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**MANAGING INTERNATIONAL TEAMS FROM BUSINESS COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVES**

**Thesis**

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**ABSTRACT**

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<p>The aim of the thesis was to analyze a suggestion for an efficient way of managing an international team through communication methods. This concept usually applied to multi-national companies (MNCs) and intercontinental corporations. The thesis aimed to give any leaders or managers an overview of a number of problems may occur in work place and also some important aspects they should consider before preparing solutions for those aforementioned problems.</p> <p>The theoretical part was divided into two main considerations: international business communication and international team management. As further, there were eight elements involved in total, from business communication analysis from cross-cultures background, leadership hierarchies to numerous frameworks and strategies to conquer a team that consists of colleagues from different nations with different knowledge cultivated.</p> <p>The empirical part was to collect answer from two managers with minimum of five-year experience and two employees from MNCs. The empirical part proposed to be qualitative research and analyzing process, which strived to reflect how much the theoretical part above could implement.</p>		

## **ABSTRACT**

In conclusion, communication at workplace is never considered to be enough and it must be developed by both managers and team members with the efforts from managers and employees. There were different leading perspectives that effectively work for team leaders to manage an international team. Through practical research, all participants aware of the importance of communication to their work and they all have their own ways of improving their communication. Most of the interviewees values their working experience in MNCs as they obtain more new ways of thinking, become more emphatic and willing to support their colleagues more.

### **Key words**

Cross-cultured workplace, intercultural communication, multinational team work, team management, qualitative analysis.

**ABSTRACT**

**CONTENTS**

**1 INTRODUCTION.....1**

**2 MANAGING INTERNATIONAL TEAMS FROM BUSINESS COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVES .....4**

**2.1 Business communication as a part of team management .....4**

        2.1.1 Cultures classification.....5

        2.1.2 Communication features with cultural contribution.....8

        2.1.3 The power of communication in leadership .....12

**2.2 Managing an international team successfully.....14**

        2.2.1 Establishing a team .....14

        2.2.2 Some team leading perspectives.....17

        2.2.3 Final decisions.....23

**2.3 Case study: Land Rover and BMW-Rover.....24**

        2.3.1 Land Rover case study .....25

        2.3.2 BMW- Rover case study .....26

**3 CONDUCTING RESEARCH.....28**

    3.1 Research method and implementation process .....28

    3.2 Participants’ background .....29

    3.3 Analysis results .....30

**4 CONCLUSION .....34**

**REFERENCES.....35**

**APPENDICES**

**GRAPHS**

GRAPH 1. The relation of management skills to their communicative purposes.....19

GRAPH 2. Land Rover logo.....24

GRAPH 3. BMW- Rover logo.....26

**FIGURES**

FIGURE 1. The thesis’s structure.....2  
FIGURE 2. Cultures classification.....6  
FIGURE 3. Two-way communication primer.....12  
FIGURE 4. Certain tasks divisions.....16

**TABLES**

TABLE 1. Cultures classification versus professions.....7  
TABLE 2. Communicative features of linear- active, multi- active and reactive.....10  
TABLE 3. British coded speech.....22  
TABLE 4. American coded speech.....22

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Business leadership among corporations and organizations has always become a crucial element in the perspective of contributing to successful and sustainable development through decades. In other words, it is regarded as a key success factor in businesses, regardless of business's size, from family-sized companies to franchises to multi-national companies. Therefore, it is significantly necessary for each leader or manager to raise his or her awareness of his or her responsibilities, as well as their sufficient power to better changes. In addition, there is one effective independent way for leaders and managers to disseminate their leadership at workplace, which is through business communication perspectives. A good leader should never think that he or she has communicated enough with their teammates. Because of the fact that temporary problems and obstacles always appear each day, a responsible should regularly be present and communicate with the colleagues in order to actually control unwanted events and plan for further back-ups.

Especially in global enterprises, such as multi-national companies (MNCs) and organizations, business communication between leader and teammates, or between individuals has proven its extensive role to make any team can successfully work together. From international basis, there are more additional elements to be accounted into the managing skills and the business communication skills. A striking example can be taken is the cross-culture aspects. Employees from varied countries obey contrasting culture as it leads to unfamiliar education background, working habits and opinions. Without frequent mutual communications and interactions, a number of problems may occur and thus, perform as an unwanted anchor to refuse continuous improvements and innovations at that workplace. Hence, an idea of a solution involving managing international teams from business communication perspective should be very promising to break the limits and blur any unnecessary boundaries at workplace.

I found this heading outstandingly attractive, especially from extend of a Bachelor of Business Administration. My personal interests in Human Resources Management and intercultural communication in practice. As a result, it is ideal to make an effort of a combination of these two interests into one integral work. Furthermore, the author completes this thesis as a researching project about her desired workplace—a multi-national company or organization. It is believed that by doing this complex work and research, a more profound awareness and knowledge about the author's objectives can increase to a higher level. On the other hand, this thesis may act as a reading source for any individuals sharing common interests or aims.

The main objective of the thesis is to analyze and clarify the idea of ‘Managing international teams from business communication perspectives’. From the dimension of a leader working at a workplace with international colleagues, this thesis manages to point out how that leader can make a team really work. Significantly, there are numerous methods and strategies in leading and managing, however, this thesis focus mainly focus on communication aspect, which has become the most important skill today, according to Forbes (2015). With the help of communication, any temporary issues or misunderstandings can be solved with ease. In the thesis, there are separate yet integrate elements contributing to the Business Communication aspect and the Managing International Teams aspect. Besides, some interesting elements supporting managing process will be revealed, namely, ‘Ethical Behaviors’ and ‘Mutual Trust among a Team’.

The structure of the thesis contains of two main parts. The first main part is labelled the same as the thesis topic, which is ‘Managing international teams from business communication perspectives’. The second main part is called ‘Practical Research’. The total layout of the thesis is divided into four chapters, descriptively as, ‘Introduction’ for chapter one, ‘Managing international teams from business communication perspectives’ for chapter two, ‘Practical Research’ for chapter three and the fourth chapter is called ‘Conclusion’. (Figure 1) below shows a quick review of the thesis.

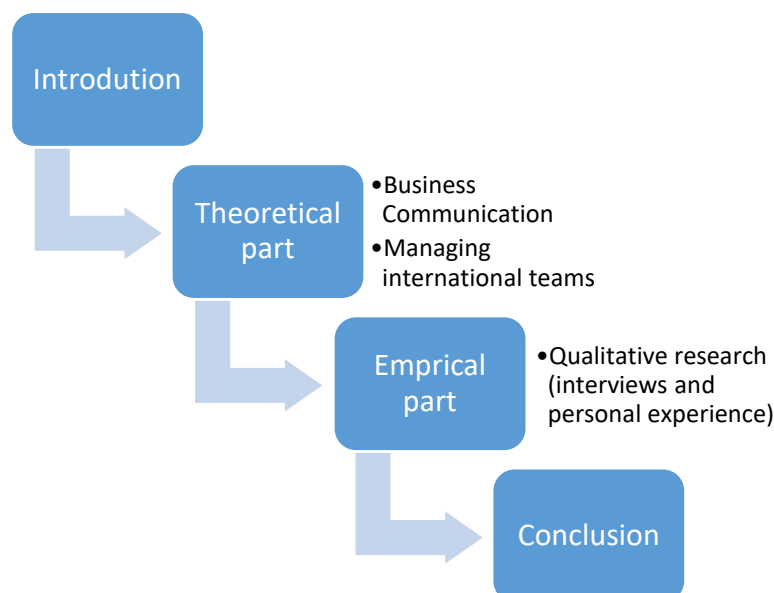


FIGURE 1. The thesis’s structure

Beside chapter one, which is the introduction part of the thesis, chapter two and chapter three can be considered the main content of the the thesis. Chapter two regards the theoretical part of how leaders should manage their international teams with the help of business communication. Chapter two consists of two smaller sections, which are ‘Business Communication’ and ‘Managing international Teams’. Both of these two sections contain various supporting element in order to analyze the sections in different dimensions. Frameworks, methods and case studies from international businesses and organizations are combined to contribute to chapter two.

Chapter three is the empirical part with qualitative research process. There were five candidates participated in this research and they are all have at least five years of experience working in MNCs. Two of them are now responsible as leaders among international team. Five in-depth questions were introduced to each candidate to reflect their practical experience and opinions with some of the given methods and framework in the theoretical part. Also, there is an analysis of the author’s personal experience as a leader with her international teams and what she learnt from that experience. Chapter four shows the conclusions and summary of evaluations through the whole thesis.



