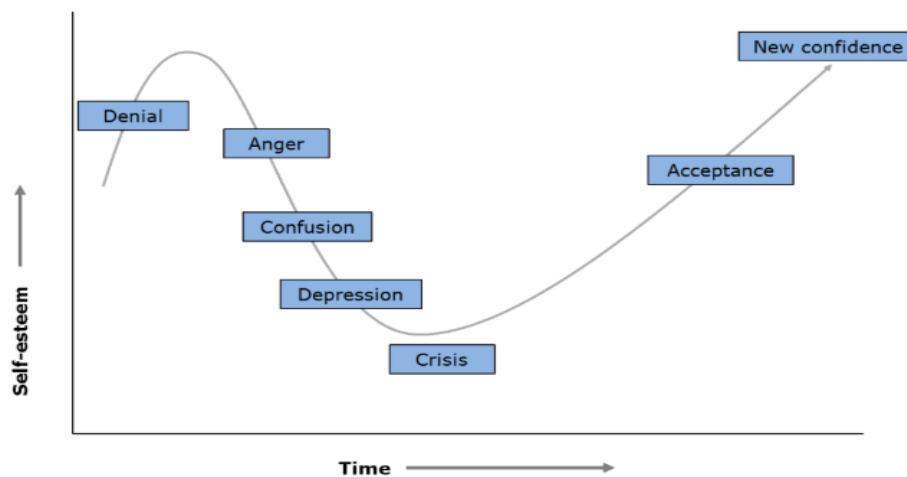


Figure 14: Classic psychological reaction to change

4. A team of Individuals

A group of social scientists teamed up to convey a multinational survey focusing on social behaviors of European citizens. The team members came from several European countries and all of them had previous experience in similar projects. The project manager, an Austrian scientist named Ernest Foerster, instituted a collaborative way of leadership. He wanted to create a bonded team that thrived through cooperation and team work. Even though the efficiency of the members was exceptional, the leader was not pleased with the level of cooperation within the team. They communicated and exchanged information when it was needed but they mostly worked as individuals. Foerster in his effort to identify the reasons of their unwillingness spoke with all the members individually. All of them spoke highly of their peers, however some of them mentioned that they saw the project as a personal goal while others wanted independency in their decision making.

Analysis: The dominant cultural dimension in this case study is Individualism. The team members are more focused on their personal goals rather than group ones, they value their independency and prefer to decide for themselves [7]. Other cultural dimensions illustrated here are Autonomy, High Assertiveness and High-Performance Orientation [18], [7]. Furthermore, it is imperative for the leader to switch his leadership style in order to suit the team's needs and capabilities. Whereas collaborative leadership is really useful in multicultural teams, individuals' experience is the main reason to switch to Individualistic Leadership style. It is obvious that all team members are highly experienced, thus there is little need for guidance from the leader. In addition, independency in decision making and autonomy that this style provides are beneficial for geographically distributed members. The leader must provide the right channels for direct communication and he has to establish trust between team members so as to aid diversity and creativity thrive.

5. Different Perceptions of Team

The Brazilian government contracted a renovation and restitution organization for the rehabilitation and construction of the piped water system in Curitiba, Brazil. Belgian project manager Arthur Maes was assigned the project leadership and he assembled a team of five Brazilian and five German engineers, especially for this project. From the beginning of the project, the Brazilian members showed willingness to create a relationship with their new peers. They tried to communicate frequently with the Germans about work issues, but they also proposed on several occasions to guide them to the city of Curitiba and introduce them to the traditional food. Maes welcomed their efforts to integrate, but the Germans were indifferent and they only initiated communication for job-related subjects. Additionally, Maes faced two opposite working behaviors. The Germans preferred completing a task before they undertook a new one and they took logical and fact-based decisions, whereas Brazilians completed several tasks simultaneously and they were more emotional and spontaneous decision makers. These two different approaches of work complicated the project schedule, created conflicts between team members and obstructed team bonding.

Analysis: In this group of diverse cultures the leader faces several challenges. All these challenges come from the two opposite cultures coexisting in the group. According to Lewis's model Brazilians are Multi-active, while Germans are Linear-active. Accordingly, these two cultural dimensions are clearly depicted to the different perspectives team members have on many aspects of the project process. First of all, it is difficult for the team to bond because the members perceive the significance of team differently. On one hand, Brazilians are more people-oriented and they blend their personal with their professional life. On the other hand, the Germans are job-oriented and they separate their personal life from their work. The leader has to use creative activities to unite the team, such as workshops and case studies to simulate tough situations in the project, midday meals arranged for all the members to eat, relax, and communicate. Secondly, he has to talk with the members and establish a communication plan that everyone is comfortable with. Choosing information channels that members are familiar with and training them to new ones so as to avoid miscommunications. Thirdly, the leader can set time limitations and boundaries in decision making procedures so as to avoid conflicts and mix ups.

