Opening Case: Flexible Project Teams Deliver Project on Time

Consider the difficulty of a project undertaken by MD Robotics to develop a special purpose dexterous manipulator (SPDM) for the Canadian Space Agency. The SPDM, a specially developed robotic arm (see Figure 3.1), was to be developed for use on NASA’s international space station. To encourage freedom of communication as well as timely problem solving, the executive project team decided to co-locate project staff on a single floor of the MD Robotics facility. The SPDM project group was divided into smaller subproject teams which in the spirit of true co-location and collaboration, worked in an open office environment designed to promote communication. Project managers were able to freely interact with engineers, and project teams were able to communicate with each other under a “no-surprises rule” implemented by senior management. The no-surprises rule specified that project teams should communicate any needed SPDM design changes to other project teams as soon as they were identified. Although the senior management team was made aware of any design changes, it did not have to sign off before teams were allowed to implement the changes.

Using this team-based project structure, combined with the policy of allowing teams the autonomy to make developmental changes, MD Robotics was able to deliver the SPDM to the Canadian Space Agency both on budget and on time (Sources: Canadian Space Agency [2003]; Carey [2005]).
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

➤ Describe the characteristics of a project team and the factors that influence team performance.
➤ Explain what is meant by need and process theories of motivation.
➤ Contrast trait, behavioral, and contingency theories of leadership.
➤ Explain the sources of power and how these sources can be used to influence people.
➤ Contrast functional versus dysfunctional conflict and explain how conflict can be beneficial to a project team.
➤ Explain why global project teams are increasing and describe the challenges of managing these teams.

INTRODUCTION

People are the most important and expensive part of an information systems project. Project time estimates for task completion and overall system quality are significantly influenced by the effectiveness of the project team. Unfortunately, good information systems personnel are in short supply. In fact, the U.S. Department of Commerce is predicting huge labor shortages over the next decade for people with skills in using, developing, and managing information systems (Kaïhla, 2003). Nearly every industry, not just computer hardware and software companies, relies heavily on information systems professionals; therefore, the shortage in skilled technology workers could have a big impact on the economy.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that high demand for technology-related workers and escalating salaries could lead to inflation and lower corporate profits as companies scramble to offer competitive salaries to the best and brightest people in this industry. Additionally, labor shortages will lead to increased use of global project teams, making effective projects more complex and more difficult to manage. Given the competitiveness of this labor pool, retaining the best personnel is
also a critical issue for many organizations. Therefore, finding ways not only to reward people adequately but also to create a positive work experience through well-managed projects, meaningful team assignments, and good interpersonal relationships not only can enhance project effectiveness but also can help to retain employees within the organization. Understanding the issues related to effectively managing project teams is the next step in gaining a comprehensive understanding of information systems project management, as shown in Figure 3.2.

In the next section, we begin by discussing what a project team is, how teams evolve, and the various factors that influence project team performance. This is followed by a discussion of several motivation theories that will help you better understand how team members can be influenced to have high work productivity and job satisfaction. Next, we discuss the roles of leadership, power, and conflict within project teams. Finally, we examine several issues related to the management of global project teams.

**Figure 3.2** Information systems project management focusing on managing project teams

In the context of organizational work, groups and teams are not necessarily the same thing. A group consists of two or more people who work together to achieve a common objective (Robbins and Judge, 2007). Yet a group may be formed for a temporary purpose, and its members may not necessarily share the same goals. A project team, however, is much more than a group. A project team is mutually accountable to the organization and to its own individual team members; the team members are also highly interdependent, having both shared goals and complementary skills (see Figure 3.3). When project teams are formed, the group of people typically takes some time to evolve into a high-performing project team. This evolution is discussed next.

**What Is a Project Team?**

In the context of organizational work, groups and teams are not necessarily the same thing. A group consists of two or more people who work together to achieve a common objective (Robbins and Judge, 2007). Yet a group may be formed for a temporary purpose, and its members may not necessarily share the same goals. A project team, however, is much more than a group. A **project team** is mutually accountable to the organization and to its own individual team members; the team members are also highly interdependent, having both shared goals and complementary skills (see Figure 3.3). When project teams are formed, the group of people typically takes some time to evolve into a high-performing project team. This evolution is discussed next.
Project Team Development

Teams do not automatically become highly interdependent and productive. Researchers have found that teams develop and evolve through various stages as they work together over time (Robbins and Judge, 2007). During project team development, five stages—forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. To reach optimal performance, the project team moves through each phase.

During forming, team members get to know each other and establish team goals and work assignments. This stage is completed when a majority of the members feel that they are part of the team. During storming, team members struggle to establish goals, power, and leadership roles. This stage is completed when a majority of the members have a relatively clear understanding of each member’s role within the team. During norming, teams develop a sense of common purpose and specify normal operating procedures. Additionally during this stage, high levels of team collegiality are typically present, and close friendships are formed. This stage ends with members having a strong sense of proper team behavior. During performing, the team undertakes the actual project work. This stage ends with the completion of the project. For permanent, ongoing project teams, performing is the last stage in their evolution. For temporary teams established to complete a single project, there is also an adjourning stage. During adjourning, team members wrap up the project’s final activities and engage in activities related to subsequent team assignments or jobs. During this stage, individuals often respond differently to adjournment—some members will delight in the team’s accomplishments, whereas others will feel a sense of sadness or loss. As a project manager, you need to understand where your team is in regard to its development in order to better understand its challenges and its potential.

Factors That Influence Project Team Performance

Researchers have focused a great deal of effort on identifying factors that lead to effective teams (Robbins and Judge, 2007). These factors can be categorized into four types: work design, composition, context, and process (see Figure 3.4). Unfortunately, even if
numerous effectiveness factors are present, they do not guarantee a productive project team. However, when these factors are present, higher performance is much more likely.

Numerous work design factors can be configured to influence team member performance. For instance, work design that provides team members with autonomy, skill variety, task identity, and significance has been found to be highly motivating. Likewise, team composition can also play a major role in project team performance. Factors that have been found to be important include member ability, personality, role diversity, size, flexibility, and preference for teamwork. Of these, personality and team size have been found to play a significant role in many project teams. For example, research has found that it can be very difficult to blend some personality types into an effective team. Because of this, many organizations give potential team members personality tests like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to more effectively match team members and to help them learn more about each other. The MBTI is the most widely used personality test; its advocates feel that it can help to improve work and personal relationships, increase productivity, and identify leadership and interpersonal communication preferences of team members. Nonetheless, there is no universal agreement that such personality tests are accurate or even helpful. (To learn more about the MBTI, see www.cpp.db.com.)

Likewise, team size can also significantly influence team performance. As the size of the team increases, it becomes increasingly difficult to effectively communicate and coordinate project activities. The rule of thumb is to use the fewest people possible; the most effective teams rarely have more than ten members (see Figure 3.5). If more than ten members are needed for a very large project, smaller subteams should be used to minimize communication and coordination problems. Getting the right people, and the right number of people, on your project team can make it easier for the group to perform.

All good sports teams have players with clearly defined roles and abilities. Likewise, a good project team needs members with a diversity of skills and abilities. It is also important to select members who are flexible—in regard to task activities and roles—and who clearly want to belong to the team. To be effective, project teams

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**Figure 3.4** Project team performance factors (adapted from Robbins and Judge, 2007)
must agree on a broad range of member roles and must design work processes that ensure that all members contribute equally to the team performance. An experienced project manager has a deep understanding of the variety of roles and skills needed to build a successful team. Researchers have found that people can also have different types of work personalities within software development teams, including the following (Howard, 2001; see Figure 3.6):

1. **Deliverer.** A person who is good at getting things done quickly and is good in emergency situations such as repairing a system failure.

**Figure 3.6** Information systems project teams need members with differing work personalities

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**Figure 3.5** Team communication and management complexity increase rapidly with group size

Communication Interfaces = \( \frac{n(n-1)}{2} \)

- Two member teams have 1 person-to-person interfaces
- Three member teams have 3 person-to-person interfaces
- Five member teams have 10 person-to-person interfaces
- Ten member teams have 45 person-to-person interfaces

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COMMUNICATION INTERFACES = n(n-1) / 2
2. Prototyper. A person who is useful for projects where the system requirements are initially unclear or in situations where building the right system is more important than building something quickly.

3. Perfector. A person whose work is meticulous and who is useful when everything must be done correctly, such as a system that could impact human safety.

4. Producer. A person who is good at getting a lot of work accomplished but often ignores standard conventions such as structured methods and documentation.

5. Fixer. A person who has a deep understanding of a system and can quickly examine a problem and make a needed repair.

6. Finisher. A person who is good at meeting deadlines but may often ignore rules or procedures in order to do so.

Just like successful sports teams, successful project teams repeatedly have been found to have members who play different roles.

Four contextual factors—adequate resources, leadership, trust, and performance evaluation and rewards—have also been found to be important for achieving high team performance. It is obvious that teams must have adequate resources or will feel it is impossible to succeed. High-performing project teams must also have clear leadership and structure so that members will know who is responsible for completing various tasks, as well as how schedules, tasks, and roles will be assigned. High-performing teams must also trust each other because doing so allows members to work independently and cooperatively. Lastly, a team-oriented performance evaluation and reward system is needed to achieve maximum team effort, commitment, and performance.