## 2 MANAGING INTERNATIONAL TEAMS FROM BUSINESS COMMUNICATION PERSPECTIVES

*'Working in a team has been a challenge since time immemorial. While it is not easy in a familiar - monocultural or narrowly technical – environment, the challenge grows exponentially when borders are crossed and varying cultures and personalities enter into a collision course'* [Bairatchnyi, 2012] (Lewis, 2012, xi)

With the rapid expansion of global business network, it has become inevitable to replace individual work to teamwork with the co-operation of a number of people so as to increase working efficiency and reach to a more broaden business network. However, it is understandable to find out a huge number of employees who admitted that they experienced some hard moments participating in team works. Especially when it comes to employees who work at cross-cultured working environment. Misunderstandings and conflicts are too significant too be seen and people feel like they should be more careful and conscious to avoid those issues. As a result, besides the fact of the main tasks to be solved at work, they sometimes feel a little of pressure and lack of comfort. This problem even happens for leaders and managers but that can be regarded as one inspiring motivation for the leaders of international teams to strive to find optimal solutions for team management.

Managing employees through the means of business communication is effective and interesting. It provides advices for leaders to manage their teams and for even better mutual understandings between individuals. Thus, not only working results are upgraded but also the positive working mood of every people involving in the work. In this chapter, business communication as a part of team management and managing an international team successfully will be revealed as below.

### 2.1 Business communication as a part of team management

Business communication section aims to clarify the idea of how should a leader take advantages of different interdependent elements consisted in the section's study to maximize his or her capability to activate and sustain the positive working status of his or teammates. On the other hand, this section can be considered a reference source for employees who are positioned as international teammates at the moment so that they may get an overview to manage themselves in such international environment

workplace. All in all, this section encourages people to find a more thoughtful and effective way of communication to convey their daily ideas and opinions. This section starts from the first element, which is labelled as ‘Cultures classification’. This is where the problems initially begin and can be called ‘the root of the problems’. It proves that it has never been the involving people who matter, it must be cultures that responsible for those problems and conflicts.

### **2.1.1 Cultures classification**

‘Culture’ is a very familiar word to each human being yet not easy to illustrate by some statements. According to Cristina De Rossi, an anthropologist at Barnet and Southgate College in London culture is defined as below.

*"Culture encompasses religion, food, what we wear, how we wear it, our language, marriage, music, what we believe is right or wrong, how we sit at the table, how we greet visitors, how we behave with loved ones, and a million other things." (Zimmermann, 2017)*

The concept of culture has enormous effects on human beings from different continents and has crept into their minds when they were little children. Therefore, this presents distinctive differences from several perspectives, from human awareness and behaviors, social norms to business life and operation. Uncommon viewpoints in those perspectives lead to significant diversity. In addition, some foreseen consequences, such as advantages and drawbacks of that diversity. To begin with, the diversity of cultures can be classified into three broad categories, namely, linear- active, multi-active and reactive (Lewis, 2012).

To be more specific, the first category, which is linear- active is a word used to describe a group of people who are very conscious about their goals and their purposes. Usually they prepare agendas with clear directions or possible alternatives. Their working style is to follow precisely that agenda every single stages and it is commonly the way it is believed to achieve the final goal. These striking descriptions can be found easily in typical German colleagues, Swiss or Britain.

In general working perspectives, the people who possess these qualities have a tendency to create huge production for the final results. The second category must be mention is multi- active. They also contribute a considerable number of positive characteristics. They tend to have cheerful and open attitudes

concerning social communication and also at work. Another plus point for multi- active people is that they are possibly capable of handling more than two tasks at the same time. With cheerful and friendly attitudes, they attract a lot of social relationship. The last category is the reactive category, which usually represent introvert human beings yet expertized listeners. Their characteristics are highlighted by politeness with high commitment.

However, research shown that it is impossible to find an individual who solely belongs to one out of these three categories. This may be a positive news to each people, as well as each leader. For the employees, each of them embraces a mixture of characteristics which are based from those main three cultural classification. Thus, teammates from international teams working at multi-national companies and organizations will have opportunities to cultivate the inter-category characteristics between three main extreme categories: linear- active, multi-active and reactive. These ideal balance helps to create cross-cultural behaviors and support mutual sympathy to the fellow co-workers. From the position of managers and leaders, they find more inspiring and common reasons to analyze strategies to manage people with these whole cultures classifications mixes.

A triangle-shaped (Figure 2) below shows the inter- connections, initiated from the three core categories. There are three big spots, which are called ‘Multi- active’, ‘Linear- active’ and ‘Reactive’.

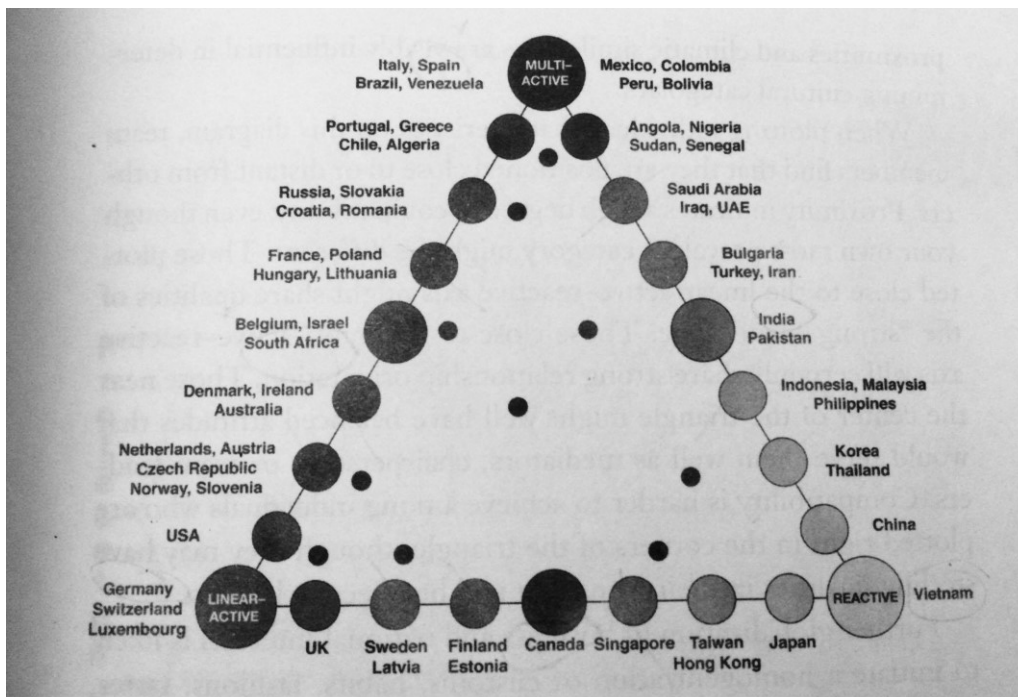


FIGURE 2. Cultures classification (Lewis 2012, 13)

These three big spots play a crucial part in the diagram to be three tops of the triangle. There are other smaller spots which are located between the three top. They represent some countries significantly observe the characteristics. The closer one country is located to one extreme, the more effect of that extreme to that country's characteristics. There are countries standing in the middle of two extreme. It means those countries tend to have balanced effective from both of the extreme's cultures classification.

Cultures classification can also have influences on jobs of each person. In fact, through the triangle-shaped diagram, whenever a leader defines his or her teammates into those three core categories, they may have an opportunity to examine and consider which task should he or she will be more likely to introduce to the proper teammate. The accuracy of the study though, cannot be completely precise yet still inspires leaders and manager a new way of brainstorming concerning management less in an intuitive style.

TABLE 1. Cultures classification versus professions

Numbers	Professions	Nationalities
1	Engineers	German
2	Accountants	Swiss
3	Technicians	Finnish
4	IT	Swedish
5	Constructors	British
6	R&D	United States
7	Scientists	Dutch
8	Administrators	Belgians
9	Lawyers	Russian
10	Project Leaders	French
11	Managers	Spanish
12	Personnel Officers	Arab
13	Teachers, Trainers	African
14	Marketing	Italian
15	Salesperson	South American

The content of (Table 1) at this situation is only an illustration of analysis from two extremes. They are linear- active and multi- active. (Lewis, 2012, 15). The differences in the characteristics in these two extremes also influence to varied professions in the society. There are fifteen cases of fifteen countries reflecting some typical jobs. The arrangement of numbers from one to fifteen is on purpose to illustrate linear- active extreme (number one) to multi- active extreme (number fifteen). Then, the other numbers sitting between these two extremes shows their inter-relations to both extremes.

As can be seen from the table, the chain of professions and nationalities from one to four, which is very close to the linear- active side, shows more accuracy- required jobs, such as, engineers, accountant, technicians and IT. This can be understandable from the characteristics basis of linear- active group. They prefer to work in a well- arranged plan and conquer each task. On the other hand, it is indicated from number twelve to fifteen that the countries owning multi- active culture tend to prefer jobs that require communication and involving several tasks to be solved at once. The rest cases lying between these two culture extremes embrace the features of both sides. The reflective careers that should combine both well- arranged plan and communication can be administrators or lawyer.

