

Intercultural Communication: Organizational Cultures and Communications

Lecture 12

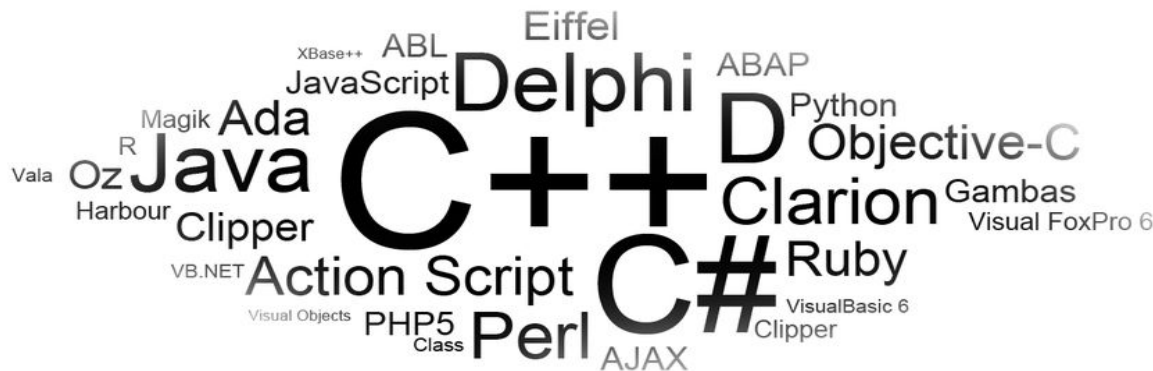
Iryna.polets@gmail.com

Dimensionalizing Cultures

- It is always a collective phenomenon, but it can be connected to different collectives.
- Within each collective there is a variety of individuals.

GEERT HOFSTEDE

“Culture is the collective programming of the mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others.”



Common problems of internal environment of international organizations:

- Dependence on superiors;
- Need for rules and predictability, also associated with nervous stress;
- The balance between individual goals and dependence on the company;
- The balance between ego values (like the need for money and careers) and social values (like cooperation and a good living environment). The former were more frequently chosen by men, the latter by women, but there were also country differences.

cultural dimensions model

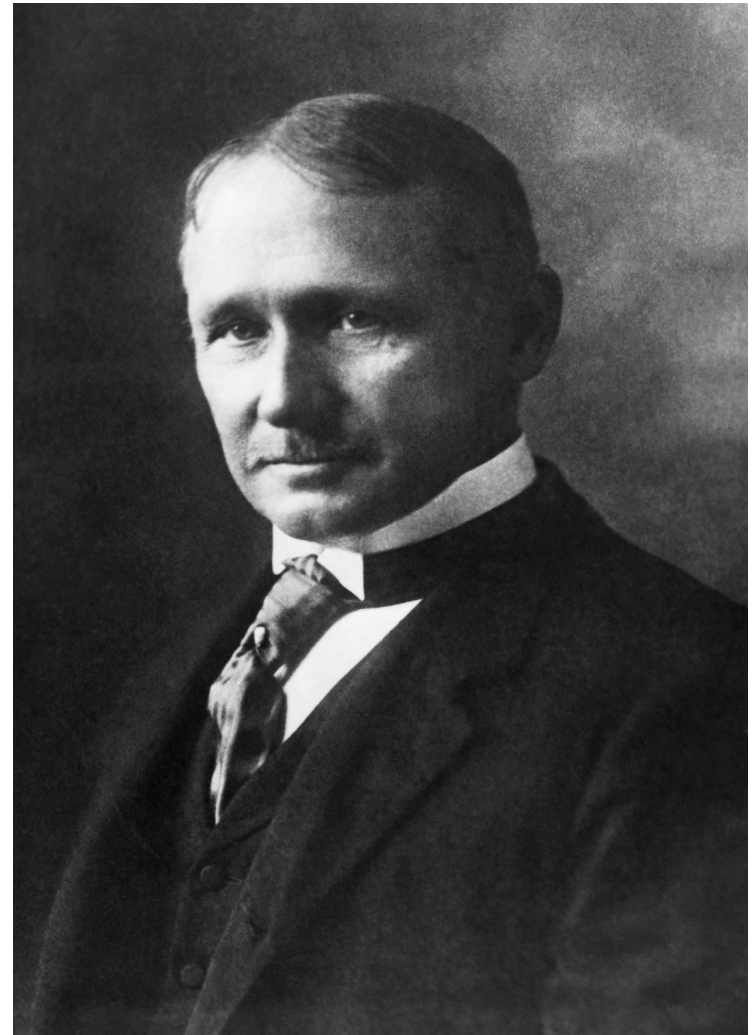
- small- and large- power distance cultures;
- weak- and strong- uncertainty avoidance societies;
- collectivistic vs. individualistic societies;
- feminine vs. masculine societies;
- short- and long-term oriented societies;