The most suitable leadership style for this team is Collaborative Leadership, because it helps deal with changes and raise awareness of behavioral differences. In order to build an integrated team in a multicultural environment, the leader has to embrace cultures. He has to be openminded and not judgmental towards new ideas and new operation techniques. All in all, he has to use cultural diversity as an advantage to a new multidimensional team of talented individuals.

6. Unsuitable Leadership Style

An Asian car industry wanting to launch a new convertible line, selected 50 individuals working in different departments of the company to create a project team. The team included people from many Middle East countries such as: Israel, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman and others. Ang Lo was selected as the project leader because of his successful project for the crossover line two years ago. Lo established an Individualistic Leadership style that promoted the autonomy of the members, using the same leadership as his previous project. He defined the basic goals of the project and gave instructions about the characteristics of the new line, but beside that he let the team free to make their own decisions. He gave them a week to prepare their suggestions and he arranged a team meeting at the end of the first week for the team to exchange ideas and plan their next moves. When the meeting took place, Lo asked each member individually about their ideas. Many of them were perplexed about their role and responsibilities within the team, while others asked for specifications and guidance. What Lo observed was that the team members made the effort to communicate and form some kind of relationship, however they did not entrust each other and they used many contextual elements.

Analysis: To begin with, the Preferred Personality of the group is Doing [15]. The team seems to need guidance and external motivation to understand and accept their roles and responsibilities. The leader gave little direction and he did not define clearly the project goals and as a result the team lacked of role awareness. He must redefine the project goals and switch his leadership style to one more suitable for the team's needs. Collaborative Leadership can diminish members' uncertainty and it can help the leader identify their talents and find ways to develop them. By motivating, challenging and inspiring constantly his team, the leader fulfils both their personal aspirations and the project objectives. What is more, Collaborative Leadership promotes the concept of team. This group of individuals needs to build trust, loyalty and commitment in order to bond as a team. By promoting team spirit and collaboration the members are motivated to work with their peers to achieve a given task.

As far as communicational issues are concerned, according to Hall it is a characteristic of Middle East countries to use High Context communication [9]. They tend to apply many contextual elements to their communication and they use body language and gestures to contact. Their preferred informational channels are: face-to-face communication, telephone calls and emails. The leader must promote more non-context ways of communication, such as formal documents and spreadsheets so as to avoid misunderstandings and hidden meanings. He can also tutor his team to use the right way of communication, written or verbal, according to the information's depth.

7. Meddling in peers work

“Plan Events” is a multicultural organization contracted by companies to organize all kinds of events. Their latest project is a company’s 50-year celebration, thus a team of twenty-two individuals was assembled. The project leader, Billy Sylvester, gathered all the team members to an available office to work together as a team and to communicate easier during the project. Although the team was culturally diverse, there was team bonding and the project was progressing greatly. What the leader observed was that some members tended to share their opinion and ask questions about others’ work. Some individuals were constantly to others’ desks interrupting their work. Another observation made by the leader was that the same team members undermined others work. On several occasions, they pointed out their peers’ errors and proposed ways to overcome them. All this meddling to their individual performance, had negative effect on individuals. They became more edgy and anxious about their reputation and the results of their efforts.

Analysis: People interfering in others work is a usual situation to multicultural teams, hence there are cultural dimensions referring to such behaviors. High Territoriality for instance, have to do with individuals that have to respect or understanding of space and boundaries. They might share too much with others and they might not understand bounds [10]. Diffuse is another cultural dimension focusing to the extent to which people get involved with others life. Professional and personal time overlap each other, though this dimension might have a positive effect to the team because the purpose of it, is to build good relationship within the group. The leader in this case, have already recognized the existence of the problem. His next step should be to reassure the members undergoing peer pressure, so as to help them relax and feel comfortable again in their project role. Afterwards, he must confront meddlers, remind them what their roles and responsibilities are and ask questions to learn their reasoning for this attitude. He has to call attention to the fact that some information is too delicate to share recklessly. Last but not least, it is important for both parties to realize that it is crucial to voice their concerns to their project manager when they think something is not right, but it is not acceptable to bother or interfere.