In terms of doing international business, the diversity of cultures brings much more advantages than drawbacks. Thanks to cross- culture diversity, a wide range of decision making is approachable to people. There are more and more countries have realized the value of international labors and international team work as it truly produces productivity and creativity. This has been proven from countries that used to be the main players in the Silk Road such as China or India in ancient history to the nowadays' top develop commercial countries such as The United State and The United Kingdom. They are all well known for the multi-national and multi- racial features. The tendency of doing business internationally is spreading faster than ever and it is evident to have international teams globally. This can be found in rich countries yet have limited other sources, especially human source, such as, Finland, Singapore and Switzerland. The whole explanation above emphasizes how necessary should leaders recognize their important role and start to cultivate their managing knowledge from now.

### **2.1.2 Communication features with cultural contribution**

In this section, the author emphasizes on communication features and how they differ from nation to nation. Different features of communications will be illustrated through three cultural categories which are classified in last section. This section, in addition, provides some primary information on a practical

case of an international teamwork and the role of each teammate who participated in it. Verbal speech is a powerful method of everyone to communicate to a target partner. In international teams, leaders and teammates must use their speech to convey their ideas and furthermore, their intention and purposes. If one cannot be aware of which methods should they communicate to the people they want to communicate with, they will surely abandon their voices. So far, it is more difficult to get their voices heard at the right time.

*'Speech is certainly a personal weapon, but different cultures use it in diverse ways'* (Lewis, 2012, 185)

Cultures, has contributed a lot to its effects on national communication styles and thinking thread. Each nation has its own communication style to illustrate opinions. Thus, when working in an international team of a multinational company (MNC), a lot of discussion will happen. With one common task, a team with five members from five different countries can express their own thoughts and their observations for that task. This is caused by the term 'cultures'. With distinctive academic background, education systems and religious beliefs, people from different countries always observe and judge an object applying their cultural aspect.

A beneficial point is highlighted when the leader has an opportunity to broaden his or her viewpoint from a number of dimensions. In this case, the term 'thinking out of the box' may be offered. As a result, more alternatives for the common tasks. However, on the other side of the coin, it will be very much challenging for the leader to collect all of those thoughts, to listen to possible debates from teammates owning opposing personal opinion and to make the final decision. A good leader should raise awareness of this issue and has some sketching ideas about features of communication. Managing styles and practical strategies will be introduced in the second part, which is called 'How to manage an international team successfully?'

To understand the diverse communication styles among cultures, a certain number of features concerning communication are conducted to a short summary (Table 2).

TABLE 2. Communicative features of linear- active, multi- active and reactive (adapted from Lewis 2012, 187)

<b>Linear- active</b>	<b>Multi- active</b>	<b>Reactive</b>
Talks and listens in equal degrees	Talks most of the time	Listens most of the time
Rarely interrupts	Often interrupts	Never interrupts
Confronts with facts	Confront emotionally	Never confront
Frank, direct	Indirect, manipulate	Indirect, courteous
Truth before diplomacy	Diplomatic, creative truth	Diplomacy before truth
Cool	Excitable	Inscrutable
Partly conceals feelings	Display feelings	Conceals feelings
Speech is information	Speech is opinion	Speech is to promote harmony
Defines problems and solves in quick sequence	Goes for all- embracing solutions	Prefer gradualist solutions
Admits own mistakes	Find an excuse	Hides, covers up
Likes clarity and accuracy	Tolerate ambiguity	Likes ambiguity
Talks in turns	Often talks over other	Takes turns slowly
Tolerates some silence	Cannot tolerate silence	Likes sharing silence

The table summaries most of communicative features. They are categories to three cultural groups that has been explained in advanced, which are linear- active, multi- active and reactive. Through this given information, leaders can manage to reflex their team members and even themselves to see the interesting contradicts. The act of reflection and making comparisons does not encourage any thoughts such as which culture is better than others nor do advice team leaders to examine their colleagues base on this summary. A better idea is to acknowledge these features and reflect to a team member to understand and share sympathy to him or her. More importantly, based on these reactions, leaders may find out strengths and weakness of each individual. After that, the leader can divide again the tasks for teammates and then see the upcoming results. Two-way discussions between the leader and teammates should be implemented as well to decrease misunderstandings. This action can be repeated as often as needed.

As illustrated in the table by Lewis (2012, 187) in his book 'When teams collide', the communicative features embrace various actions and communicating habits among three cultural groups. They involve ways of expressing talking habits, persuasive backgrounds and expressing feelings. Moreover, these communicative features reveal a diversity of working styles, such as ways of approaching problems and styles of giving speeches. By careful analysis and thoughtful understandings, leaders and managers will draw ways to organizing everyone into a common team and give them a chance to work together. Because of unique characteristics, which have been produced by several cultures backgrounds, there should be some certain solutions to keep international colleagues supporting each other under practical cases and concealing others' weaknesses. This is how a team should really work in practical, or, in other words, this is how perfect imperfections are created.

Here is a primary example to illustrate how communicative features will affect the team work outcomes, which are contributed by each teammate and how a leader should plan to manage them for the best working results. The situation of this example is withdrawn from the personal experience of the thesis's author. Three participants joined in a temporary project at Lodz University in Lodz, Poland. The two men are Paulo from Portugal and Luca from Czech Republic. There was only one female member from China called Zhi. Their one common goal was to create an interacting game concerning Lodz city to contribute to the tourism industry of the city. After the interacting game was completed, there would be a conference organized to call for sponsorship so that the game would be launched to the market with end customers.

Three team members solely showed their personal strengths and interests to different tasks in the project. Surprisingly, it, somehow, reflected clearly three cultural groups as stated above, namely, linear- active, multi- active and reactive. First of all, Paulo from Portugal reflected to a 'multi- active teammate'. He loved face-to-face interactions and owned a number of logical thoughts to highlight his viewpoint when it came to presentation. He made other people feel comfortable spending time and talking about things that was happening during the project. On the other hand, Luca from Czech Republic was a little bit cold when meeting other teammates. However, he proved from the first impression to be a passionate programmer with two years of working experience. The last member was Zhi, a typical analytical yet thoughtful member who was excellent to analyze potential customers' data.

According to the three members' interests and strengths, the leader of this team divided certain tasks for each team member. Zhi sketched out the ideas of the game and designed the game's content. Luca was the core programmer to create the game on internet devices. Paulo was responsible for the presentation



part to the municipality's sponsors. Because of good observations of each teammate, the leader managed the work into appropriate arrangements step by step. During most of the implementation stages, there was hardly any problems that might harm the final game product. However, there was a conflict appeared when it came to the presentation stage. Paulo did not feel confident about his preparation of the final presentation. Thus, several changes had been made and unfortunately, without much notice of due date. When it was only one day until the final presentation, Luca and Paulo had an argument because the final slides for presentation were not ready yet. Meanwhile, Zhi admitted to not interfere into the argument because she was afraid that Paulo might feel more pressure. From the leader's viewpoint, it was better to notice that it was not completely Paulo's fault to not finish his task on time. This might affect from the fact that Paulo got used to feel relax about time while working. He strived to created lots of ideas for the best performance yet miss to reach the timing. As in the role of a leader, it would be better if he discussed to Paulo about this issue and help Paulo to understand that sometimes, he must choose the best alternative at that moment, even though it was not the best one that Paulo had in his mind set.

### **2.1.3 The power of communication in leadership**

It is important to state that leadership should have an intimate relation to business communication.

*'In real estate, the old cliché is: location, location, location. In business leadership, you preach: communication, communication, communication'* (Froschheiser, 2008).

The statement of Lee Froschheiser, president and CEO of Map Consulting (MAP), showed how significant a leader can effectively lead a team with the help of communication. With the ability of conveying clear communication to fellow co-workers, leaders can show them clearly what big goal to achieve and what is needed to be planned. These two very first criteria will first ensure people working in a team having a straight forward viewpoint of what is happening in their workplace and know exactly their position in the 'big picture' of the company. This means teammates all navigate the common direction and start to brainstorm by themselves any possible alternatives. After that, the ability of clear communication from the leader can empower and inspire individuals who are involved. Only leaders who can express clearly their values will get people admired and then follow their lead.

Thus, it is essential to present to the whole colleagues at work the implementation process of a clear communication in business environment.



FIGURE 3. Two-way communication primer (Froschheiser, 2008)

To achieve a successful communication process, a leader must prepare for his actions. First, it is always important for the leader to find a main goal of the conversation, or, in other words, to find out why the leader find it necessary to gather all the team members to have a meeting. The goal of the conversation means the heart of a successful communication. Thus, the main goal or the main purpose must be very clear and understandable. When having the main goal of conversation, the leader should plan carefully how should he penetrate this issue with some arrangements of what aspects should be presented first and then last to illustrate his intention. It is beneficial if the leader could anticipate the responsive actions of the teammates. By doing this, there would be less surprises yet more preparations for the uncertainties and it should be faster to catch each other's ideas.