Finally, three process factors also have been found to significantly shape the performance of project teams. Teams that share a common purpose and goals, have confidence in their ability to be successful, and have low-to-moderate levels of conflict, typically perform better than teams that don’t. In sum, many factors influence a team’s performance. Understanding how various factors shape team performance will help you design a more effective team and achieve higher performance.

TIPS FROM THE PROS
How to Pick a Project Team

Experienced project managers have become experts in how to best select the right members for a team. According to Bill Hagerup, a project management specialist at Ouellette & Associates Inc., a consulting firm in Bedford, New Hampshire, building a successful team takes the right mix of “soft” skills, personalities, and attitudes. Picking people exclusively for their technical skills is often a mistake. Some other tips include (Source: Melymuka [2004]):

- Keep teams small and manageable. You often have to balance departmental representation with overall team effectiveness, but teams bigger than five members are frequently difficult to manage.
- Get the right personalities. Look for people with strong work ethics and positive, upbeat personalities. One cynic can spoil the entire team’s outlook, whereas positive upbeat personalities can lift the team’s spirit.
- Embrace diversity. Because technology professions tend to attract similar types of people, work hard to build diversity on your teams so that they will not be as susceptible to groupthink and narrow solutions.
- Reuse successful teams. It takes a lot of work to build and nurture a successful team, so reuse successful teams when you can.
- Plan ahead to get the right people. The best people for a team are often very busy, so it is important to plan ahead to line up key people well in advance.
- Use your network. Getting the best people to join a team often requires that you convince their boss or others that it is in the organization’s best interest for this person to be on your team. Use your friends and close colleagues to identify and recruit the right people.
Motivating Team Members

Motivation
An individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal. Motivation refers to an individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal (Robbins and Judge, 2007). Intensity refers to how hard someone tries to attain the goal. However, intensity alone may not result in favorable results, unless the Direction of that intensity is channeled toward attaining the appropriate goal. Direction thus is focused on the quality of the effort. Persistence refers to how long someone maintains an effort toward the goal. To be ultimately successful, a person needs all three traits. For example, a person can work hard, but if this effort is not directed correctly or is not sustained, success may not be possible. Motivating team members is, therefore, critical to gaining optimum team performance.

Over the years, a lot of research has been conducted to identify why and how people are motivated. From this research, it has been found that different people are motivated by different things and in different ways. For example, some people are primarily motivated by external factors such as financial rewards while others are motivated by internal factors such as a sense of accomplishment. Also, the researchers have put forth and tested different theories of motivation that have been useful for understanding work productivity as well as job satisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover. Job satisfaction refers to the general attitude a person has toward his or her job; absenteeism refers to the failure to report to work; and turnover refers to the rate at which people voluntarily or involuntarily leave an organization. Some theories have been good for understanding job satisfaction, whereas others have been useful for understanding work productivity. In sum, understanding why and how people are motivated to be satisfied, to come to work, to stay with the organization, or to work hard is important for all project managers. Consequently, we briefly review various motivational theories to help you better understand motivation. More in-depth discussions of motivation can be found in Robbins and Judge (2007) or Verma (1996).

Need Theories of Motivation
For more than 50 years, researchers have examined various theories of how different personal factors can shape a person’s motivation. Although support for these theories has been mixed when examined in controlled research settings, they are nonetheless widely used within organizations when designing work practices and reward systems. In this section, we briefly examine the most popular need theories of motivation.

Hierarchy of Needs
One of the most famous motivational theories is Maslow’s hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954). This theory states that within every person, there exists a hierarchy of five needs: physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization (see Figure 3.7). This theory states that as each lower-level need is met (or substantially met), the next higher-level need becomes the individual’s motivating focus. This means that if you want to motivate people, you need to understand where they are in this hierarchy and use mechanisms to help them satisfy needs at the next higher level. Although Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is easy to understand and is widely recognized by many project managers, research has not found it valid for consistently explaining motivation. Basically, research has found that unsatisfied needs do not necessarily motivate, that satisfied needs do not always activate movement to higher levels in the hierarchy, and that more than one need from different levels may be desired.
Two-factor theory

Intrinsic factors—motivational factors—such as achievement, recognition, advancement, and responsibility are related to job satisfaction, whereas extrinsic factors—hygiene factors—such as salary, relationships with colleagues, and work conditions are associated with job dissatisfaction.

ERG Theory

A related theory, ERG theory, refined the hierarchy of needs theory to more closely match the research findings in this area. In particular, ERG theory argues that there are three core needs—Existence, Relatedness, and Growth—of which more than one may be operating at the same time; if the fulfillment of a higher-level need is unrealized, the desire to satisfy a lower-level need becomes the motivating focus.

ERG theory

Three core needs—Existence, Relatedness, and Growth—of which more than one may be operative at the same time; if the fulfillment of a higher-level need is unrealized, the desire to satisfy a lower-level need becomes the motivating focus.

Two-Factor Theory

Another need theory, the motivational-hygiene theory, or simply the two-factor theory, was proposed by Frederick Herzberg (Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman, 1959). This theory predicts that intrinsic factors—motivational factors—like achievement, recognition, advancement, and responsibility, are related to job satisfaction, while extrinsic factors—hygiene factors—like salary, relationships with colleagues, and work conditions, are associated with job dissatisfaction (see Table 3.1). This theory predicts that the factors that lead to job satisfaction are separate and distinct from those that lead to dissatisfaction (see Figure 3.8). In other words, people will not be dissatisfied if extrinsic factors are adequate, but they won’t necessarily be satisfied either. For a person to be satisfied, intrinsic factors must also be adequately met. As with Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the two-factor theory is not universally accepted. Nonetheless, many managers and organizations have accepted its concepts, and it has been instrumental in the development of programs that allow workers greater control over their day-to-day activities.
**Table 3.1** Common Hygiene and Motivational Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HYGIENE FACTORS</th>
<th>MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Company policies and administration</td>
<td>• Opportunity for achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Relationship with supervisor, peers, and subordinates</td>
<td>• Opportunity for recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Working conditions</td>
<td>• Challenges and variety of the work itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Salary and benefits</td>
<td>• Sense of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Status</td>
<td>• Opportunity for advancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Security</td>
<td>• Opportunity for personal growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Theory of Needs**

One last needs theory is McClelland’s **theory of needs**, which proposes that individuals’ motivation can be explained by their need for achievement, power, and affiliation (McClelland, 1961). The need for achievement refers to having a drive to excel beyond a set of standards. The need for power refers to having a drive to control the behavior of others. The need for affiliation refers to having the desire for close and friendly interpersonal relationships. Researchers have developed questionnaires that can be used to help rate people on various dimensions. High achievers are not necessarily good managers, whereas good managers have a high need for power and a low need for affiliation. Of all need theories, McClelland’s has been found to best predict work productivity, whereas the others have had the most success in explaining a person’s job satisfaction.

**Process Theories of Motivation**

Process theories attempt to understand a person’s behavior based on intrinsic or personal factors used to motivate specific behavior. In general, this perspective on motivation suggests that project managers need to create a proper environment, work processes, and rewards to create the greatest motivation in people. Several of the most notable process theories of motivation are described next.
Theory X and Theory Y
In the early 1960s, Douglas McGregor proposed Theory X and Theory Y to reflect contrasting views of human behavior, management, and motivation (McGregor, 1960). Theory X assumes that people dislike work, are lazy, dislike responsibility, and must be coerced to work hard. Alternatively, Theory Y assumes that people like work, are creative, like autonomy, and seek responsibility. A project manager who believes Theory X is the right approach for motivating individuals will typically be autocratic, leave no doubt with others about who is in charge, and have little concern about the feelings of others. A Theory Y manager will be participative and encourage a high level of involvement by team members in their assignments, work processes, and decisions. Theory Y has been found to be a much better management philosophy for motivating professionals and highly educated individuals.

Theory Z
In the 1980s, William Ouchi proposed an extension to Theory X and Theory Y, which he called Theory Z (Ouchi, 1981). This theory reflects the Japanese work philosophy that includes a belief in lifetime employment, strong company loyalty, and group consensus. A Theory Z management philosophy views workers as long-term partners who are capable of working without close supervision; decisions are made by the entire team with high levels of group consensus. Project managers who believe Theory X, Theory Y, or Theory Z will treat team members differently and design vastly different work processes and rewards (or punishments).

Goal-Setting Theory
Goal-setting theory offers another perspective on understanding a person’s motivation (Locke, 1968). This theory suggests that specific and difficult goals, with clear feedback on how well a person is meeting them, can enhance a person’s work productivity. This means that telling someone to “do their best” will likely result in their not doing their best! However, giving people higher, specific job performance goals (“Please complete the new user interface by Friday noon”) will most often lead to higher levels of performance, especially when clear feedback is given.

Equity Theory
Equity theory suggests that individuals compare their work inputs and outcomes with those of others and then respond to eliminate inequities (Adams, 1965). For example, if individuals feel they are not being treated fairly, they will work less, reduce their outputs, change their perceptions, or quit. Alternatively, individuals who believe they are being treated fairly will remain relatively satisfied and motivated to perform. Although equity theory has demonstrated that making relative comparisons to others influences motivation, it is most powerful in predicting absenteeism and turnover, not levels of work productivity (Robbins and Judge, 2007).

