Global Information Systems:

Globally distributed teams

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The Open Unified Process – Disciplines

- Architecture
  - Architecture Notebook
- Configuration and Change Management
- Development
  - Design
  - Build
  - Developer Test
  - Implementation
- Project Management
  - Iteration Plan
  - Project Plan
  - Work Items List
  - Risk List

- Requirements
  - Supporting Requirements Specification
  - Vision
  - Use Case
  - Glossary
  - Use-Case Model
- Test
  - Test Case
  - Test Log
  - Test Script

- Roles
- Artefacts / Support

[Source: http://www.epfwiki.net/wikis/openup/]
Issues

- Staffing: Finding, selecting and initiating virtual teams
- Coordination of tasks and dependent work items
- Communication between teams
- Cultural aspects, barriers, and solutions
The virtual manager

Skills required

– General management
– People management
– Communication
– Technical knowledge
– Decision making
– Problem solving
– Administration
– Cultural knowledge and skills
Cost issues

- Management time for coordination
- Training cost for cross-cultural communication
- Cost of misunderstanding (re-work, delays, drop-out)
- Increased cost for offshore experts
- Communication, travel cost
Creating teams

- **Process**
  - Choose team members
  - Interview team members
  - Consider team dynamics
  - Consider personalities of team members
  - Evaluate abilities, skills / competencies

- **Staffing plan**
  - General information
  - Staffing process
  - Goals, objectives, timelines
  - Staffing profiles
  - Skill sets and requirements
  - Organizational chart
Creating teams (2)

- Defining roles and responsibilities
  - Job description
  - Annual performance objectives
  - Growth and and development plan
Cultural profiles (Dafoulas, Macaulay, 2001)

Diagram showing the relationships between different cultural profiles and their impact on individual characteristics and human resources. The diagram includes:

- Team Profile (diversity level)
- Role Profile (preferences)
- Task Profile (requirements)
- Communication skills:
  - Participation
  - Leadership
  - Conflict resolution
- Required skills:
  - Problem solving
  - Decision making
  - Goal setting
  - Motivation
- Human Resources:
  - Power Distance
  - Uncertainty Avoidance
  - Individualism
  - Time
  - Trust
  - Space
  - Material Goods
  - Power

The diagram illustrates how team development and cultural profiles influence the screening process and the identification of required skills.
Management issues

- Team meetings across time zones
  - Split regional teams
  - Rotating conference calls
  - Management meetings

- Managing language difficulties
  - Translation
  - Communication rules (clarity of speech, rotating right to speak,...)
  - Avoiding / knowing gestures
  - Questions in different cultures
Building teams

- Managing cultural differences (see L3)
- Considering adjustment to calculate productivity and potential difficulties
- Phases of cultural adjustment
  - Enthusiasm
  - Conflict Stage
  - Integration Stage
  - Adaptation Stage
Virtual Teamwork

- Discovering commonalities
  - Workshops, informal meetings
- Creating trust
- Understanding dynamics of the team
- Creating a virtual community
- Team member interaction
  - Virtual communication
  - Virtual team days
  - Sharing best practices
  - Rewards
Virtual Teamwork Processes

Communication process: A formal plan defines...

– Stakeholder groups
– Formal Communication plan
  • Meetings
  • Conference call
  • Communication tools
  • Documents
  • Website / intranet updates
– Informal communication / escalation
– Communication rules
Virtual Teamwork Processes (2)

- General process management
  - Design, development, …
- Change control process
  - E.g., resources, schedule, maintenance, catastrophes, …
- Defect-tracking process (technical)
- Organizational processes
- Client and vendor processes
- Status report process
- Risk Management
- Escalation procedures
Describing team / individual profiles

- What are necessary competences?
- A competence is a set of knowledge, skills, abilities and attitudes to solve a problem in a given context
- Competences differ according to
  - Domain
  - Career path / position
  - Education
  - Context (country, project, …)
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