According to Froschheiser, the message should be delivered in a persuasive way and somehow, connects to further objectives. After introducing the goal of the conversation to the whole team, there should be a presentation of a thread of implementing actions, such as step-by-step instructions. On the way of receiving the comments and replies from colleagues, it is optimal to stay in open-minded status to recognize constructive ideas. In this two-way communication primer, the leader should bear in mind the confirmation of understandings from to parties, which are the leader versus the other involving teammates. The better understanding level may lead to the better density of comments, questions, mutual interactions and opinions from the listeners. This should be considered a positive sign in the perspective of a successful communication. In addition, a two-way respecting performance will really boost up the quality

of the team meeting. In the end, here comes the stages of evaluation and the creation of possible changes that has been discussed by the listeners before.

## **2.2 Managing an international team successfully**

Because international teams have been quickly framing the central position among companies and organizations all over the world, it is undeniable to raise the awareness of this spreading trend. In this part, the author emphasizes on some contributing elements on leading international teams. There are four vital elements that are labeled respectively. They are named as ‘Establish a team’, ‘Some team leading perspectives’, ‘Final decisions’ and ‘Ethical behaviors and mutual trust in teamwork’. Each element is titled in a directive way of showing its main intentions and they are solely positioned as an order of stages in the mind of a leader concerning the team managing process.

### **2.2.1 Establishing a team**

This is the first element to be mentioned in the team managing process. It is significantly fundamental to establish a suitable team with team members who can potentially work, support and enjoy working together in a long run. As a team leader, who aims to conquer success, it is advantageous to build this first step nicely as a profound base for further plans. In this section, the author mentions two notions. The first notion regards factors to consider when establishing a team and the second one regards to the tasks divisions for each team members.

There should be a wide range of issues to worry when a leader starts to create his team to work for some certain project. The very first question may appear is: ‘How big should a team be?’ According to Darren Brady (2017), the size of a team really matters.

*‘If you don’t manage to strike the balance properly with regards to the size of your team you might end up with a lot of preventable problems. Those teams that are too small risk having a skills gap in an important area while teams that are too large risk a loss of productivity and cohesiveness’.* Bradley (2017)

Through different studies, Mrs. Katherine Klein from Wharton University stated that the universally ideal number of a team's size is five members. She said that putting more than five people will not prove much personal performance. By contrast, having less than four members may decrease skills gaps and enthusiasm. Then, the next mission for the leader is to consider the criteria when choosing team members. There are six criteria in total, but the leader may consider whether to use all of them.

According to Brightwork (2014), a team needs an excellent communicator. This matched the discussion above and this excellent communicator is usually the team leader. The second criteria is to obey some basic tools or terms of the work. This is a primary requirement for any team member. For example, if the project the team is going to handle is about 'Haute couture fashion, spring 2017', then the participants should own knowledge on fashion in general or have interests of fashion trends of spring 2017.

In addition, when working as a team, a team member should also manage to organize their small tasks within the common work. A step-by-step plan or short-term objectives may be a practical suggestion. Because of the fact that it is simple to be achieved, as well as not too difficult to control, any team member can prepare those personal plans to minimize the probability of postponement. This requirement, in a way, helps to prevent possibly overwhelming deadlines. This requirement leads to another new one when looking for the best team member, which is the capability of time-estimating. Once people involved all prepared nicely their step-by-step plan, it is vital to estimate precisely some periods of time that those tasks can be fulfilled. Just a tiny incorrect time estimation might postpone other continuous activities. Thus, it may destroy the whole project.

The fifth criteria may be hard to embrace yet it would be ideal for a team to have some members who can notice others' feelings. They will notice whenever their teammates are not full of energy and courage them with some motivations. Harsh moments can occur unexpectedly. Hence, it is much worthier to own a teammate with this quality. Finally, to build a strong team, there must be people who believe in themselves and believe in what they are doing. This will reduce the confusion among teammates whenever obstacles happened. Then, the whole team can stand strong to discuss for alternatives to solve the problems.

Another factor to be mentioned by the author in this part is task divisions among teamwork. It was withdrawn from Richard D. Lewis' research in his book, which is called 'When teams collide'. This is an example of how international teammates may be responsible for preferable tasks. The tasks in the figure below represents separate stages of a project implementation, which are, '*vision, imagination, re-*

*articulation/ re- definition, action plan, detailed planning, implementation, monitoring, completion, relationship maintenance, concept of deal and articulation* (Lewis, 2012, 53). The tasks division based on the former-discussed concept of three cultural groups, which are called linear-active, multi-active and reactive. The concerning features and characteristics that contribute to this division has been discussed and explained clearly at section 2.1.2. (Figure 4) displays a tasks division for team members from the typical cultural characteristics they own.

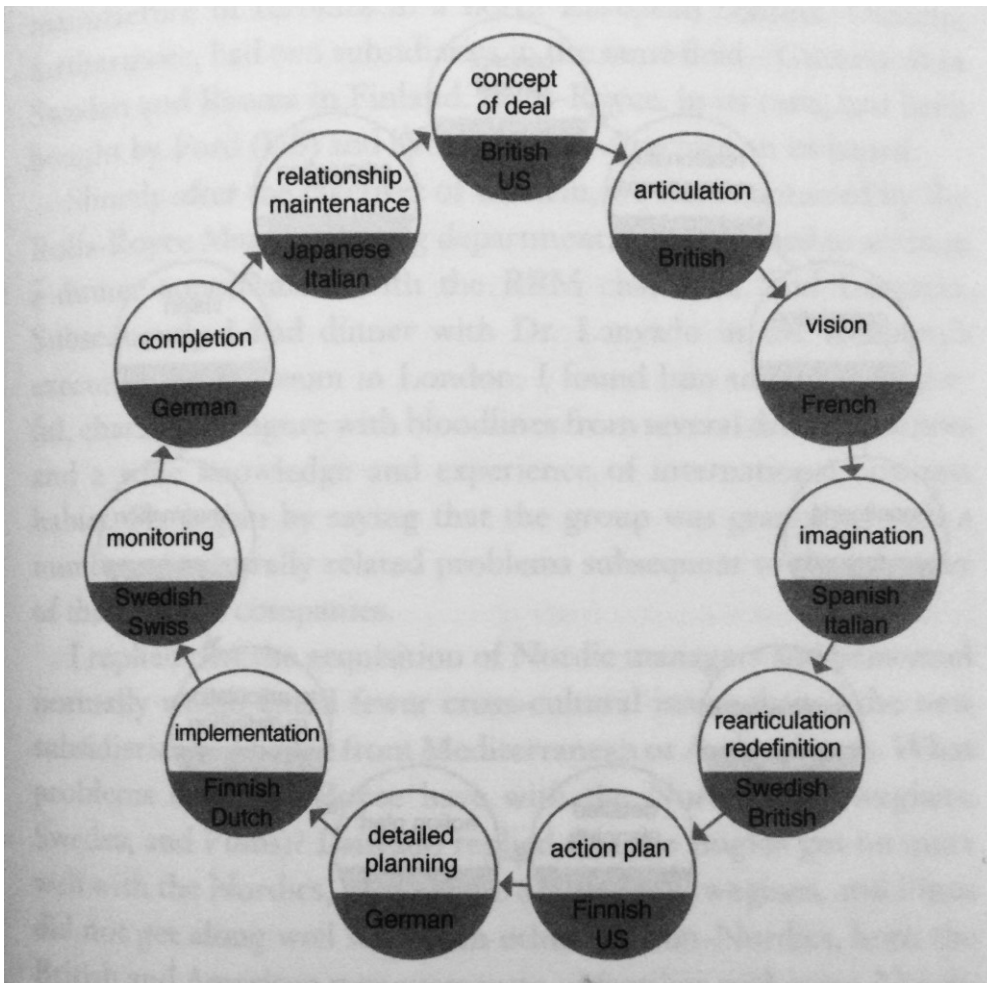


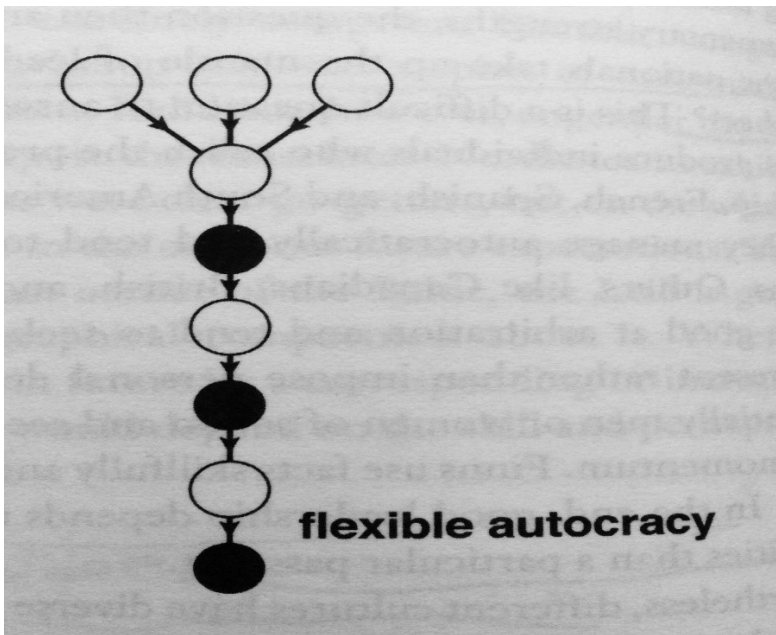
FIGURE 4. Certain tasks divisions (Lewis 2012, 53)

Depends on the diversity in characteristics among each cultural- based an employee belongs to, a leader may take advantages of them as suggestions for tasks divisions for each employees. Even though there are exceptional cases in practice, the act of considering cultural preferences, as, multi- active, linear-active and reactive as a part of tasks of divisions still deduct the risks of unwanted or mismatch tasks for team members.