Reinforcement Theory
Reinforcement theory argues that both positive and negative feedback, or reinforcement, conditions behavior (Komaki, Coombs, and Schepman, 1996). In other words, reinforcement theory proposes that if desirable behavior is rewarded—with
pay increases, incentives, or other valued items—it will be repeated. Likewise, undesirable behavior can be discouraged by punishment. This theory has a very broad following and has become the basis of the reward systems within many modern organizations.

**Expectancy Theory**

Lastly, expectancy theory, one of the most widely accepted and supported motivational theories, predicts that people will be motivated to exert a high level of effort when they believe that (Vroom, 1964):

1. Effort will lead to a good performance appraisal.
2. A good appraisal will lead to rewards.
3. These rewards will satisfy their needs.

Figure 3.9 shows each of these three relationships. The effort-performance relationship reflects the belief that increased individual effort leads to higher work performance. The performance-rewards relationship reflects the belief that work performance at a particular level will lead to specific outcomes such as a bonus, a salary increase, or promotion. Finally, the rewards-personal goals relationship reflects the belief that organizational rewards will satisfy a person’s goals or needs. Expectancy theory has been very useful for understanding why many workers are, or are not, motivated to do their jobs well. To adequately motivate employees to perform their best, the organization must design job evaluation and reward systems that accurately measure effort and performance, and it must design reward systems that meet each employee’s specific needs. If employees believe that effort will lead to the rewards that meet their personal needs, then optimal work performance can be achieved.

**General Guidelines for Motivating Team Members**

As can be seen from this discussion of employee motivation, there is no single approach to optimally motivating an individual. Over the years, researchers have examined many approaches for enhancing motivation (see Table 3.2). From this work, several general recommendations can be made for managing your project team (Robbins and Judge, 2007):

1. **Recognize individual differences.** Because your team members will have different needs and goals, it is essential that you learn what is important to each person.
Table 3.2  Various Theories That Have Been Developed to Explain Motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
</tr>
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<td>Three core needs—Existence, Relatedness, and Growth—in which more than one need may be operative at the same time; if the fulfillment of a higher-level need is unrealized, the desire to satisfy a lower-level need becomes the motivating focus.</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reinforcement Theory</strong></td>
<td>Both positive and negative feedback condition behavior.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expectancy Theory</strong></td>
<td>People’s effort leads to their performance; their performance leads to rewards; and their rewards lead to the fulfillment of personal goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. **Use specific goals and feedback.** Teams should set specific goals, with specific feedback on how each member is doing, in order to achieve optimal performance.

3. **Allow team members to participate in decisions that affect them.** Team members should be allowed to participate in most decisions that affect them in order to increase productivity, commitment, motivation, and job satisfaction.

4. **Link rewards to performance.** Rewards should be clearly tied to performance in order to optimally motivate team members.

5. **Check the system for equity.** Monitor team members for perceptions of inequality to make sure that any differences in experiences, skills, abilities, and effort lead to clear differences in pay, job assignments, and other rewards.

Understanding why and how people are motivated is an important skill for all project managers. Subtle changes in work processes, evaluation systems, and rewards can have a tremendous influence on a person’s motivation. Next, we examine how leadership and power can also be used to influence the performance of project teams.
COMMON PROBLEMS
Managing Einsteins

An “Einstein” is an intelligent, curious, and technologically proficient knowledge worker who has the know-how to keep everything operating without costly delays, breakdowns, and crashes—and the individual to drive managers insane.

Information systems project teams often consist of extremely intelligent individuals who possess extraordinary skills but also sometimes abhor management authority. Researchers have recently identified six types of Einsteins that are common on technical project teams (see Ivancevich and Duening, 2002):

1. Arrogant Einsteins
2. Know-It-All Einsteins
3. Impatient Einsteins
4. Eccentric Einsteins
5. Disorganized Einsteins
6. Withdrawn Einsteins

Researchers point out how every type of Einstein can be troublesome to a project team in one way or another. However, with careful management each can be nurtured to perform their best. To be successful, project managers must be skilled at profiling, recruiting, rewarding, leading, and even disciplining Einsteins.

LEADERSHIP, POWER, AND CONFLICT IN PROJECT TEAMS

The exercise of leadership and power is a natural part of project teams. Over the life of a project, project managers and team members will interact with a broad range of people both from within the team and from outside. Some of these people may hold a higher rank within the organization, whereas others may be customers or contractors outside the organization. How you use your leadership abilities and power to influence the behavior of others can have a tremendous impact on the success or failure of a project.

Leadership and Project Team Effectiveness

The terms management and leadership are often used interchangeably but are really quite different. A manager is typically someone who has a formal position of authority and is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, monitoring, and controlling project activities. A leader is someone, who, by virtue of his or her personal attributes, can influence others. Therefore, leadership is defined as the ability to influence people toward the achievement of goals. Note that leaders may or may not be managers. Likewise, some managers may not be effective leaders. Effective project managers have the right mix of both management and leadership abilities (see Table 3.3). Experience has shown that successful project teams have great management and great leadership. Managers are essential for keeping the team on track. Leaders are critical for inspiring the team to define its vision and the steps needed to reach success. It has been said that good managers focus on “doing things right,” whereas good leaders focus on “doing the right things.” Successful projects need both!
Behavioral theories of leadership
A set of leadership theories that suggest people’s actions determine their potential to be successful leaders.

Trait Theories of Leadership
As you might expect, there are different views on what makes a good leader and whether people are “born leaders” or can be “made” leaders through training and education. One body of research focused on identifying the traits, or personal attributes, of leaders. These trait theories of leadership argue that personality, appearance, competency, and other personal characteristics differentiate leaders from nonleaders. This research has found that successful leaders often share some similar personal attributes, including:

- Intelligence and competency in task and organizational activities
- Maturity and a broad range of interests
- Considerate interpersonal skills and respect for the needs and differences of others
- Goal-oriented focus and a strong motivation to achieve success

Although trait-focused research has been useful for identifying characteristics of leaders, it has failed to determine why people become leaders or how people can be better leaders. Additionally, it has been found that people can possess the traits of leaders, but this alone does not guarantee success. Nonetheless, what can be concluded from this research is that people who emerge as leaders are much more likely to possess intelligence, maturity, consideration for others, and a goal-orientated focus.

Behavioral Theories of Leadership
A second view of leadership can be found in the behavioral theories of leadership. Although there are several different behavioral theories of leadership, all share a common view that people’s actions, rather than personal traits, determine their potential to be successful leaders. In this work, two general types of leaders—task-oriented and relationship-oriented—have been identified. On the one hand, leaders

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**Table 3.3  Characteristics of Managers versus Leaders**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANAGERS FOCUS ON:</th>
<th>LEADERS FOCUS ON:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling how and when</td>
<td>Selling what and why</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shorter range</td>
<td>Longer range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and structure</td>
<td>People</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autocracy</td>
<td>Democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restraining</td>
<td>Enabling</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintaining</td>
<td>Developing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conforming</td>
<td>Challenging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imitating</td>
<td>Originating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrating</td>
<td>Innovating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling</td>
<td>Directing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency</td>
<td>Flexibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk avoidance</td>
<td>Risk opportunity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom line</td>
<td>Top line</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Verma, 1996.
who are relationship-oriented emphasize interpersonal relationships with team members in order to gain the greatest influence. For example, relationship-oriented leaders take a personal interest in team members and accept individual differences among them as being a positive team characteristic. On the other hand, task-oriented leaders use their influence to get tasks completed as effectively as possible, with much less concern for the relationships among team members. There is no consensus on which type of leader is most effective. In some situations, task-oriented leaders have been most effective, whereas in others relationship-oriented leaders have been most effective.

Contingency Theories of Leadership

A third and final general group of leadership theories referred to as contingency theories of leadership consider the situation the most critical element for identifying leadership success. Specifically, these theories suggest the most effective leadership behavior depends upon the situation, suggesting that no particular leadership style or approach is always best. For example, the Fiedler Contingency Model examined the contexts in which task-oriented versus relationship-oriented leaders would be most successful (Fiedler, 1967). This research found that the interplay of the leader-member relationships, the task structure, and the amount of power the leader possesses determines whether a task- or relationship-oriented leader would be most successful in a given situation. Figure 3.10 shows that both task- and relationship-oriented leaders can be successful, depending upon the leader-member

Figure 3.10 The influence of leader-member relations, task structure, and power on leadership performance (adapted from Robbins and Judge, 2007)
### Level of Follower Commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Follower Commitment</th>
<th>Leader → Telling / Directing</th>
<th>Leader → Participating / Supporting</th>
<th>Leader → Delegating</th>
<th>Leader → Selling / Coaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low task &amp; high relationship focus</td>
<td>High task &amp; low relationship focus</td>
<td>Low task &amp; low relationship focus</td>
<td>High task &amp; high relationship focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.11** How the commitment and competency of a follower influences leadership style

relationship (good versus poor), the task structure (high versus low), and the power of the leader (strong versus weak).

Similar to Fiedler’s Contingency Model, Blanchard and colleagues’ (2005) Situational Leadership Model (SLM) focuses on characteristics of followers to determine the best leadership style. Specifically, followers can be competent (able) and agreeable (willing) to perform a task or can be incompetent and/or reluctant. Depending on a follower’s willingness and ability, the leader should choose a different approach, focusing more on task completion (e.g., guiding a follower who lacks ability) or emotional-relationship activities (e.g., coaching the unwilling) (see Figure 3.11). Although the SLM is widely used in management training, research efforts to test its predictive power have been disappointing. Nevertheless, it remains a popular leadership approach for many organizations.