8. Insufficient Team Experience

Sarah Gomez, an experienced project manager and conservator, was hired by a French museum to lead their new restoration project. The project included the restoration of 15 pieces from a famous French artist that the museum was donated with, and project’s duration was estimated to thirty days so as to coincide with the grand opening of the new wing. The museum had recently replaced the restoration team due to a scandal of stolen paintings, hence they had recently hired young conservators from around the world. Gomez was aware of the new project team but she did not take part to the choice of the members because she was the last recruitment. When she was firstly introduced to her new team, she was pleased to find a team of highly educated individuals ready to work hard. The team members were willing to tackle any task given, but what the project manager quickly figured out was that they needed detailed instructions for every task. A quick research of all their resumes revealed that most of the members had little working experience, while others had just graduated and all their experience was based on university programs. At the end of the first week, the team was becoming stressed, asking confirmation from the project leader for their every step. Gomez was trying to

shoulder as much of the workload as possible, but the repeated questions and the lack of experience were too time consuming.

Analysis: The issue of this team is that even though they are skilled, they are not trained enough to meet project objectives and perform the assigned tasks. Ergo, it is of high importance for the leader to impose the most suitable leadership style for his team. In urgent situations like this one the leader must develop a more task-oriented leadership, so as to focus on the project process. Strict Leadership is the best choice for inexperienced team members that need direction. To reduce members' anxiety, the leader must provide clear instructions such as manuals, checklists, flow charts and other tools that can be used to analyze the required work. The leader is the only one to decide how to proceed solely based on the project's and the team's benefit, in order to avoid losing more time that might prolong the process. In future projects, the leader might use a more collaborative approach and let members be part of the project decisions. He might be able to train his team and utilize their skills.

9. Unresolved Conflicts

“Clothes of the World” is a company creating clothing lines inspired by different cultures around the world. The company shows cultural empathy, employing people from several countries. Their newest six-month project was a Peruvian inspired line, including the designing and manufacturing of the clothes. Two months in the project, the project manager came across the same conflict for the second time. Several members of the team complained again to the project manager about one of the designers. This particular designer, had difficulty in collaborating with others, demanding perfection and being confrontational with her peers. In the first incident, when there was a mistake to the shirt prototypes, the team members said that she was aggressive and she did not give clear instructions. The project manager conversed with her, pointing out that the team is based on communication and cooperation and he suggested ways to face similar issues in the future. After that, the members seemed withdrawn when working with the designer and some of them avoided direct communication. The next incident triggered a greater conflict within the team. It appears that, team members had bottled feelings that led to verbal arguments, claiming that the designer was disrespectful and unable to be part of a team.

Analysis: Understandably, repeated problems in a project team originate from prior issues between team members that were not really resolved in the past. Putting off resolution is the worst choice for one's team, because it provokes arguing, dissatisfaction, reduction of job motivation, passive aggression and further conflict. When dealing a second time with the same issue, the project manager must determine what did not work the first time around and why. He must question what triggers the problem, challenge individuals to evaluate their behavior and demand their honest opinion about themselves and others, before he tries to find the best solution. Disagreements might derive from power plays, lack of communication and/or cultural differences. This case presents a team member showing High Assertiveness or in other words, a person that develops aggressive relationships, bases trust on calculation, and demands perfection and hard work to succeed [3]. Identifying such dimension in his team, the leader has to persuade the member that the project objectives align with his/her personal goals, in order to

earn his/her trust and motivate him/her adapt to the team's philosophy. Moreover, he has to clarify what is acceptable behavior and what is not and make it clear that holding a grudge will not help neither the team nor the project.

10. Culture Shock

An Australian railways company wanting a customized CNC milling machine for their new factory, approached both an Indian and an Australian consulting engineering companies to undertake the project. The railways company thought that the project was considerably complicated, hence, they suggested a collaboration of two consulting companies. Both accepted the challenge, so the Indians decided to send one of their engineers to the headquarters of the Australian consultants, and the rest of their project team would work remotely. Raj Beedi was an experienced engineer, working in similar projects for his company for the last five years, but it was the first time he traveled abroad to work on a project. The Australian project team was acceptive and trying to incorporate him, and on his part, Beedi seemed withdrawn but willing to learn more about his new team. After a while, the project manager realized that change and unfamiliarity made Beedi anxious, he did not trust his peers and he complained that they misunderstood his behavior. He used excuses for mistakes on his tasks, and he did not participate on team meetings so as to present his opinion on things that irritated him.