### 2.2.2 Some team leading perspectives

After completing the stage of establishing a team, there should be another question posed, regarding how to lead that international team. Significantly, there is no leader to be readily transferred from one culture to another culture that performs successfully team management. Depending on whom the leader is going to collaborate with, some certain changes within leadership styles must adopted to earn optimal synchronizing co-operations. Apart from leadership styles that will be soon presented in this section and some certain basic management skills to help the leader manage his team. For better understanding from the perspective of communication, English language is indicated as the most widely used language. There will be comparisons of British versus American speech code as some primary knowledge for the teams doing businesses getting to truly understand the exact meaning of a number of the common statements may be offered at international meetings or discussions.

Noticing different management styles lets leaders and other team members get acquainted with working styles and numerous related actions that are decided or affected by those leadership styles. It can be described as when the whole team members look at a map and see how roads are located and then navigate themselves as functional objects in that map. As a result, directions are revealed to reach to the final destination, which refers to the common goal. According to Expert Program Management (2010) with the study of Kurt Lewin (1939), leaderships are categorized by three main leadership styles. They represent autocratic, democratic and Laissez Faire. An autocratic team leader often makes most of the final decisions himself with very little interference of other team members. Most of the consultations of other team members will not involve much in the mind of the autocratic team leader. Italian leadership is based on autocracy. However, leaders there create more flexibility into leadership for better results, according to Lewis (2012, 77) in (Graph 1).



GRAPH 1. Italian autocratic leading style (Lewis, 2012, 78)

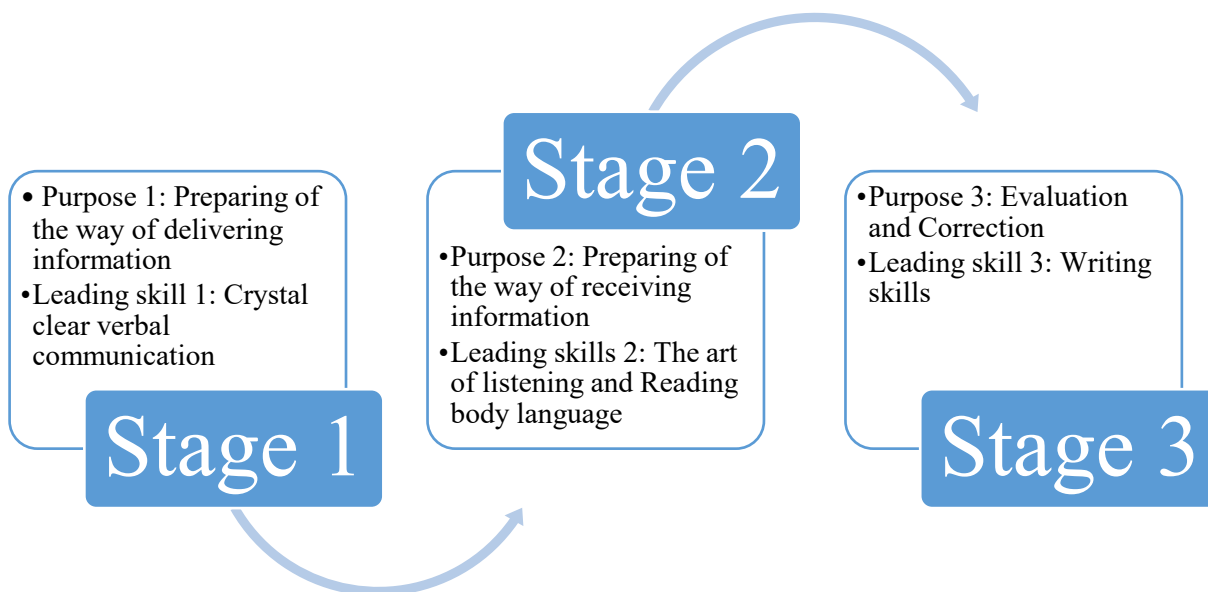
Democracy, on the other hand, is an opposite style of leadership. To be clarified, contributions from different team members are accounted to final decisions. Therefore, team members and the leader share the common responsibility. Some examples of countries following this type of leadership are Norway, Sweden and Finland. The leader and other colleagues contribute clearly their ideas to develop business strategies, final decisions, as well as the other implementing processes. Comparing to the two aforementioned leadership styles, Laissez Faire proves to be the most flexible leadership styles with no direct leadership from leaders. It means that employees own the right to set their own deadlines for works and decide how their works are completed. Only if advice is needed, there will be any interference from the leader as guidance. As a result, the importance of business communication in terms of team leadership is highlighted as a necessity within both democratic leadership and Laissez Faire leadership.

Regarding to leaders' management skills, it has been proven in fact that being a great team leader or a great manager does not have any relation to personal instincts nor any individual gifts. There are a number of skills that need to be repeatedly learned and practiced for a long period of time to make any leader become great. From the viewpoint of this thesis, when introducing some basic management skills, only communicational skills are involved as stated in the main topic of the thesis. These management skills are aimed to pursuit the aforementioned framework in section 2.1.3, which is called 'The two-way communication primer' (Froschheiser, 2008). The author of the thesis believe that, with the implication of these inspiring leading skills to the primer, there will be more promising scenarios related to internal workplace communication among cross-cultural companies.

As demonstrated in section 2.1.3 ‘The power of communication in leadership’, the author of the thesis decided to sum up ‘The two-way communication primer’ (Froschheiser, 2008) into three main stages:

- Stage one: Preparing of the way of delivering information
- Stage two: Preparing of the way of receiving information
- Stage three: Evaluating the communication process and implementing necessary correctness

Each stages of the communication primer will be recognized as the purpose of each management skills that are going to be explained. In other words, (Graph 1) below describes the brief idea of how these management skills support each communication stages from the inspiring idea of ‘The two-way communication primer’. These management skills are withdrawn from an article of Steve Olenski (Forbes, 2016) as a suggestion for any leader who wants to become great in leading international teams.



GRAPH 1. The relation of management skills to their communicative purposes (Forbes, 2018)

The first stage mentioned in ‘The two-way communication primer’ is also known as the first purpose. It is to make a preparation of the way of delivering communicative information. In this direction, Froschheiser (2008) stated that the leader must always clarify the goal of the conversation. It should not be



difficult for the listeners to find out the main message from their leader when gathering to have a meeting. The goal of the conversation means the heart of a successful communication. Thus, the main goal or the main purpose must be very clearly stated and understandable. Once the leader defined the main message to the audiences, he or she should inform that message with conviction and connect it to the larger goal in the big picture.

In order to achieve the preparation of the way of delivering communicative information above, the first management skill required is called to obey a 'crystal clear' verbal communication performance. Not only because every single individual owns his or her unique way of communication but also all of their levels of understandings may not reach the expecting level of the presenter. Thus, it would be an outstanding competency if a leader is able to demonstrate a completely listener-friendly way of verbal communication. This skills can be adapted by using universal words when talking to teammates because of the fact that not all of them own, for example, English, as their mother tongue.

*'As a general rule, people do not listen attentively. Therefore, it's your job as a leader to speak as clearly and effectively as possible. So don't use words that aren't understood by most people. Not only will your message be lost, but you'll run the risk of sounding arrogant. Remember, the goal of communication is clarity.'* (Olenski, 2016).