There are several other contingency-based models of leadership, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Each variation attempts to refine certain aspects of the context to better explain how leaders emerge and when they will be successful. Clearly, there is the potential for many types of successful leaders.

### General Leadership Guidelines

Today, most leadership researchers believe that effective leadership can be taught and that the key to effective leadership can be summarized in five essential practices (Tucker, McCarthy, and Benton, 2002):

1. **Challenging the process.** Effective leaders search for opportunities to change the status quo and, by doing so, experiment and take risks.
2. **Inspiring a shared vision.** Effective leaders passionately believe they can make a difference and envision the future, enlisting other team members to see the same future.
3. **Enabling others to act.** Effective leaders cultivate collaboration and build spirited teams, strengthening others in the process by creating trust and fostering human dignity.
4. **Modeling the way.** Effective leaders create standards of excellence, set an example for others, and help others achieve success.

5. **Encouraging the heart.** Effective leaders recognize the contributions of others and celebrate their accomplishments, making team members feel like heroes.

With organizations becoming increasingly global and with the increasing use of global project teams within information systems projects, effective leadership has never been more important for achieving project team success. Achieving the right balance between manager and leader is a significant challenge; however, reaching the proper balance will help your project team reach its greatest potential (see Table 3.4).

### Table 3.4 Guidelines for Effective Leadership

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Challenge the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inspire a shared vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enable others to act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model the way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encourage the heart.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Power Within Project Teams**

Closely related to leadership is power. **Power** refers to the absolute capacity of a person to influence the behavior or attitudes of one or more target persons at a given point in time (Yukl, 2006). Leaders use power to influence team members to achieve the team’s goals. Power can be thought of as the ability to force people to do something they would not normally do. This makes power seem like a bad thing, but it isn’t necessarily; the use of power to influence the behavior of others is a natural part of all project teams and organizations. Researchers have identified two different types of power, positional (sometimes referred to as formal) power and personal power (French and Raven, 1959; Robbins and Judge, 2007). **Positional power** is based on an individual’s position in an organization and can be one of five types.

1. **Legitimate power.** Influencing people based on being in a position of authority.
2. **Reward power.** Influencing people based on being in a position to distribute rewards.
3. **Coercive power.** Influencing people based on being in a position to punish.
4. **Information power.** Influencing people based on their dependency on controlled information.
5. **Ecological power.** Influencing people based on controlling physical resources such as equipment and space.

Alternatively, **personal power** is an outcome of an individual’s unique characteristics and can be one of three types.

1. **Expert power.** Influencing people based on having expertise, special skills, or knowledge (e.g., financial guru Warren Buffett).
2. **Referent power.** Influencing people based on their strong affection, admiration, or loyalty (e.g., former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell).
3. **Charismatic power.** Influencing people based on having a favorable personality and interpersonal style (e.g., entertainment mogul Oprah Winfrey).

In sum, each individual on a project team will possess different amounts of power, and this power will be derived from various sources, both positional and personal.
**Conflict**
The opposition of people in an organization arising from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands.

**Functional conflict**
Conflict that supports the goals of the team and improves its performance.

**Dysfunctional conflict**
Conflict that hinders group performance and interferes with team performance.

Understanding what power is, where it comes from, and why people possess it in differing amounts helps us to better understand various team roles and why and how some teams perform better than others (see Table 3.5). Of course, when power is exercised to influence people, it sometimes causes conflict. This topic is discussed next.

### Managing and Resolving Project Team Conflict

Conflict is the opposition of people in an organization who have incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands (Verma, 1996). Like leadership and power, conflict is a natural part of project teams and organizations. Years ago, any conflict within a project team was viewed as a very serious problem that had to be eliminated. Today, however, researchers believe that some functional conflict is absolutely necessary for a team to perform effectively. Functional conflict helps to support the goals of the team and improve its performance. Alternatively, dysfunctional conflict hinders group performance and interferes with team performance. So when we say that some conflict is good, we mean that some functional conflict is good (see Figure 3.12).

### Table 3.5 Sources of Positional and Personal Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of Positional Power</th>
<th>Sources of Personal Power</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Legitimate power</td>
<td>• Expert power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reward power</td>
<td>• Referent power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coercive power</td>
<td>• Charismatic power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ecological power</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Figure 3.12 Conflict and team performance (adapted from Robbins and Judge, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Level of Conflict</th>
<th>Type of Conflict</th>
<th>Team’s Internal Characteristics</th>
<th>Level of Team Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Low to None</td>
<td>Dysfunctional</td>
<td>Apathetic, Stagnant, Nonresponsive to change, Lack of new ideas</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Optimal</td>
<td>Functional</td>
<td>Viable, Self-critical, Innovative</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Dysfunctional</td>
<td>Disruptive, Chaotic, Uncooperative</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Among project teams, conflict can arise from tasks, work processes, or relationships (see Table 3.6). Task conflict relates to the content and goals of the work itself. Relationship conflict relates to interpersonal relationships among team members. Process conflict relates to how the work gets done within a team. Research has found that low-to-moderate levels of task conflict, as well as low levels of process conflict, can help a team’s performance. High levels of task conflict—not agreeing on what should be done and what the objective is—will never lead to enhanced performance. Likewise, moderate-to-high levels of process conflict—not agreeing on how work will be performed or who will do it—does not lead to enhanced performance. Additionally, this research has found that relationship conflicts—personality conflicts and relationship problems—will always hinder team performance (Robbins and Judge, 2007). This means that functional conflict is always related to task and process issues, whereas dysfunctional conflict can be rooted in tasks, processes, or relationships, depending upon its intensity. In sum, conflict can be thought of as varying in intensity from none to extreme (see Figure 3.13). Functional conflict is typically at the lower end of this continuum, whereas dysfunctional conflict can span its entire range.

Within project teams, researchers have identified the primary causes of conflict to be (Thamhain and Wilemon, 1975):

1. **Schedule.** Disagreements on task duration and sequencing.
2. **Project priorities.** Disagreements on project vision and scope.
3. **Manpower.** Disagreements on the utilization of people, especially those simultaneously involved in multiple projects.
4. **Technical.** Disagreements over system design elegance and resource limitations.
5. **Administration.** Disagreements due to authority over key resources.
6. **Personality.** Disagreements due to dysfunctional interpersonal interactions.
7. **Cost.** Disagreements arising from increasing resource constraints as a project evolves.

### Table 3.6 Conditions That Can Lead to Project Conflict

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITION</th>
<th>DESCRIPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambiguous roles, work boundaries, responsibility, and authority</td>
<td>Project teams often have members with different reporting structures and overlapping or conflicting responsibilities that can lead to conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inconsistent or incompatible goals</td>
<td>Team members may perceive others to have different or conflicting goals that can lead to conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication problems</td>
<td>Task, process, or relationship ambiguity can result in reduced or ineffective communication that can lead to conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependence on another party</td>
<td>Team members depend on others to complete tasks or provide resources; delays or work quality issues can lead to conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialization or differentiation</td>
<td>Team members from different professional backgrounds often have different viewpoints, languages, and goals that can lead to conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for joint decision making and consensus</td>
<td>Teams with a diverse mix of members may feel pressure to conform to the majority opinion, which can lead to conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior regulations</td>
<td>Project teams have norms for working together that may conflict with an individual’s preferred work processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unresolved prior conflicts</td>
<td>Past unresolved issues between team members can lead to conflict.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Adapted from Verma, 1995.*
In most cases, effective project management can minimize these causes of conflict. For example, an incomplete work breakdown schedule can lead to conflict related to the project schedule, or a vague project scope statement can lead to conflict related to project priorities. Additionally, as a project evolves, different sources of conflict may be more likely (e.g., project priorities will likely occur early within the project). In addition to effective project management techniques, many good conflict management approaches can be utilized. These are discussed next.

Although there is no single best way to manage all types of conflict, some approaches have been found to be better than others. Approaches for resolving conflict can range from completely autocratic to more cooperative. Situational factors, such as time pressure, the intensity of the conflict, the importance of the problem, and the level of cooperation among parties, can influence which approach is most appropriate. Likewise, because low-to-moderate levels of conflict have been found to benefit team performance, some techniques can be used to purposefully stimulate functional conflict within a team. Conflict management, the use of resolution and stimulation techniques to achieve a desired level of team conflict, is a valuable skill for all project managers. Table 3.7 summarizes many of the most widely used techniques. By using these techniques, you should be able to better sustain the desired level of conflict within your team.

**Managing Project Politics**

Politics are a natural part of all organizations and reflect the use of covert mechanisms to obtain power and control. Within the context of information systems projects, politics are the art of getting things done. Although some view politics as a somewhat evil or distasteful part of organizational life, they are not necessarily a bad thing or something to avoid. There are, of course, good and bad politicians; the good politicians look for win–win opportunities, while the bad look for opportunities to win at any cost. Being a successful project manager in modern organizations requires that you also become a savvy politician. Some advice for improving your political skills includes (Choo, 2003):

1. **Understand what your organization values.** To be a good organizational politician, you need to understand what the organization values (e.g., its mission, goals, and strategy) and align your personal goals and behavior to best help the organization achieve its objectives. By aligning your objectives with those of the organization, you are more likely to gain the support of powerful decision makers within the organization.
2. **Understand how decisions are made in your organization.** In most organizations, decisions are not necessarily made based on the formal organizational structure chart. Understanding how decisions are made and who truly has influence on those decisions is necessary for building successful alliances.