Analysis: The insertion of an individual in an unfamiliar culture can affect his participation and adjustment in the new environment. This change might cause the newcomer anxiety, dissatisfaction, isolation or even hostility. Individuals that exhibit such psychological signs of stress when entering a new cultural environment, are experiencing Culture Shock. In this case, the new member is more open at the beginning of the project, and as the project processes he feels confused and disappointed by his team's behavior. For the leader to cope with Culture Shock, he has to use both his and the team's skills to aid individual integrate wholly. He has to urge the newcomer to vocalize his problems, show him that he has nothing to be afraid of, and more importantly the leader has to always keep an open mind to cultural differences. As far as the team is concerned, guidance and assistance from his peers can help the member gain knowledge and comprehension of the new culture. With the aid of the team and the leader, the newcomer will adapt quicker and easier and his stress level will be reduced significantly.

11. Gender Discrimination

A South African gun manufactory hired Olaf Crimson, an IT specialized project manager from Iceland, to lead their software upgrade project. The human resources department in association with Crimson composed a team of programmers, network engineers and developers from several African countries. The team consisted of eighteen members, two of them were female and the rest were male. One of the female members was selected as developers' manager and the other as network engineers' manager because of their education and previous experience. The team members had to report to their managers about their tasks, ask them for guidance and specifics when an issue occurred, and in general the managers role was to connect their team with the project manager so as to avoid delays. Crimson was really satisfied by all three of his team managers, hence he was baffled when both engineers and developers revealed their dissatisfaction with their managers. The project manager conducted a team meeting to communicate the issue, where

he noticed that some male members questioned the female managers' abilities. Both female led teams, requested to communicate directly with the project manager for instructions, advocating that they worked better with same sex members, and claiming that female members were not efficient enough in team leading and problem solving.

Analysis: Gender Discrimination, sometimes mentioned as sex-based discrimination, is act of treating someone differently based on their gender. Cultural dimensions presenting such biases have been presented by both GLOBE scientists and Hofstede. In this case, team members show Low Gender Egalitarianism or else Masculinity, claiming that women are not tough or assertive enough so as to be chosen for positions of authority [3] [11]. Gender stereotyping, and holding assumptions about one's capabilities or lack thereof based on their gender are considered indirect sex discrimination. All kinds of biases affect severely the team unity, create a negative working environment and increase conflicts. Such behaviors might act as an obstruction for the female members, diminishing their job satisfaction, lowering their morale and damaging their productivity. The most important step to overcome gender discrimination is to recognize that it exists, rather than pretend it does not happen or remain silent. The project leader must inspire trust and prompt his team members to talk if they feel like they are treated unequally. The organization in cooperation with the project manager, must provide clear policies against inequality and show zero tolerance at any kind of discrimination. By providing proper training on equality, the leader establishes what is acceptable and what is not between team members' relations, and defines with clarity the role each member possesses. Furthermore, he must ensure that every member is judged only for his/her work performance and behavior. Lastly, a great way to discourage such attitudes, is for the leader to become a role model for his team. Evidently, in this case study the project manager shows gender egalitarianism by choosing competent female employees for positions of power.

12. Rebuilding Trust in a Virtual Team

A home care goods company based in the United Kingdom, brought together a team of experts from United States, Italy, France and Thailand for a two-year project to develop a new fabric softener for sensitive fabrics. The members were geographically distributed, whereas the project manager operated from the headquarters of the company. The virtual team communicated through video conferences, messaging platforms, e-mails, and a blog with project updates. The project manager discussed the project objectives with the team before assigning tasks and he gave them freedom in decision-making related to their designated work. Through the next weeks, the team members delivered great work and there were only insignificant issues to deal with. Even though the project was progressing according to plan, the project manager started to check more often his inferiors, asking for additional information and the reasoning behind their decisions. He immersed himself in others' work, with the excuse of helping them do things better and quicker. In some cases, he changed others' decisions, when things did not go according to his preference. Team members witnessing this attitude, became more reluctant to ask for help and they tried to take too much themselves. His involvement demotivated the team and reduced information flow between team members.

