

Explorations of Temporal Diversity, Temporal Conflict, and Temporal Leadership

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WALLY, I NEED YOUR DATA FOR MY MEETING IN THREE DAYS.

OKAY. IT SHOULDN'T TAKE MORE THAN THREE OR FOUR DAYS TO PULL IT TOGETHER.

NOT THREE OR FOUR DAYS. I NEED IT IN **THREE** DAYS.

OKAY, THREE DAYS, NOT COUNTING THE WEEKEND AND THE DAY I GIVE IT TO YOU.

THAT WOULD BE SIX DAYS!

SIX OR SEVEN DAYS, TOPS.

I NEED IT IN THREE DAYS, NOT A WEEK.

THAT'S NO PROBLEM. A WEEK OR TWO AT THE MOST.

OKAY! YOU WIN! I'LL RESCHEDULE MY MEETING FOR TWO WEEKS OUT!

AND YOU'LL HAVE THE DATA IN TWO WEEKS?

YES. TWO WEEKS OR SO.

The Clocks That Time Us Are Not The Same



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Mohammed & Harrison, 2013

What We Will Talk About Today

- Introduction to temporal individual differences
- Research on:
 - Temporal diversity
 - Temporal conflict
 - Temporal leadership
- Practical recommendations



Temporal Individual Differences

- Time Urgency
 - Chronic Hurriedness
- Pacing Style
 - Early action style
 - Steady action style
 - Deadline action style



Time Urgency Versus Pacing Style

Time Urgency

- Attention to *when* work is due
- Time is the enemy and a source of constant pressure

Pacing Style

- Penchant for *how* temporal resources should be distributed over time
- Energized by deadlines and “in their element” as the target date approaches (deadline style)

The Clocks That Time Us Are Not the Same In Teams

- Individuals enter teams with diverse temporal orientations



Temporal Diversity is a Double-Edged Sword

Positive Side:

- Facilitates temporal synergy when the task requires multiple performance criteria

Negative Side:

- Schedules and task priorities are contradictory
- Resolving conflicts between members can distract members away from task accomplishment

Theoretical Premise

- Team-level combinations of these differences will have complex effects on performance that depend on moderating factors

Task-Time Matches



Time Wrecks



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Mohammed & Harrison, 2013; Mohammed &
Nadkarni, 2011, 2014

Empirical Research

- N=71 teams (299 employees)
 - Average of 4.21 members per team
 - 100% response rate from 63 teams
- Business process outsourcing firm in India
 - Team-based organization, Time pressured environment



Temporal diversity shows more positive or less negative associations with team performance when:

- Shared temporal cognition is higher
 - Members agree on specific deadlines, how quickly the team should work to meet the deadline, how work should be scheduled over time
- Temporal leadership is stronger
 - Leader behaviors that aid in scheduling, synchronizing work flow, and allocating temporal resources

Success or Failure in Interdependent Teams Depends On:

- Group members accommodating each other's actions
- Group members accommodating to the deadline to make sure that the intended output is delivered on time



Temporal Diversity Is Potentially Potent in Teams

- May underlie:
 - Conflict
 - Performance Problems



Hidden, But Potentially Potent

- Hidden nature of temporal diversity
 - Team members often not consciously aware of their own time-based individual differences or those of others
 - Temporal diversity problems are likely to:
 - be undetected
 - be misattributed to more explicitly addressed personality traits

Research & Practice Challenge

- How can we simultaneously:
 - Minimize dysfunctional conflict?
 - Leverage temporal differences synergistically?



Practical Recommendations

Temporal diversity should be actively managed

Awareness

- Develop an awareness of temporal orientations and their strengths and weaknesses:
 - Your own
 - Other team members



Discuss Time-Based Expectations

- What expectations do you have for timing and scheduling?
- Who will fulfill temporal leadership duties?
 - Hierarchical leader?
 - A time-urgent team member?
 - Multiple team members?
- How will the team handle conflicts arising from differing temporal orientations?



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Collaboratively Engage In Temporal Planning



Fosters:

- Members getting on the same page temporally
- Awareness of mutual dependencies
- Time awareness norms

Temporal Task Assignment

- Distribute tasks in accordance with members' temporal orientations as much as possible



Temporal Monitoring and Adaptation

- Frequent informal contact among members to check on task progress
 - Increases awareness of mutual dependencies
 - Reinforces time awareness norms
- Closely monitor the progression of time and project accomplishment
 - Recognize dysfunctional use of time
- Change course and adapt plans when necessary



Takeaways

- **What we know:**
 - People differ regarding perceptions of time
- **What we can do:**
 - Be aware of temporal individual differences
 - Get on the same temporal page in teams
 - Provide temporal leadership
- **How we can do it: Temporal tools**
 - Temporal assignment, planning, and monitoring



It Takes a Team to Do Team Research!

- Kent Alipour
- Linda Angell
- Dinora Fitzgerald
- David Harrison
- David Livert
- Sucheta Nadkarni
- Jackie Marhefka
- Patty Martinez
- Jason Williamson



THANK YOU for your time!

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