3. **Expand and strengthen your network.** To get complex development projects completed on time often requires that you are able to gain access to scarce resources and expertise. These valuable resources are often controlled by other managers who may or may not want to help you to be successful. Being a valued colleague to others by giving your time, expertise, and support, is a great way to get a favor returned when one is critically needed.

4. **Develop a clear and easy-to-communicate story.** Being a successful politician requires having the right story, for the right audience, at the right time. Hearing the right story motivates team members, sponsors, and other critical stakeholders. Much like a successful coach, you must inspire confidence to get the most from your team.

5. **Lead by example.** If you are to be a great leader, your team must respect your values, judgment, work ethic, and competency to deliver a successful project. Successful project managers understand that leading by example is a great way to inspire others to go beyond the call of duty to make the project a success.

---

**Table 3.7  Conflict Management Techniques for Resolving and Stimulating Team Conflict**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Face-to-face meetings can be used to identify and resolve conflicts through open and candid discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared goals</td>
<td>Create shared goals that can only be achieved through the cooperation of the conflicting parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource expansion</td>
<td>When conflict is caused by resource scarcity—say, money, opportunities, space, equipment—additional resources can be used to resolve discrepancies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance</td>
<td>Withdrawal from, or suppression of, the conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoothing</td>
<td>Playing down differences while emphasizing common interests between the conflicting parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>Each party to the conflict gives up something of value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritative command</td>
<td>A person of power mandates an outcome and communicates it to the conflicting parties.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering team member behavior</td>
<td>Use some type of training or intervention to alter the attitudes or behaviors that are causing conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altering the team structure</td>
<td>Change the formal team structure so that conflicting members limit their interaction; a more extreme solution is to remove members from the team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CONFLICT STIMULATION TECHNIQUES</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Using ambiguous or threatening messages to increase conflict levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bringing in outsiders</td>
<td>Adding new members to the team who have different backgrounds, attitudes, values, or managerial styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructuring the team</td>
<td>Realigning the tasks, work or communication processes to disrupt the status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appointing a devil’s advocate</td>
<td>Have an assigned critic to argue against the team’s majority position</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Adapted from Robbins and Judge, 2007.*
In sum, project politics is not about winning at any cost. It is about finding common ground and building alliances to achieve organizational objectives. Being a successful project manager requires that you also be a skilled organizational politician.

**Managing Global Project Teams**

One important trend that most organizations are facing in the development of information systems is the increased use of global project teams, often referred to as virtual teams, with members located throughout the world. In this section, we first examine several catalysts for this trend. Next, we examine various challenges related to managing these teams. The section concludes with advice for developing stronger global information systems project teams.

**Growing Numbers of Global Information Systems Projects**

The use of global teams for information systems projects has become extremely popular. This growth can be attributed to three primary factors (see Figure 3.14):

1. Advances in telecommunications
2. Increased globalization
3. Increased outsourcing

All of these factors are related. For example, advances in telecommunications have enabled organizations to more easily outsource part of their information systems operations, such as data entry, user support, or application programming to locations that offer cheaper labor. Yet without a high-quality network connection between sites, this would be much more difficult. In the remainder of this section, we briefly examine each of these factors.
Advances in Telecommunications

In recent years, there have been tremendous advances in telecommunications. The proliferation of the Internet and the World Wide Web is the most significant example of how the connectivity across the globe has increased. Today more than 200 countries and over a billion people have access to the Internet. Advances in telecommunications—for example, 24-hour global news, the Internet, “world” phones, instant messaging, and Web logs (blogs)—have led to vast increases in globalization and have also spurred the use of global project teams.

Increased Globalization

Globalization refers to the compression of the world and the increased awareness that no country or individual can shut itself off from others (Robertson, 1992; Walsham, 2001). Today, organizations are increasingly moving away from focusing exclusively on local markets. For example, Asian businesses, such as Mitac and Creative Technologies, are focusing on global markets by attempting to become serious competitors in the PC, telecommunications equipment, computer parts, and digital services industries. The Thai subsidiary of Texas Instruments is also increasing its global customer base, becoming one of the world’s largest producers of microchips. Price Waterhouse LLP is focusing on forming overseas partnerships to increase its client base and better serve regions away from its U.S. home. Today, more and more organizations are operating throughout the world; this, too, has led to an increased use of global project teams.

Changes in political systems have also opened new markets, most notably in Asia and Latin America. For instance, Hong Kong, with its sophisticated fiber-optic-based telecommunications infrastructure and multinational banks, has become a center for organizations focusing on Internet-enabled business. Many Latin American countries have also liberalized and expanded their global trade, most notably Brazil, which is home to more than half of the Internet users in Latin America. Additionally, many economies in former Soviet-bloc and eastern European countries are rapidly evolving. In sum, the globalization of the world’s markets is another important factor contributing to the growth of global information-systems project teams.

Increased Outsourcing

The advances in telecommunications and increased globalization have enabled organizations to seek partners with cheap, yet high-quality, labor (see Table 3.8). Much like a firm would outsource the manufacturing of some component of a physical product, firms are also now outsourcing information system development, support, and management. Today the global outsourcing market exceeds $500 billion annually and is predicted to rapidly increase over the next decade. Additionally, nearly 90 percent of all large organizations are expected to use some form of global IT outsourcing by 2006. Companies are choosing to outsource some or all of their information systems development, support, or management for a variety of reasons, including (King, 2003):

- To reduce or control costs
- To free up internal resources
- To gain access to world-class capabilities
- To increase revenue potential of the organization
- To reduce time to market
- To increase process efficiencies
- To outsource noncore activities
- To compensate for a lack of specific capabilities or skills
Table 3.8 Salary Differences Have Helped to Make Global Outsourcing Popular

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Average Annual Salary for Experienced Systems Programmer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poland and Hungary</td>
<td>$4,800 to $8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>$5,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>$6,564</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>$7,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian Federation</td>
<td>$5,000 to $7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>$8,952</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>$28,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>$23,000 to $34,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>$15,000 to $38,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>$63,331</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Ethical Dilemma: Implications of Global Outsourcing

“It’s considered a crime against humanity today, where for the last 15 years, it was a sound business move.” IBM spokesman John Bukovinsky recently stated what many companies think about global outsourcing. From software development to call centers, many companies have used outsourcing to get access to highly skilled but inexpensive labor in foreign countries, mainly India and China. Often, companies choose to outsource certain jobs because they have a hard time finding the right workers in the United States; in many cases, however, outsourcing is done to decrease costs, which increases a company’s bottom line.

Although outsourcing can be beneficial for companies, it often results in domestic job cuts. For the displaced worker, the outsourcing is not beneficial. Recent studies claim that offshore outsourcing is not a zero-sum game; companies often use the cost reductions from outsourcing to move into new business segments or to invest in new products, thereby creating new jobs in the United States.

Nevertheless, in the short run, moving a job to India can roughly be translated into laying-off a domestic employee. Should this be viewed as a sound business move or a crime against humanity? (Sources: Cringely [2003], Lopez [2004], Morphy [2004])

Discussion Questions
1. Should there be limits on the extent to which organizations can outsource work to other countries? Explain.
2. If you were a project manager who oversaw a global project team with outsourced members, what benefits and challenges would you envision?

In addition to these factors, a “buy-versus-build” mentality is becoming more pervasive as higher quality and more sophisticated off-the-shelf applications become available from a broader range of vendors. Additionally, with better low-level
support and more programming tasks being outsourced, organizational IT groups increasingly are being used to integrate off-the-shelf modules with applications developed by outsourcing partners. Increased system integration and the use of global outsourcing providers make effective project planning and management extremely important; “It is one thing to have cheap labor available to perform routine development tasks, it is another to ensure that the software is being effectively designed and projects are effectively managed.” Next, we will examine some of the challenges associated with managing global information systems project teams.

**Challenges for Managing Global Information Systems Project Teams**

Whether or not a firm is trying to integrate information systems across countries, develop a system in one country for use in another, or outsource parts of its systems development abroad, it faces many challenges when it seeks to operate across national boundaries. Challenges for managing global information systems project teams can be categorized into four broad categories (see Figure 3.15):

1. Technology-related challenges
2. Cultural challenges
3. Human-resource challenges
4. Environmental challenges

**Technology-Related Challenges**

The primary technological challenge faced by organizations operating across national boundaries is related to the telecommunications infrastructure. The price, quality, and speed of telecommunications can vary from country to country. For
example, the price of an Internet connection in Europe can be more than double the price of a similar connection in the United States. Such price differences can be even greater when contrasting developed and less-developed countries. Additionally, the quality of the telecommunications infrastructure can vary significantly, causing problems in data transfer and connectivity. For instance, in Greece, only half of the telecommunications network is digital, making it much slower and less reliable than the network in say, Finland, which is 100 percent digital. Likewise, the sophistication and geographic coverage of a country’s telecommunications infrastructure can also vary. In less developed countries, such as those in Asia or Africa, large areas can exist where no network access is available. Such gaps act as a significant barrier to developing global partnerships. For example, a Hong Kong-based company recently opened operations in Thailand, only to realize that no common telecommunications connections were available, limiting its ability to interact with its headquarters (Sarker and Sarker, 2000).