Analysis: Trust is a fragile asset that is easily damaged. There is a positive relationship between virtual team’s effectiveness and trust, because it ameliorates team’s attitude and their willingness to share knowledge and information. Jarvenpaa & Leidner talking about virtual teams argued that “*trust is more difficult to develop in such teams in comparison with teams whose members are involved in frequent face-to-face interactions*” [30]. Despite the fact that the project manager gave his team the power to act independently, later he started micromanaging and interfering in his inferiors’ work. Micromanaging from the project manager’s side, led members lose their trust in him and they became more suspicious with each other. This attitude can also harm the team’s productivity, because the project manager distracts others rather than helps overcome project related problems. Moreover, by altering their decisions he might cause the team members to question their own abilities and lose their confidence.

In order for the leader to solve problems and avoid further complications, he must rebuild trust in his virtual team. First of all, he must accept and determine his errors. By understanding what damaged the team’s trust, he will understand better the different cultures of his team and the way others perceive trust. Additionally, he has to communicate with the team the reasoning behind his attitude, tell them the truth and be honest about what makes him anxious and therefore what had pushed him to control every aspect of the project. In order to move forward, the project manager must put trust on his team and believe in their skills and abilities to complete the given work and make the best decisions for the project.

One must comprehend that Team Trust is associated with several aspects of the team and it can vastly alternate the way team members operate and interact [31].

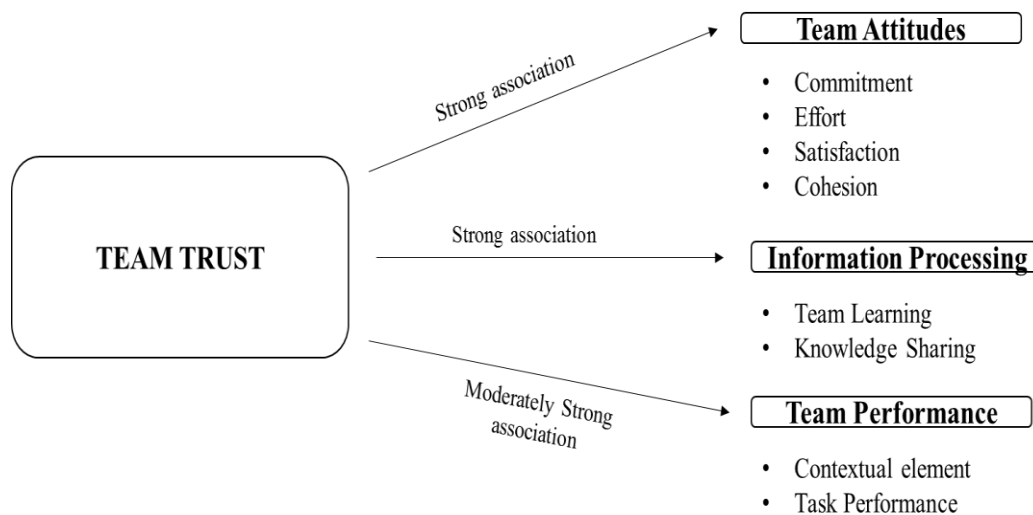


Figure 15: Team Trust

13. Information Flow Challenges

New Project, a Swiss engineering company, was approached by an Italian food company to design their new production line. The project included the specification of the needed equipment and the construction of the new production line for different pasta types. The project would last three years, and the team assembled

for it included eleven Swiss members from the engineering company, one of which was the project manager, and fifteen members of the food company from Spain and Italy. At the beginning of the project, Raphael Moyes, the project manager conducted a team meeting so as to present all basic information of the project, and further instructions were delivered to each member autonomously in a meeting with him. From the start, the leader used more verbal communication such as video chats, face-to-face meetings and phone calls when he needed to resolve an issue or to give instructions. At the second month of the project, Moyes noticed that there were delays on the project process and misunderstandings, because team members failed to complete quickly enough and/or correctly the given tasks. They asked more and more information from Moyes, but they also tried to exchange information and keep in touch with others' work. Questioning his team, he was notified that the way he distributed information created only an outline of the task and its' context lacked in detail.

Analysis: This multicultural project team has difficulty in communicating due to different conceptions of information flow. On one hand, the project team is according to Hall's theory a High Information Flow team [9]. They need to possess and share more information and they have to keep in touch with others' progress. On the other hand, the project manager belongs to a Low Information Flow culture, where only necessary information is given to small portions [9]. He supplies crucial instructions to his inferiors with simple and clear messages that lack of hidden meaning.