Another way the leader may manage a communicative case is to strive to explain one idea with multi ways of expressions. For instance, a number of contexts can be put in to the message the leader wants to discuss. The leader should try also some familiar examples to their teammates that he or she thinks it match the case. After some trials, one necessary attempt must be done by the leader to complete stage one- the preparation of the way of delivering communicative information- is to have verbal interactions with their colleagues. Two way communication, with mutual questions and answers coming from two sides- the presenter and the listeners, will reflect much more about the efficiency of the delivering information process. In fact, the more questions recorded from the side of the listeners, the higher efficiency showed in the communicative results. Because only when people understand the message conveyed, can they brainstorm more ideas and opinions. Hence, more discussions occurred at that moment.

After the first stage is done, the second stage should be followed continuously to achieve the next communicative purpose. At this second stage, the responsibility of the leader or, the manager, is to prepare of ways of receiving communicative information. In comparison, while stage one emphasizes on the way the leader conveys main messages, stage two focuses on the opposite direction of 'The two-way communication primer'. This stage refers to the feedbacks coming from the whole teammates. Thus, the

challenge of the leader here is to receive those communicative feedbacks. Usually, feedbacks from colleagues consists of verbal communication and non-verbal communication. And the leader must excel his skills to take an insight look into both verbal and non-verbal feedbacks.

At this stage, the skills that support the leader must provide their capabilities to identify the main ideas that the listeners want to express. Apart from the leading skills, the leader's attitude plays an extremely crucial parts. With a judgeless state of mind, the leader will find it less challenging in observing other people's opinions from their ways of thinking. As a result, when the leader looks at the same viewpoint and understands unique mindset of an individual, he or she will be more open when deciding the term 'Right or Wrong'. When the term 'Right or Wrong' is considered more carefully from variable aspects, the leader creates more potential alternatives for his or her actions, as well as, the final decisions.

From Olenski's viewpoints (Forbes, 2016), listening skills and reading body language skills are really helpful for any leader or manager at this stage of communication. It is too obvious that listening is a vital element to be taken under consideration when a leader hope to receive interacting information from his or her fellow co-workers. At this second stage of communication, listening to the audiences with care is one of the successful key to figure out the core message expected. Steve Olenski advised leaders to use empathetic listening skills to enhance the listening results. He also advised leaders to focus on what the presenter feels excited and spends time to talk about more than other thoughts. Because people rarely discuss an aspect by words so carefully without the expectation of other people's recognitions. At this point, the leader can straightly penetrate into the presenter's main interests then.

The second type of feedbacks collected from the team members is non-verbal communicative feedbacks. In fact, non-verbal communicative forms, or mostly concerned body language, reveals much more honesty in people's thoughts and believes. The leader may figure out how much comfort his co-workers are when he is demonstrating a new method of analyzing customer's satisfaction data. By contrast, he will also feel some hesitations from the eyes of his teammates. Thus, those signs give the leader more certain evidence to clarify the core message within feedbacks. And luckily, some gestures refer to the same universal meaning and more commonly occurred than others. By consequence, it is always the proper time for all leaders to cultivate more knowledge that refers to body language.

The last management skill presented in this section is related to the last stage of 'The two-way communicative primer'. In stage three of the communicative primer, there must be efforts made to value the final evaluation of the effectiveness of the communication process. In addition, some internal discussions

about correctness may be suitable if needed. As a result, it can be clearly seen that the purpose of this stage has a tendency to be informational summarized with analytical performances. Then, it is extremely vital for all leaders who targets to extend their communicative leadership to improve their writing skills.

Having a profound base of writing skills is significantly beneficial for leaders in broadening their means of communications, as well as, enhancing communication quality. From the perspective of a leader or a manager who work in a multi-national and multi-cultural environment with different educational backgrounds, the ability of effective writing skills bring a lot of advantages. The leader who can write less words with more meanings involved should be recognized as a writing expert. Short texts with clearly stated ideas are always welcomed by most of the people because things are kept straight forward and memorized. Imagine a leader is not at workplace to explain about monthly agenda but a short note on the bulletin board helps him connect with his teammates with no boundary.

Besides the useful contribution of some basic management skills, working in a cross-cultural workplace requires further communicative notices, which helps work goes swiftly. In practice, people working in multi-national companies, as known as MNCs, often use English. And English is the main language documented and shared within a MNCs' global subsidiaries. There are two most commonly used versions of English language, which are British English language and American English language. They mostly perform the same functions with the same efficiency yet meanings may vary from literature styles. This is called coded speech. Below are (Table 3) and (Table 4) that are distinctively illustrate some statements in business conversations in both British English language and American English language. Lewis (2012), foreigners usually find British coded speech unfamiliar and indirect, inasmuch as comparing to American coded speech.

TABLE 3. British coded speech (Lewis, 2012, 198,199)

<b>Statements</b>	<b>True meanings</b>
It is too early to see how this one is going.	It is failed.
This is too vital to decide one way or the other at this very moment.	It is my tea break.
We will certainly consider that.	We will not do it.
We must have a meeting about that.	I refuse to talk about that now.
Remind me once more of your strategy.	I was not listening last time.
It is a bit dodgy.	Nobody will take the responsibility.
I am not quite with you on that one.	That is totally unacceptable.

TABLE 4. American coded speech. (Lewis, 2012, 201)

Statements	True meanings
It is bombed.	It is failed.
You must be kidding.	Hmm, that is an interesting idea.
That is a beautiful scenario.	We might find a way of making that work.
Go for broke.	Stake everything on one venture.
I want black ink on the bottom line.	We must go for profit.
We are playing for all the marbles.	It is a big deal.
If you play ball.	If you cooperate.

These statements are some examples showing how different business expressions can be presented in practical cases. While American English language expressions tend to be more clearly exposed by underlying meanings, British coded speech requires advanced interpreting in communication skills.

### 2.2.3 Final decisions

Making final decisions is the most powerful action from team leaders or managers. From the perspective of working in multi-national companies (MNCs), decisions made by leaders must be thoughtfully considered, yet with time limitation factor. Because working in a big company like MNCs, a team should working as a mating gear of an enormous machines. In order to keep pace with the working process of the whole company, the team leader of that team must raise the awareness of completing tasks by planned deadlines. Hence, the action of making final decisions by deadlines is inevitable. In this section, decision making will be discussed by the aspect of the common route to it.

Owing to the objective of the study are multi-national companies (MNCs), cultural factors should be mentioned as an inspiring context of the study. Followed by the explanation of the route to decisions are some typical reflections concerning representative countries with their styles of decisions making. From the position of a team leader, after collaborating with his or her team, he or she should sit down to summarize all results that has been analyzed from hard work and make a conclusion. Interestingly, Lewis (2012) pointed out that decisions making may vary from nationalities of the leader and is affected significantly by cultural classification. This cultural classification is presented in section 2.1.1 of the thesis,

known as ‘Cultures classification’ with three preferences: Linear-active, Multi-active and Reactive preference. These preferences are regarded as basis of the development of final decisions.

To begin with, some leaders from cultural background close to Linear-active culture, namely, Germany, the United State of America and the United Kingdom. From Linear-active culture, after compromising all results from different colleagues, internal votes are implemented for the final results. There may also be debates and arguments concerning the final results. Discussions are encouraged until the final decision is cleared and confirmed. By doing this, there is rarely interruption involved to postpone the decision time. Implementation stages come as a continual chain of planning to create action plans in practice. Usually, implementing actions are performed swiftly after all decisions agreed. Multi-active leaders, such as, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, on the other hand, need more time to make final decisions because they consider thoroughly every detailed aspects related with usually long discussions until they can limit potential risks. Due to longer time of deciding, implementation process is more slowly. Finally, most of Reactive leaders come from Asian countries preserve a collective and harmonized way of finalizing decisions. They implement long yet consensus discussion before coming to the implementation plan. Thus, practical actions are swift after final results.

### **2.3 Case study: Land Rover and BMW-Rover.**

There were some theoretical frameworks and their supporting elements thoroughly explained in the two primary parts: ‘Business communication as a part of team management’ and ‘How to manage an international team successfully?’. However, it is still necessary to investigate some certain cases in MNCs to reflect the relationship between the thesis’s theoretical studies versus reality situations. In this section, two practice-based case studies will be presented to discuss how big multi-national companies (MNCs) overcame their management challenges. The challenges are selected to be compatible to the two main parts that were aforementioned. One case study illustrate Land Rover with its problem concerning leading international teams. And the second case study of BMW-Rover refers directly to workplace communication in globalized working environment.

### 2.3.1 Land Rover case study

According to Jaguar Land Rover's official website, Land Rover is originated as a British car brands. However in 2008, Tata Motors acquired Jaguar and Land Rover from Ford and merged them into Jaguar Land Rover Automotive PLC. However, this first case study of Land Rover is back to the early 1990s, which was in relation to assigning an appropriate leader to be responsible to its different globalized divisions (Lewis, 2012, 99). To be specific, at that moment, Land Rover decided to cut down its international sales areas with the hope of eliminate the duplicating responsibilities. Land Rover decided to remain only six divisions worldwide, namely, 'China and the Far East', 'North America', 'South America', 'Northern Europe', 'Southern Europe' and 'Middle East and Africa'. Therefore, the most striking problem there was to figure out the top six potential vacant managers for each division.