Apart from the price, the quality, and the pervasiveness of the infrastructure, telecommunications standards can also vary throughout the world. In addition to infrastructure challenges, the hardware and software environments can also be different, causing serious communication and integration problems. Whereas the United States has seen a predominance of the use of IBM mainframes or network servers with Windows-based clients, Unix-based workstations have been an extremely popular hardware platform in Europe. Software preferences can also be different; most European nations prefer to use PDF files when exchanging documents; U.S.-based organizations prefer Microsoft Office-based document sharing. Such hardware and software differences can cause serious problems in data sharing, data transfer, and overall project communication, adding to the complexity of managing global projects and teams.

Cultural Challenges
Hofstede (2001) defines culture as the “collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another” (p. 9). Culture is manifested in how individuals view a variety of cultural dimensions, such as power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, time, and life focus (see Table 3.9). In essence, each nation has its own culture, which can often have important implications for managing global project teams.

Power distance refers to how different societies handle the issue of human inequality and sheds light on the inherent power structure within organizations and teams. Some cultures are higher in power distance, preferring autocracy, whereas other cultures are lower in power distance, fostering more collaborative teamwork and less hierarchical structures. Consequently, differences in power distance can pose serious challenges for managing global project teams.

For instance, an information systems development project was undertaken by a Jamaican insurance company to improve its claim processing (Walsham, 2001). For this project, Indian software developers were hired to jointly develop the new information system with their Jamaican counterparts. In the initial project stages, the group worked effectively together. Over time, however, there was significant and ongoing conflict between the two groups. One of the major causes of this conflict related to differences in power distance between the Indian and Jamaican cultures. The Indian software developers, originating from a country with a relatively high power-distance culture, were viewed as being highly autocratic and were not used to being contradicted or questioned. In contrast, the Jamaican developers came from a relatively low power-distance culture, believing in consensual and democratic management styles. For
them, it was most natural to sit down as a group and talk through issues when making decisions. The difference in power distance for these teams led to extensive clashes, delaying the actual development process and hurting the overall project quality.

The degree of uncertainty avoidance helps in understanding the risk-taking nature of a culture. From a project team perspective, this might result in team members from some cultures being more cautious; this can be particularly troublesome when they are reluctant to adopt new technologies or techniques. A related dimension, individualism/collectivism, reflects the extent to which a society values the position of an individual versus the position of a group. In collectivist societies, peer pressure often plays an important role in shaping group interaction and decision-making. Mixing individually and collectively oriented individuals on a team can often cause excessive conflict if not carefully managed. Additionally, masculinity/femininity refers to the degree to which a society is characterized by masculine qualities, such as assertiveness, or by feminine characteristics, such as nurturance, which can have important implications in terms of user preferences for technology, how user requirements are collected, or how teams assign roles and collaborate.

The concept of time can also differ across cultures, with some cultures having a relatively longer-term orientation, reflecting an appreciation for future rewards, perseverance, and long-term planning. Conversely, cultures with shorter-term orientation focus on the past and the current situation. Clearly, time orientation differences can greatly influence project planning, task assignments, and overall team performance. A last cultural dimension, life focus, contrasts the extent to which a culture focuses on quantity of life versus quality of life. A quality-of-life orientation reflects a more competitive culture that values achievements and the acquisition of material goods. A quality-of-life orientation values relationships, interdependence, and concern for others. Life focus differences can influence group development, task and role assignments, and reward preferences among team members. In sum, global project

<table>
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<tr>
<th>COUNTRIES</th>
<th>GROUP 1: USA,</th>
<th>GROUP 2: GERMANY,</th>
<th>GROUP 3: MEXICO,</th>
<th>GROUP 4: HONG KONG,</th>
<th>GROUP 5: INDIA,</th>
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<td>Life Focus</td>
<td>Quantity</td>
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<td>More on Quality than Quantity</td>
<td>Changing from Quantity to Quality</td>
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Table 3.9 Critical Cultural Dimensions for Various Countries

Uncertainty avoidance
A cultural characteristic that helps in understanding the risk-taking nature of a culture.

Individualism/collectivism
A cultural characteristic that reflects the extent to which a society values the position of an individual versus the position of a group.

Masculinity/femininity
A cultural characteristic that refers to the degree to which a society is characterized by masculine or feminine qualities.

Concept of time
A cultural characteristic that reflects the extent to which a culture has a longer- or shorter-term orientation.

Life focus
A cultural characteristic that contrasts the extent to which a culture focuses on quantity of life versus quality of life.
teams composed of people with differing cultural values will be much more difficult to manage. Effective project teams will require members who are sensitive and respectful to the differences of others; it is crucial that project managers employ differing and flexible management techniques in order to help a team reach its optimal performance.

In addition to cultural barriers, many other barriers can hinder global project team interaction and performance, including:

- Language—for example, communication language and norms
- Work culture—for example, work skills, habits, and attitudes toward work
- Aesthetics—for example, art, music, and culture
- Education—for example, attitudes toward education and literacy
- Religion, beliefs, and attitudes—for example, spiritual institutions and values
- Social organizations—for example, family and social cohesiveness
- Political life—for example, political stability

Each of these cultural elements can greatly influence project team interaction and performance, as outlined in Table 3.10. For example, the lack of a common language can often lead to disastrous results when communicating technical information such as user requirements or design specifications. Likewise, differences in work culture can influence project team interaction and effectiveness. For instance, Europeans typically approach a project by focusing on its beginning and incrementally moving forward until the project is concluded. Americans, in contrast, typically look at the end first, and work backward to the start (Heichler, 2000). In sum, differences in language, work culture, and other cultural elements can have serious implications for managing cross-cultural information-systems project teams.

### Expertise Related Challenges

Apart from the cultural issues, the nature of the IS workforce can also pose significant challenges for global project teams. Different countries have different concentrations of skilled workers and, as previously discussed, differing costs for those workers. For example, most industrial nations have made significant investments in building a large base of skilled information systems personnel. However, these workers will

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CULTURAL ELEMENT</th>
<th>HOW IT CAN IMPACT THE PROJECT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Communication problems can influence project team efficiency, understanding, and performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Work Culture</td>
<td>Different skills, work habits and attitudes can influence project performance and manpower constraints.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aesthetics</td>
<td>Art, music, and dance reflect nonwork interests that can be used to enrich team communication and cohesiveness.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education level limits skill levels, technological sophistication, and infrastructure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion, Beliefs, and Attitudes</td>
<td>Basic values and beliefs can influence attitudes toward work, promptness, punctuality, mutual trust, respect, and cooperation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Organization</td>
<td>Social norms can influence formal and informal communication, including negotiations and job assignments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Life</td>
<td>Differing political systems can influence the delivery of supplies and equipment, human rights, the legal system, and overall stability.</td>
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</table>

*Source: Adapted from Verma, 1997.*
typically also be much more costly to employ than those from less developed countries. The types of skills prevalent in different countries may also vary. For instance, a cross-cultural software development project involving analysts and developers from both Norway and the United States led to conflict regarding the preferred development methodology and programming environment (Sarker and Sahay, 2004). This conflict hindered workload sharing and team cohesiveness.

**Environmental Challenges**

Environmental issues can also pose significant challenges for managing global IS projects and teams due to differing rules and regulations. One example is the European Union Data Protection Directive of 1998, which controls transborder data flow between nations. Contrary to many of the regulations in the United States, this directive states that personal data collected in Europe can only be used for the purposes for which it has been collected and cannot be transferred across national borders. This has caused significant challenges for U.S. organizations that employ European project team members.

Legal policies can also differ, which is often an outgrowth of the inherent culture of the country. For example, the copyright laws in China are fairly relaxed because copying is seen as a compliment to the originator of the work. The concept of ownership of intellectual property goes against the Chinese’ notion that the value of the society is greater than the value of the individual. The political environment can also play an important role in global project team management. A stable, political government that is keen on investing in information systems infrastructure is always more attractive to potential partners. Likewise, currency fluctuations can have significant implications for global operations and teams where changes in the exchange rate can quickly transform a low-cost geographical area to a high-cost area and vice versa. In sum, many challenges related to technology, culture, expertise, and environment can influence the difficulty of managing global project teams. In addition to these challenges, relatively minor issues such as differences in time zones or how intellectual property is viewed can pose formidable challenges to global project teams.

**Developing Global Information Systems Project Teams**

One of the keys to creating successful global project teams is to have members who can work together effectively. This means that effective project team members will not only have strong technical skills but will also be effective at working in cross-cultural teams. Unfortunately, people with good cross-cultural team training are in short supply. Nevertheless, there are several effective strategies for developing stronger global project teams, and these are discussed next (see Figure 3.16).

**Hire Individuals Experienced in Working Across Cultures**

The first strategy is very straightforward. Simply put, hiring individuals who are experienced in working on cross-cultural project teams and possess the necessary cultural sensitivity to empathize with other cultures will greatly enhance global project team performance. Pat Zilvitis, the CIO of Gillette, has repeatedly found that people who have “technical astuteness, business understanding, cultural sensitivity, and ability to communicate well” are perfect candidates for global project team assignments (Heichler, 2000). Given that it is often difficult to find people with global project team experience, another strategy is to develop the skills of existing
employees. For example, many companies are rotating staff into global project teams or assigning staff to locations throughout the world.