There is a communication gap between the project manager and the team members. In order to solve this issue, the leader must adapt the way he communicates with his team according to their needs. Written communication can be helpful to individuals that need permanent files to direct their tasks and to simplify complicated ideas. E-mails, memos and manuals can provide such knowledge to individuals. As far as verbal communication is concerned, the project manager can use these channels when the exchanged information is of lower importance and/or when there is high urgency and immediate feedback is needed. Another way to ameliorate communication is to keep individuals informed in others' progress and to spread information quicker. A project blog could serve this purpose, as all team members are kept updated on project progress, display their work and exchange knowledge.

14. Stifled Team Skills

The Chinese government hired Go to Project, a project management company, to lead the new high-speed railway project. Go to Project was a Mongolian company occupying individuals from all around Asia. The project would last five years and included the extension of five different lines around Beijing. Bolormaa Khulan was chosen as project manager, which in turn chose five junior project managers for every subway line. Khulan and the junior project managers took part in decision making and shared the majority of information. The five managers were responsible for data distribution and duty assignments to their inferiors, all in all acting as mediators between the project manager and the project team. Individuals had specific roles and responsibilities, thus they were discouraged to modify their approach. For instance, an Irani engineer proposed a new mechanical drawing tool that he had used to a previous project and he thought could be more appropriate. When he demonstrated some prototypes by this program to his superiors, the

project manager pleaded that such change was a great risk for the project and such initiatives shifted inferior focus from the project scope. What is more, the project manager behaved equally to all the members without regards to their cultural background. Communication between team members was formal and each member was pushed to fulfill his/her personal goals, hence team unity and collaboration were neglected. Six months in the project, Khulan was alarmed when individuals from different teams submitted their resignation to their junior project managers. They claimed that although the project was unique and offered advanced knowledge, they felt that their skills were unused and there were not opportunities to innovate and evolve.

Analysis: There are two cultural dimensions evident in this case. The first one called High Power Distance, presented by GLOBE, refers to the team's dynamics. In these cultures, there are few positions of power and information is available to a handful of individuals, likewise in this team power is distributed to six individuals and they also possess information [3]. Hierarchy is the other cultural dimension defined by Schwartz, and refers to the specific role each member occupies in a team [18]. Furthermore, the leadership style adopted by the project manager is Strict Leadership. He shows cultural blindness being indifferent to the diversity of the group, imposes formal communication between team members and he does not attempt to establish team unity. Cultural blindness did not help members understand each other and create a team bond. Moreover, predefined roles without chances to innovate and use their individual talents, resulted team members to feel stifled and unfulfilled.

In order for the leader to stop losing important associates from the project and make them feel valuable members of the team, he has to switch his leadership approach. Instituting Collaborative Leadership will help the project manager in embracing cultures and individuals' skills. By accepting diversity, he can comprehend team members' behavior and determine all their skills that will be used to the project's advantage. Last but not least, this team seems in need of team spirit. Using more informal communication and building trust between team members, will improve collaboration and reduce conflicts.

15. Scope Creep Challenges

An international conglomerate hired an Egyptian IT company to design a security system for their new facilities in Cairo. The IT company put together a virtual team consisting of Egyptian and Portuguese software engineers. The four-months project included all the typical security applications such as IP security, monitoring and sensor systems etc. The project scope was established before the beginning of the project and all the stakeholders were compatible with the project objectives and deliverables. When the project started, the project manager with the aid of his virtual team established a plan of action to work efficiently. After the first month of the project, the building's management team met with the project manager so as to get briefed on the project progress. During the meeting, the management team informed the project manager that the company wanted to add a remote access system for the security team to use. The system would be based on a brand-new software that was just released in Egypt. This addition changed the project's scope; hence, the project manager had to alter his plans, but he came up against several issues. One of them, was that the members located in Portugal had difficulty in communicating with the rest of the team due to time difference and language

barriers that interfered with team collaboration. What is more, only a few individuals were familiar with the new software, meaning that the leader had to train his team without delaying the project.

Analysis: This multicultural team faces a project-related challenge. Scope Creep, is a change to the project scope, in this case adding tasks, that can bring several problems to a multicultural project team. First of all, it can cause frustration and anxiety to the team. Adding new tasks to their already heavy schedule, especially when they have to have additional training, might increase tension and nerves among team members leading to conflicts. Secondly, distributed workforce and different time zones might cause delays to individuals' feedback, and consequently delay the project itself. Thirdly, communication can be challenging due to language barriers that provoke misunderstandings and misinterpretations between individuals. And lastly, team unity and trust might suffer, because the team lacks face-to-face communication when the adjustment to the new tasks occurs.