GRAPH 2. Land Rover logo

Land Rover implemented the solution for this problem with the help of a 'Cultural Profile Assessment system' because the experts from the company believed that only when candidates owned an intimate affinity to the culture traits of each division's location, would they become a great leader for that division. The Human Resources Departments of Land Rover provided a test consisting approximately two hundred and fifty questions to three hundred questions. These questions implied a wide range of different purposes to examine to which division location the top six managers were most suitable. From these questions, the aspects of worldview, core beliefs, communicative capabilities and workplace attitudes were all revealed. Furthermore, a supplementary interview of thirty-minute long were conducted with the aim of cultivating further personal fact- related knowledge from the candidates.

After the assessment process, Lewis (2012, 101) with other experts listed the top six most potential managers. And then they needed to analyze where to assign each manager to the new divisions. Lewis and his other colleagues analyzed personal characteristics and personal communicative proficiency, and

then reflected them to the three cultural groups: Linear-active, Multi-active and Reactive. The more matching elements investigated from a candidate, the higher opportunity he or she would be recommended to the new division. For example, candidate B applied to be the new manager in the South America division. He proved himself after the ‘Cultural Profile Assessment system’ to be a multi-active person, which were similar to the cultural classification background of South American countries. Another outstanding competency of this candidate was that he could speak fluently six languages, with two multi-active related languages: Spanish and Portuguese.

The other candidates seemed quite suitable to their desired working position. It meant that Lewis and other experts would not need much consideration about their cases before reporting to the directors. However, there was a special case from candidate A. He was a very forceful candidate with highest competencies among other candidates. According to Lewis, there was very near to complete no weakness in this candidate’s competencies. He also owned really impressive leading records and he offered his demand to move to work in China. Despite perfect competencies, the experts figured out in the interview that he understands quite well Chinese cultures yet stated that none of them could interfere to business environment. With the lack of empathy to China, as well as Asia, the expert decided to report all of that content frankly. Eventually, the board of director made the final decision for A to move to Northern Europe, where he, in fact, continued to perform outstanding records as usual.

### **2.3.2 BMW- Rover case study**

According to Lewis (2012, 215), when BMW, a renowned German cars company, took over Rover in the 1980s, it led to a number of merging German and British teams. Therefore, several communicative conflicts started to occur at that time. The merge of a company from Germany to another from the United Kingdom started to force some changes in internal workplace communication in one integrate German-British- based company. Because of the fact that there were both German colleagues and British colleagues working in one single environment, it was required to have bilingual proficiency at that moment, which consisted of both English and German. Even though it has been always obvious that English language is the friendliest language for international workers, there was still a diverse aspects that the German teammates and leaders would feel more comfortable and confident to express in their mother tongue. Thus, there was an obvious challenge concerning these two language when promoting efficient workplace communication.



GRAPH 3. BMW-Rover logo

To solve this challenge, BMW and Rover made decisions concerning the encouragement of cultivating languages for employers and employees. As English language were universal from continents to continents, most of the German executives performed quite well in their English communicative proficiency. On the other hand, it was a huge challenge for British colleague to learn German, which could be considered a fairly formidable language for all language learners. Despite the provision of German classes for British employers and employees from Rover, they attended none of those German classes. The situation got worse when executives from Rover and BMW could not be open enough to set one common way of communications. Even though certain actions for communicative improvements were carried out, the results failed due to the core factor of human beings. This study case illustrates significantly that, besides frameworks and proper plans for implementation, the attitudes and urgency of change play a crucial part in the success of the improvement. Eventually, this failure led to the discontinuation of merging of Rover and BMW.



### 3 CONDUCTING RESEARCH

This chapter consists of three core elements, which are: research method and implementation process, participants' backgrounds and analysis results. To begin, the main purpose of the thesis will be explained briefly. All participants who agreed to join this practical research program all have a prerequisite of working in an MNC. There are two managers and three employees working in multi-national environments. They are asked for collaborations to summarize the results concerning the two-way opinions. The first way of opinion is from the viewpoints of the managers. This research encourages them to examine the way they manage their international teammates, with the tools of business communication. The second way of opinion comes from the interviewed employees from MNCs about their evaluation of the quality of management from their leaders. Once again, the cross-cultural context will be applied to the research program.

#### 3.1 Research method and implementation process

The research method in used in this practical research is called 'Qualitative research'. According to, Denzin, Norman. K. and Yvonna S. Lincoln (2000), 'Qualitative research stresses the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. It seeks answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning'. Reflecting to the purpose of the research, qualitative research method proved to be the most suitable method. The researcher can analyze gathered data from the perspectives of finding similarities and differences between interviewees' opinions. Furthermore, the method the author used in qualitative research was semi-structured interview method, owing to its truthfulness and its contextual flexibility. With the help of qualitative research and semi-structured interview method, after collecting data from the interviewees' experiences, the author then combined both rational and intuitive way of approaching information to produce the most acceptable results.

Regarding interview process, all admitted interviewees are contacted by emails and telephone numbers. Then, there were interview plan sent to them by emails before interview process. The interview plan included four themes with different topics, which all had intimate linkages to the thesis contents. The two main themes were 'Business communication in intercultural workplace' and 'Managing international teams successfully'. The second important theme was dispatched to two ways of opinions. The

first one was managing international teams from the opinions of leaders and the second way of opinion was from the feedback of employees who works at MNCs. During the interview process, there were contacts through face-to-face interviews, or social network-based channel, such as Skype. The complete interview process was conducted on 20 January 2018 with the duration of nearly one and a half hour. Advanced records, if needed, must be agreed by the interviewees before implemented as notes. Finally, after the interview process, the interviewees can take a glance at the notes of the interviewer, as well as, the final analysis results before it is presented in the author's thesis. This action is to confirm the proper understandings of the research's content from two sides: the author and the interviewees.

### **3.2 Participants' background**

There were four participants who joined this practical research program: two managers and two employees. As mentioned above, all admitted participants should have a prerequisite of working in an MNC.

The first interviewee is Mrs. E.H, thirty-eight years old from Espoo, Finland. She is now positioned as the Managing Director at Unilever Finland Oy and becomes a member of the Unilever Nordic Management Team. She determines her strength is communication. Her main responsibility relates to the performance of Unilever Finland. She involves mainly in strategic developments. Her job requires many business trips abroad and she earns lots of negotiation skills with foreign customers. The second interviewee is Mr. J.P.H, thirty-eight years old from Espoo, Finland. Mr. J.P.H is Mrs. E. H's husband. This interviewee has been the Treasury Risk Manager at Kone Finland Oy, Espoo branch for more than one and a half year. His main duty relates to FX risk management. J.P.H has eight-year experience in FX risk management at Danske Bank, Finland before. He admits that he has more opportunities to work with international colleagues and deal with more tasks overseas when he moves to Kone.

From the extend of employees in MNCs, the third woman named T.L, is working as an HR assistant at Mascot International Vietnam, Hanoi Branch. She moved to Mascot International Vietnam 2 years ago. At work, she helps HR directors and managers with performance reports, recruit and train new employees. She can speak fluently English, Danish, German and some French. The last participant is Ms. C.N from Nagoya, Japan. She works in Vietnam for more than five years in Heineken, Hanoi, Vietnam, as a Sales Training Officer. Her main responsibilities are planning and implementing Sales Capability Development programs.

### 3.3 Analysis results

Interviewees are asked for collaborations to summarize the results concerning the two-way opinions. The first way of opinion is from the viewpoints of the managers and the second one comes from the positions of employees. Two main themes to be interviewed are 'Business communication in intercultural workplace' and 'Managing international teams successfully'. Thus, information and the results will be analyzed base on these two themes.

First, the participants in this research are interviewed from the aspect of communication in their workplace. According to the results gathered, Mrs. E. H's job involves the highest chance of communication to her colleagues, board of directors and foreign partners. In average, E. H has overseas business trips more than six times per month. She admits that she spends much more time at work rather than at home and the person she communicates most often is the leader of the team she is responsible for now. T and C interact quite a lot with their colleagues when they have training programs for new employees and when meeting people from their implementing projects. Meanwhile, Mr. J.P.H contributes moderate workplace communication as he said his work tends to be more analytical. All participants agree that working in multi-national environment is very inspiring and valuable. For example, Mrs. E.H likes more challenges which encourages her to work harder yet in a smarter way. She values the power of workplace communication and make things clear to be solved. Mr. J.P.H has learned to 'think bigger and broader' and Mrs. T.L appreciates working in Mascot as it encourages her to learn more languages, thus, she communicates better with her Danish boss and she opens her empathic soul to co-workers.