**Hire Individuals Who Can Speak Multiple Languages**

A second strategy is to hire individuals who can speak different languages. Language problems within global project teams are often hidden beneath the surface. Many people are embarrassed to admit when they don’t completely understand a foreign colleague. Unfortunately, the miscommunication of important design information can have disastrous effects on a project. Having at least one person at each remote location who is fluent in the host country’s language can help to alleviate this problem.

**Make the Organizational Culture More Flexible**

A third strategy is to design a flexible organizational culture that best reflects the cultural values of the local employees. For example, Fujitsu has been making strong gains in its international markets, especially in Internet and multimedia products, after years of overseas failure. To gain flexibility, Fujitsu changed its culture significantly to fit the needs of local environments, such as the relaxation of strict Japanese standards of dress and the introduction of flexible working hours. This flexibility has led to enhanced organizational and project team performance.

**Sensitize Teams to Global Cultural and Political Issues**

A fourth strategy focuses on the development of mechanisms to help global project teams be more sensitive to the various cultural and political differences of their members. Such sensitivity and awareness can be developed through careful and in-depth training and by having a diverse mix of employees representing
different cultures within the organization and team. Project team members who understand current events and the political climate of a global project team member’s country will enhance project communication, team cohesiveness, and performance.

Globalization is a reality within the information systems departments of most large organizations. In the not too distant future, it will be a reality in virtually all organizations, both large and small. For better or worse, it appears that global outsourcing is here to stay. Thus, to be an effective project manager in this increasingly global environment, you must become skilled in understanding and working with cross-cultural teams.

Global Implications: Managing International Projects

Project managers who are successful in managing projects within their home countries are not always successful when assigned to manage a project in an international location. To increase your chances of success, prior to your assignment do the following:

1. Read books, newspapers, magazines, and Web sites about the country.
2. Talk to people who already know the country and its culture.
3. Avoid literal translations of work materials, brochures, memos, and other important documents.
4. Watch locally produced television and monitor the local news through international news stations and Web sites.
5. After arriving in the new country, take time to tour local parks, monuments, museums, entertainment locations, and other cultural venues.
6. Share meals and breaks with local workers and discuss more than just work-related issues, such as current local events and topics.
7. Learn several words and phrases in the local language.

To create a successful project team environment, you need to build trust. Trust is built by showing sensitivity to and awareness of local issues, language, and culture. By following these steps, you will not only increase the project’s likelihood of success; you will also make your project experience much more enjoyable (Source: Treitel [2000]).

Managing Project Teams and the PMBOK

In this chapter, we have focused primarily on Knowledge Area 9, Project Human Resource Management, of the Project Management Institute Body of Knowledge (PMBOK, 2004) (see Figure 3.17). Specifically, three key processes—organizational planning, staff acquisition and team development—have been discussed. Additionally, we have also discussed issues related to Knowledge Area 2, the Project Management Context, by examining various organizational influences on projects and project managers, as well as several key general management skills for project managers. Together, this information provides a solid foundation for managing project teams.
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**Key:** ● - where material is covered in past chapters; ✓ - current chapter coverage; ○ - where material is covered in future chapters
Chapter 3 Managing Project Teams

RUNNING CASE
Managing Project Teams

Jim Woo, the assistant director of information technology at Petrie’s, a Southern California-based electronics retail store, walked into his building’s conference room. It was early in the morning for Jim, but the meeting was important to him. He was going to put together his team for the customer-relationship project he had just been named to manage. It was Jim’s first big project to manage at Petrie’s, and he was excited about getting started.

“Hi, Jim,” said Ella Whinston, the chief operation officer. With Ella was a guy Jim did not know. “This is Bob Petroski, Jim. I’ve asked that he be on your project team to represent me.”

Jim and Bob shook hands. “Nice to meet you, Jim. I’m looking forward to working with you on this project.”

“Bob knows how important this project is to me,” Ella said, “so I expect him to keep me informed about your progress.” Ella smiled.

Great, Jim thought, more pressure. That’s all I need. Just then, John Smith, the head of marketing walked into the conference room. With him was a young woman Jim recognized, but he wasn’t sure where he had seen her.

“Jim,” John said, “let me introduce you to Sally Fukuyama. She is the assistant director of marketing. She will be representing marketing and me on your No Customer Escapes project.”

“Hi, Jim,” Sally said, “I have a lot of ideas about what we can do. Even though I still have my regular job to worry about, I’m excited about working on this project.”

“Who else will be on your team?” Ella asked.

“I am bringing Sanjay Agarwal from IT,” Jim said. “He is in charge of systems integration in the IT department and reports to me. In addition to me and Sanjay and Sally and Bob, we will also have a store manager on the team. I’m trying to get Juanita Lopez, the manager of the store in Riverside. Like the rest of us, she is really busy, but I think we have to have a store manager on the team.”

“Riverside?” Ella asked. “That’s one of our top stores. Juanita should have a lot of insight into the issues related to keeping customers if she is managing the Riverside store. And you are right, she is going to be very busy.”

“So,” John asked, “when is your first meeting?”

Chapter Summary

Describe the characteristics of a project team and the factors that influence team performance.

A project team consists of two or more people who are mutually accountable to the organization and to each member of the team; they are also highly interdependent, having both shared goals and complementary skills. Project teams do not automatically become highly interdependent and productive but must develop and evolve through various stages as they work together over time. When teams develop, they pass through five stages: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Work design, composition, context, and process factors are just some of the many factors that influence team performance.

Explain what is meant by need and process theories of motivation.

Motivation refers to an individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal. There have been contrasting views of how, why, and when people are motivated. Need theories of motivation deal with factors within a person that act to energize, direct, or stop various behaviors. For example, good working conditions may energize a person to work hard on a project. Process theories of motivation attempt to understand a person’s behavior based on intrinsic or personal factors that are used to motivate specific behavior. In general, this perspective suggests that project managers need to create a proper environment, work processes, and rewards to achieve the greatest motivation from people.

Contrast trait, behavioral, and contingency theories of leadership.

Leadership is the ability to influence people toward the achievement of goals. There are three primary schools of thought regarding why certain people are great leaders. The first, trait theories of leadership, believes that
personality, appearance, competency, and other personal characteristics differentiate leaders from nonleaders. The second, behavioral theories of leadership, proposes that people’s actions, rather than personal traits, determine their potential to be successful leaders. The third, contingency theories of leadership, proposes that the situation is the most critical element for successful leadership. Today, researchers believe that effective leadership can be taught and that the behavioral and contingency theories of leadership most accurately predict leadership success.

Explain the sources of power and how these sources can be used to influence people. Power refers to the absolute capacity of a person to influence the behavior or attitudes of one or more target persons at a given point in time. Researchers have identified two general types of power that can be used to influence the behavior and attitudes of others: positional power and personal power. Positional power is based on an individual’s position in an organization and can be one of five types: legitimate, reward, coercive, informational, and ecological. Personal power is an outcome of an individual’s unique characteristics and can be one of three types: expert, referent, and charismatic. Understanding what power is, where it comes from, and why people possess it in differing amounts helps us to better understand various team roles and why and how some teams perform better than others.

Contrast functional versus dysfunctional conflict and explain how conflict can be beneficial to a project team. Conflict is the opposition of people in an organization arising from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands. There are two general types of conflict within project teams: functional and dysfunctional. Functional conflict helps to support the goals of the team and improve its performance, whereas dysfunctional conflict hinders group performance and is destructive to team performance. Today, researchers believe that conflict is a natural part of a project team and that some functional conflict—centered on task and work processes—is absolutely necessary for a team to perform effectively; conflict centered on personal relationships is never good for team performance.

Explain why global project teams are increasing and describe the challenges of managing these teams. The use of global teams for information systems projects has become increasingly popular due to three primary factors: 1) advances in telecommunications, 2) increased globalization, and 3) increased outsourcing. Although global project teams are becoming widespread, there are many challenges for managing these teams, including: 1) technology-related challenges, 2) cultural challenges, 3) human-resource challenges, and 4) environmental challenges. Because of this, you must become skilled in understanding and working with cross-cultural teams to be an effective project manager.
Match each of the key terms above with the definition that best fits it.

1. ________ Two or more people who share the same goals, are interdependent, have complementary skills, and are mutually accountable to the organization and to each member of the team.

2. ________ Five stages—forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning—through which a team evolves in order to reach optimal performance.

3. ________ A widely used personality test that can be used to improve work and personal relationships, increase productivity, and identify leadership and interpersonal communication preferences of team members.

4. ________ An individual’s intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal.

5. ________ The general attitude a person has toward his or her job.

6. ________ The failure to report to work.

7. ________ The rate at which people voluntarily or involuntarily leave an organization.

8. ________ A hierarchy of needs—physiological, safety, social, esteem, and self-actualization—where as each need is met, the next higher-level need becomes the motivating focus.

9. ________ Three core needs—Existence, Relatedness, and Growth—of which more than one need may be operative at the same time; if the fulfillment of a higher-level need is unrealized, the desire to satisfy a lower-level need becomes the motivating focus.

10. ________ Intrinsic factors—motivational factors—such as achievement, recognition, advancement, and responsibility are related to job satisfaction, whereas extrinsic factors—hygiene factors—such as salary, relationships with colleagues, and work conditions are associated with dissatisfaction.