Before the change is added to the project scope, the project manager must verify that it does not interfere with the project's schedule and that the additional cost required is accepted by the project owner. As far as the team is concerned, the leader must communicate the challenges this situation brought, speak honestly and with empathy to his team. Asking their opinion and being open to their ideas, can benefit both the project's adaption to change and the members themselves to become part of the change and feel more confident in it. The leader can create a communication plan that suits in time the virtual team, establishing common working hours and/or coordinating meetings in order to include as many team members as possible. A helpful tool to solve communication delays can be a cloud where the team can save their documents, so as to be available for everyone. This can improve the collaboration of the team and also help individuals meet deadlines without regard to time difference. Furthermore, the team must become acquainted with the new software; thus, the leader must provide several methods, such as online courses, team workshops, manuals etc. Another way to help members learn, is to use individuals with knowledge as instructors and counselors for the rest of the team. In this way, team members will use their personal skills for the benefit of the team and it will help members bond and integrate by cooperating more frequently.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This paper provides an insight into multicultural project teams and their management. A multicultural project team, is a team of individuals with a wide spectrum of cultural backgrounds. Diversity might create conflicts and project delays, but it can also be beneficial to the project. We presented the leadership styles for such teams, the challenges, goals and best practices for a project manager to become an effective leader.

First of all, we thoroughly analyzed the seven most important cultural models, presenting the cultural dimensions that disserve individuals. The way people comprehend terms such as Power, Time, Culture, Collectivism, Emotions etc., helped us understand their behavior in a group, organization and consequently in a project team. What is more, cultural dimensions can be used by the leader, so as to choose the best leadership approach and comprehend his team's wishes.

In the second chapter we developed three leadership categories, based on the way a leader acts toward his inferiors. In all three categories, we analyzed the project manager's and the team's approach concerning project processes, ingroup relations, individuals' skills and their behavioral patterns. Moreover, we identified the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of every category and we connected the leadership categories with the cultural dimensions displayed by both the project manager and the team. Furthermore, we presented the Switch Leadership style. The project manager adopts this style when he has to change his management approach due to time, experience or performance issues of his team. These four categories could be a manual on multicultural leadership. A project manager must understand the needs and diagnose any problems of the project team, in order to adapt or switch his leadership style accordingly.

As we established in Chapter 3, for a project manager to lead his project team, he has to know the challenges a multicultural team might face. Hence, we created three categories of Team Challenges, that refer to the social, behavioral, cultural and project-related challenges of a team with dissimilar education, background and comprehension of norms. Using the knowledge derived from Team Challenges, we built the Team Goals of a multicultural team. All the goals aim to a satisfied team, ergo a successful project. Finally, we combined the Team Goals and Challenges, in order to extract the best practices of managing multicultural project teams. A project manager can follow all these steps at the beginning and throughout of the project's life. They can help create a fully integrated team and solve any issues and conflicts between members.

All the terms analyzed to the first three chapters of the paper, are used to Chapter 4 to build 15 case studies. Their purpose is to show how cultures, behaviors, goals and leadership styles are connected and affect the project team and the project itself. Every case study focuses to different issues and challenges. We present behavioral patterns that might be connected to specific cultural dimensions. We suggested the most suitable approaches and tools to resolve the team's issues.

One way to progress this research, would be to compare and contrast its results with the viewpoint of real multicultural teams on the subjects presented. Conducting a survey on real multicultural teams would give us a perspective of the issues in such teams. How project managers cope with cultural diversity and if the

practices we established are applied or could be helpful. Questionnaires and personal interviews with both the project manager and the team members could us give important information and broaden our knowledge on multicultural teams.

Furthermore, this research could be extended to the unique culture every organization has. Organizational Culture encompasses behaviors, beliefs and values responsible for the psychological and social environment of a business. It effects the way people communicate, interact, share information and handle change. Organizational Culture includes not only the business's values but also the national culture the organization is located into. In this additional research, we could analyze organizational culture and its relation with multicultural project teams. How the culture of an organization influences the way people in it accept and behave toward other cultures. What is more, the research could focus on techniques and procedures for the organization to change or adapt to include people from different cultures and embrace diversity.

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