Three out of the participants do not find any severe obstacles at work. For this answer, the author thinks it is understandable because when being interviewed about the advantages of working in MNCs, all the participants find a number of them without hesitation. Meanwhile, Mr. J.P.H said there is only some confusions in some small details in the reports he receives from Asian subsidiaries of Kone. He said people from different cultures have different ways to clarify a statement. For example, Asian people with Reactive culture tend to be more consensus and explain the reason of a problem in more details. It means it takes more time to read the reports, yet it is beneficial for him to understand the situation better. J.P.H does not recognize this as a problem. He sees it as a chance to have direct phone calls to those subsidiaries or some more email replies concerning the financial reports. He sees positive signs from people working at those subsidiaries. And J.P trains himself more in reading psychological books and cultural books to understand China and Chinese more.

For other solutions for better workplace communication, Mrs. E.H showed her practical activities by learning French with a mobile application called ‘Duolingo’. She said it is very helpful to her as she visits France quite often and understands that French prefer their business partners try to speak some French. She states that self- changing is the best idea to improve any problem. Mrs. T.L wants more coffee breaks at the office to meet people more often. She emphasizes, when people get relaxed and feel happy at work, they exchange more potential ideas with positive working attitudes. By contrast, Ms. C.N prefers to be patient because in Japan, communication at work gets better only when people are more familiar to each other. From the point of view of the author, the idea of Ms. C.N from Japan sounds a bit strange at first. Yet, when taken it under consideration, it is not a bad idea when in some situation, a relaxing solution maybe powerful. And this solution works quite effectively in reactive-based cultures, such as, Japan or Vietnam, where C. N is working.

The second important perspective to be discussed is ‘Managing international teams’. As the information collected from this theme will be divided into two sides: the manager side and the employee side, the analyzed results will be documented as in the same order. From the extend of managers, both E.H and J.P.H have the experience of being a manager for more time five years. Thus, they do acknowledge some lessons from their leadership. However, through the interview, both seem very humble with their experience and would love to strive to a better version of a manager in years ahead.

Mrs. E.H works in Unilever Finland Oy from the position of Manager Assistant and she reflects her image as an employee to the team members working with her now to lead the team better. Concerning factors to select team members, E does not take the criteria too strict as she wants a suitable person for her team, rather than the one with forceful profile yet hard to blend into the team. She is now responsible for a team of Sales Management with five members. Two of them are Finns with three foreign co-workers from Brazil, Sweden and Denmark. As analyzed, Finnish, Swedish and Danish people are very close to the cultural preference of Linear- active. As a result, their working styles tend to be similar and therefore, it may be less conflicts while working together.

Usually, employees with Linear- active cultural base find it more comfortable to do planning process and solve required tasks step-by-step with clear instructions. In additional, Mrs. E.H is from the same cultural preference and working culture, so she may find less conflicts within those team members. She admits from the beginning, she invites her team member to more parties and outdoor activities to get to know each other more. The working momentum is only created when P, the team member from Brazil,

gets used to the working style step-by-step. And it often takes longer time for P. to make his final decision, as he wants to consider all aspects of the case in a cautious way. This point, again, match with the theory of decision making route from cultural base. To be specific, P. from Brazil represent Multi- active preference. In the end, the team works well together and E.H concentrates her core value of leadership is to be crystal clear when getting the final common goal. She does not need to force anyone to any rules because her teammates will adjust themselves to pursuit the goal.

From the story of Mr. J.P.H, he is even more relaxed in managing his colleagues. He admits it may cause from the tasks of his jobs and because he works mainly with Finns and only one Indian team member. He thinks people dealing with analytical tasks should be patient to each other and to their tasks. The expectation seems very little, yet it takes time to achieve it. His team need to work together and divide reports to analyze. From the position of a researcher, the author finds a similar point in his case and Mrs. E. H's case. They both consider the common goal, such as the objective of the tasks at work, to encourage their teammates to adjust themselves to complete it. Mr. J.P.H believes mutual trust is the key to his leadership. He trusts his teammates and he is patient if unwanted problems occurred. Thus, under some cases, we need to understand the features of the work because as a leader, it can benefit your leading strategies.

On the other hand, from the perspective of employees, even though Mrs. T. L. and Ms. C. N. really enjoy working in cross-cultural environment, they start to show some evidences of the lack of communication with their managers. Both feel connected when having conversations with their leaders weekly. Yet, most of the conversations happen concerning work-related issues. For example, when they need to submit reports or asking for permission of implementing a project. Ms. C.N admits she wants more chance to talk to the manager, even though she understands that he has different schedules and numeral business trips. It is understandable, as in Asian cultures, the boundary between manager and employees are more visible due to their own culture of hierarchical respects. In my opinion, this case may happen to the team member of Mrs. E.H also, as she has quite many business trips to not stay with her team members. When interviewed about the 'ideal leader', both T. and C. hope to contact more to their managers as sometimes they are under pressure when lots of unexpected problems occurred. If the managers are available with the team more frequently, he may morally support C. and T. better.

In the end, all participants aware of the importance of communication to their work and they all have their own ways of improving their communication. For example, by learning new languages to understand their foreign co-worker more. As language is not just communication, it also reveals cultures and

the background of local people. Or, other people have direct conversations to their colleagues to build the mutual linkages. Most of the interviewees value their working experience in MNCs as they obtain more new ways of thinking, become more emphatic and willing to support their colleagues more. There are obstacles from cross cultural working environment, but the interviewees turn those obstacles into very little or just some confusing cases. It means they managed to adapt to the environment and it shows that they are willing to cultivate personal competences. Thus, their working experience through the interviews tend to be more about the values they gain from work and the effort they contribute. From the management perspective, there are efforts made for better leadership from managers and efforts from the employees. Yet, the solutions are not optimal. By consequences, communication at workplace is never considered to be enough and it must be developed by both managers and team members. Without the effort of any party, no expected results in management through communication can be achieved.

## 4 CONCLUSION

By conclusion, the author managed to earn some specific results through the study of the thesis topic: Managing international teams from business communication- Business communication perspectives. The study is implemented from both the theoretical part and the empirical part. In the theoretical part, besides the theory of research methodology, there are two practices- based topics introduced. They are two case studies from two MNCs called Land Rover and BMW- Rover. In the empirical part, with qualitative research and the means of semi-structured interview method, the author reached the final objective of the thesis under two important perspectives. They are managing international teams and workplace communication in multi- national companies (MNCs). The framework of cultures classification is concentrated through the whole thesis's content and is reflected in conducting research.

This work proves that communication in leadership is vitally important and inevitable. With the ability of conveying clear communication to fellow co-workers, leaders can show them clearly what big goal to achieve and what is needed to be planned. It helps teammates having a straight forward viewpoint of what is happening in their workplace and know exactly their position in the 'big picture' of the company. They all navigate the direction and start to brainstorm by themselves any possible alternatives. From the position of a leader, manage a team properly refers to establishing a team with moderate size, which is recommended to be around five people. Some leading perspectives and final decisions contributes significantly to the image of a successful leader.

From the research conducted, the theoretical framework of cultures classification reflects fairly obvious in the results of the analysis. In the size of the research, four eligible interviewees contribute valuable results. It shows the similarities of managers from Linear- active cultures to their managing styles in reality, as two Finns managers interviewed. Step- by step implementation and clear goals are always set when they lead a team. And two employees from Vietnam and Japan, representing Reactive culture group show their consensus working attitude with empathy for a better working environment. Despite the differences from their cultural backgrounds and ways of thinking, four candidates prove the necessity of workplace communication through their hopes and their practical actions of improvements.

By consequences, international teams should be managed by the help of communication for better mutual understandings. It is communication, which is the key to diminish uncertainties at workplace and creates clarity to the path of continuous achievement for any companies, especially MNCs.

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## APPENDIX 1

### INTERVIEW PLAN

Part 1: Personal information of the interviewees.

- Self-introduction: including name, age, gender, home country, working position and a brief timeline of working experience.
- Describe your current working environment? What are your main tasks at your workplace?

Part 2: Business communication in intercultural workplace.

- Does your working position involve much in communicating to other colleagues?
- Are there some striking benefits that can be seen as the most valuable to you when working in a multi-national company? How do they affect yourself?
- Describe the most unwanted problem when working in a multi-national company? How do they affect yourself?
- How did you manage to overcome that problem with the help of business communication?
- To what extent do you hope your colleagues to raise more awareness for better business communication's results?

Part 3: How to manage an international team successfully? (This part is specialized for leaders and managers only)

- What factors do you often take into consideration when selecting members to a team?
- What is the most difficult aspect occurred when working with an international team?
- What is the core value of your leadership? Please explain how will that value influence your team?

Part 4: Evaluation of manager's leadership (This part is specialized for employees only)

- Describe the interaction between you and your team leader at work (frequency of discussion and how your uncertainties are solved after those conversations)
- How would an 'ideal leader' mean to your imagination?