11. ________ Individuals’ motivation can be explained by their need for achievement, power, and affiliation.

12. ________ Motivational theory that assumes people dislike work, are lazy, dislike responsibilities, and must be coerced to work hard.

13. ________ Motivational theory that assumes people like work, are creative, like autonomy, and seek responsibility.

14. ________ Management theory reflecting the Japanese work philosophy that includes a belief in lifetime employment, strong company loyalty, and group consensus.

15. ________ Specific and difficult goal, with clear feedback on how well a person is meeting that goal, can enhance a person’s work productivity.

16. ________ Individuals compare their work inputs and outcomes with those of others and then respond to eliminate any inequities.

17. ________ A motivation theory that argues that both positive and negative feedback condition behavior.

18. ________ People exert a high level of effort when they believe that 1) effort will lead to a good performance appraisal, 2) a good appraisal will lead to rewards, and 3) these rewards will satisfy their needs.

19. ________ A formal position of authority in an organization that is responsible for planning, organizing, directing, monitoring, and controlling the activities of others.

20. ________ A person, who, by virtue of his or her personal attributes, can exert influence on others.

21. ________ The ability to influence people toward the achievement of goals.

22. ________ A set of leadership theories that suggest personality, appearance, competency, and other personal characteristics differentiate leaders from nonleaders.

23. ________ A set of leadership theories that argue people’s actions determine their potential to be successful leaders.
24. ________ A set of leadership theories that suggest that the situation is most critical for identifying leadership success.
25. ________ The absolute capacity of a person to influence the behavior or attitudes of one or more target persons at a given point in time.
26. ________ Power derived from an individual’s position in an organization.
27. ________ Power derived from an individual’s unique characteristics.
28. ________ The opposition of people in an organization arising from incompatible or opposing needs, drives, wishes, or external or internal demands.
29. ________ Conflict that supports the goals of the team and improves its performance.
30. ________ Conflict that hinders group performance and interferes with team performance.
31. ________ The use of resolution and stimulation techniques to achieve a desired level of team conflict.
32. ________ A project team whose members are located throughout the world.
33. ________ The compression of the world and the increased awareness that no country or individual can shut itself off from others.
34. ________ The collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another.
35. ________ A cultural characteristic that describes how different societies handle the issue of human inequality.
36. ________ A cultural characteristic that helps in understanding the risk-taking nature of a culture.
37. ________ A cultural characteristic that reflects the extent to which a society values the position of an individual versus the position of a group.
38. ________ A cultural characteristic that refers to the degree to which a society is characterized by masculine or feminine qualities.
39. ________ A cultural characteristic that reflects the extent to which a culture has a longer- or shorter-term orientation.
40. ________ A cultural characteristic that contrasts the extent to which a culture focuses on quantity of life versus quality of life.

**Review Questions**

1. What are the major processes involved in project team management?
2. How is a project team different from a group?
3. Describe the five stages of project team development.
4. Discuss how work design, composition, context, and process influence project team performance.
5. What is motivation and why is it important for project managers to understand why and how people are motivated?
6. Describe and contrast the hierarchy of needs, the ERG theory, and the two-factor theory.
7. What are process theories of motivation?
8. Contrast what is meant by hygiene factors versus motivational factors in the two-factor theory of motivation. Which is more important? Why?
9. Describe how leadership and power can be used to influence project team members.
10. Explain and contrast trait, behavioral, and contingency theories of leadership.
11. Describe various types of positional power and personal power.
12. Describe and contrast functional versus dysfunctional conflict and how conflict management techniques can be used to manage conflict within a team.
13. What factors have led to the increased use of global project teams?
14. Explain and contrast various technological, cultural, human-resource, and environmental challenges of managing global project teams.
CHAPTER EXERCISES

1. Do you prefer to work as part of a team or alone? Why? How do you think your answer compares with others in your class? Does this preference depend on what type of task you are working on?
2. What types of problems might occur at each stage in the five-stage team development model?
3. Can a person be too motivated? Why or why not?
4. What motivates professional employees? What motivates hourly workers?
5. Do you think you have the traits and skills to be a leader? Why or why not?
6. Distinguish between leadership and management. Do you think you would be a better leader or a better manager? Why?
7. What type of power—positional or personal—has the greatest influence on other team members within an information systems project team? Why?
8. Some conflict is good for a project team, whereas other types of conflict are bad. What type of conflict causes the greatest problems in project teams? Why?
9. Global outsourcing appears to be here to stay. Use the Web to identify a company that is providing low-cost labor from some less-developed part of the world. Provide a short report that explains who they are, where they are located, who their customers are, what services and capabilities they provide, how long they have been in business, and any other interesting information you can find in your research.
10. Examine Table 3.9 and rate yourself for each of the critical cultural dimensions. Do your ratings match those of your country in every instance? If they do, why do you think this is so? If not, why not?
11. Contrast the pros and cons of managing diverse project teams.
12. What are the implications of new forms of technology-mediated communication for managing project teams?
13. Leaders can come from all backgrounds, genders, and races. Meet with a team of three to five students and identify what makes the following individuals more effective (or less effective) leaders: President George W. Bush, Microsoft’s Bill Gates, Senator Hillary Clinton, and entertainer Oprah Winfrey. Write a one-page summary of your results.
14. Throughout your life—at school, work, or socially—you have undoubtedly participated on a team. Meet with a team of three to five students and identify, without naming names, the “worst team member I have ever worked with.” During this discussion, identify the key factors as to why each nominated worst team member was chosen and summarize this in a one-page report to your instructor.

CHAPTER CASE

Sedona Management Group and Managing Project Teams

The Sedona Management Group (SMG) recognizes the importance of teamwork in the successful completion of projects. Tim Turnpaugh also believes in building a project team based on both the skills and diversity in background of the project team members. To Turnpaugh, diversity in background adds fresh ideas that can enhance the quality of SMG’s products. As an example, the chief programmer at SMG not only has
the expected skills in ASP.Net, VB, and SQL Server, but he is also a professional jazz musician. Another member of SMG’s team, a graphic designer, was a physical therapist and an artist prior to joining the team. Turnpaugh believes that such diverse backgrounds allow people to approach problems differently, see issues from different perspectives, and in many ways, enhance the quality of the work environment. All of these factors not only result in enhanced project quality but also help the team learn to “think out of the box” and build new products and services that enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

What does it take to be an employee at SMG? The Sedona team looks for intrinsically motivated individuals, people who enjoy their work, whether it be building applications or interacting with SMG’s diverse client base. While these individuals should have the necessary technical expertise, such as skills in ASP.Net, VB, and SQL Server, their ability to work as members of the Sedona team and create a fun work environment are also highly valued. SMG looks for people who strive for perfection in what they do. Turnpaugh believes that these characteristics—while they can be developed to some extent—are highly dependent on the person’s basic personality and attitudes. Individuals who enjoy their work and pay attention to details make great employees for a self-managed work team environment, such as that at SMG. While compensation and other forms of extrinsic motivation are always important for any work environment, Turnpaugh seeks employees who are self-motivated to succeed and have fun while doing it.

In several situations, Turnpaugh has trained unskilled employees—what he calls rookies. He emphasizes that if an individual comes from a different background, the focus is not on stripping the employee’s knowledge and starting over again but rather on finding ways to complement that existing knowledge with the knowledge that will be gained working with the team. In the case of the graphic designer turned Web interface designer, the employee’s knowledge as an artist augments his ability in designing the interface for the system. As these skills are merged, Turnpaugh calls these people Ninjas, in that they become experts in their areas—beyond the normal black belt. He adds that he would rather have a few Ninjas on his team than a bunch of non-Ninjas. Central to SMG’s personnel philosophy is that recruitment is key. A smart, personable, hard-working individual can, in many instances, acquire the appropriate skills for his position. The reverse, however, is not true. While skilled, a person who isn’t motivated to work hard and cannot enjoy the work environment may never acquire these attributes.

SMG’s reward and recognition system is set up to reward both individual behavior and teamwork. While Turnpaugh recognizes individual members of the Sedona team who have done something extra to ensure customer satisfaction, rewards are also given for group-level performance to ensure people are pulling together as a team. To further enhance the social fabric and teamwork aspects of his organization, social events are frequently planned after the team has successfully completed a project. Many members of the Sedona team genuinely like each other and share common hobbies and time together after work.

Finally, Turnpaugh stresses the importance of smaller teams with three to seven members. Larger teams frequently suffer from problems associated with managing schedules and interteam communication. The Sedona team has found that communication is vital to the management and success of any project and that members of a smaller team tend to be in constant communication with each other. Consequently, these smaller teams can work more effectively toward fulfilling the customer’s needs.

CHAPTER 3 PROJECT ASSIGNMENT

As you have learned from this chapter, it takes teamwork to successfully complete most projects. The members of your entertainment Web site development team must work together to achieve the project objectives. For this assignment, you will find out what you need to work as a successful team.

1. As an individual-level assignment, determine at least five things that really work well, and five that do not, when managing teams.
2. Get together with your team members and discuss what each of you has written in response to Question 1.
3. Establish a set of ground rules that you will use during the project to manage team interactions.
4. Also determine a responsibility assignment matrix that defines who will perform what work at a very general level.
5. Identify the skills that are most important for the project manager.
References