Organizational cultures

- Reside rather in (visible and conscious) practices: the way people perceive what goes on in their organizational environment.
- ***Organization as machine*** metaphor:
 - Specialization (*Everyone has a special role*)
 - Standardization (*Very replaceable – ex.:CRM tool*)
 - Predictability

The Efficient World of Frederick Taylor

- A mechanical engineer by profession.
- Shocked by the industrial inefficiency of the factories at the turn of the century.
- Designed the so called system of **“scientific management”**, system that includes principles that are still essential to the industrial production.



Scientific Management – The Problem

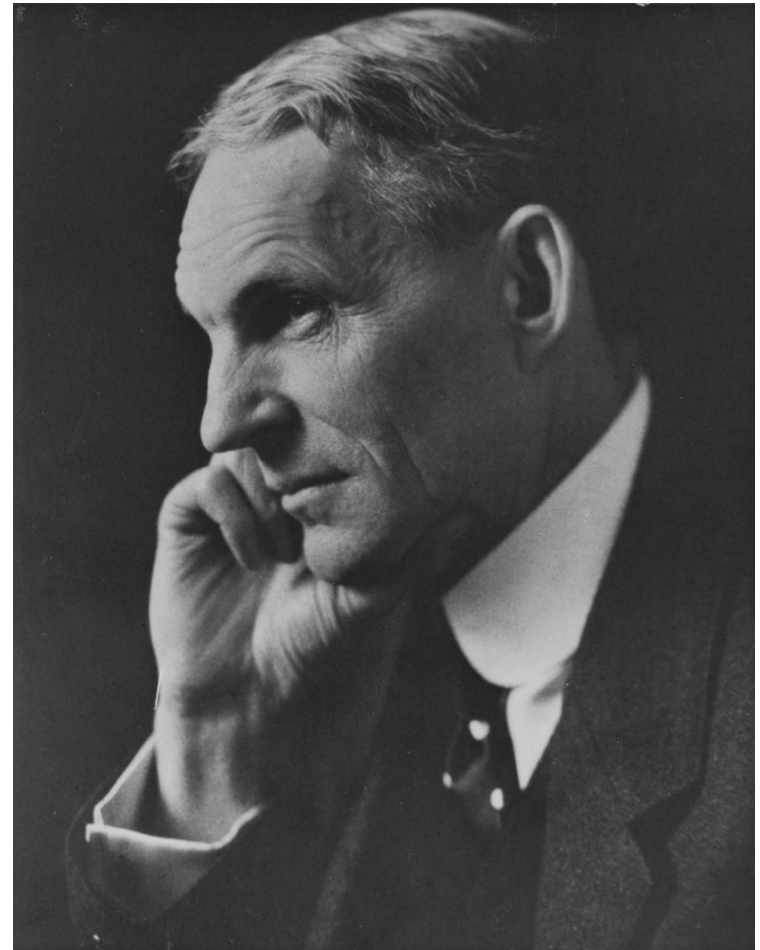
- Inefficiency of the factory production process
 - Managerial incompetence.
 - Worker's "soldiering".
- Underlying reasons
 - The belief that increasing productivity will result in unemployment.
 - Defective systems of management that encourage soldiering.
 - "Rules of thumb" in the stead of scientific procedures.
 - Wrong assumptions about payment.

Scientific Management – the solution

- “Develop a science for each element of man’s work, which replaces the rule of thumb method.”
- “They scientifically select and then train, teach, and develop the workman, whereas in the past he chose his own work and trained himself as best he could.”
- Selection of first-class men for each particular task.
- Fair day’s wage for fair day’s work.
- System of supervision.

Mass Production – Henry Ford

- Launched his famous Ford Motor Company in 1903
- Became interested in Taylorism shortly after and sought Taylor's expertise.



Principles of Fordism

- Application of every single principle of Taylorism.
- The centrality of the assembly line.
 - Deskilling of workers.
 - 300-500% increase of productivity.
- Standardization of products
 - Interchangeable parts.
 - Capacity to mass-produce.
- Increased pay of workers
 - Further increases efficiency.
 - Produce workers who are able to purchase your products.

Classical elements of management (Henry Fayol's Theory)

What we do?

- Planning
- Organizing
- Commanding
- Coordination
- Control

How we do it?

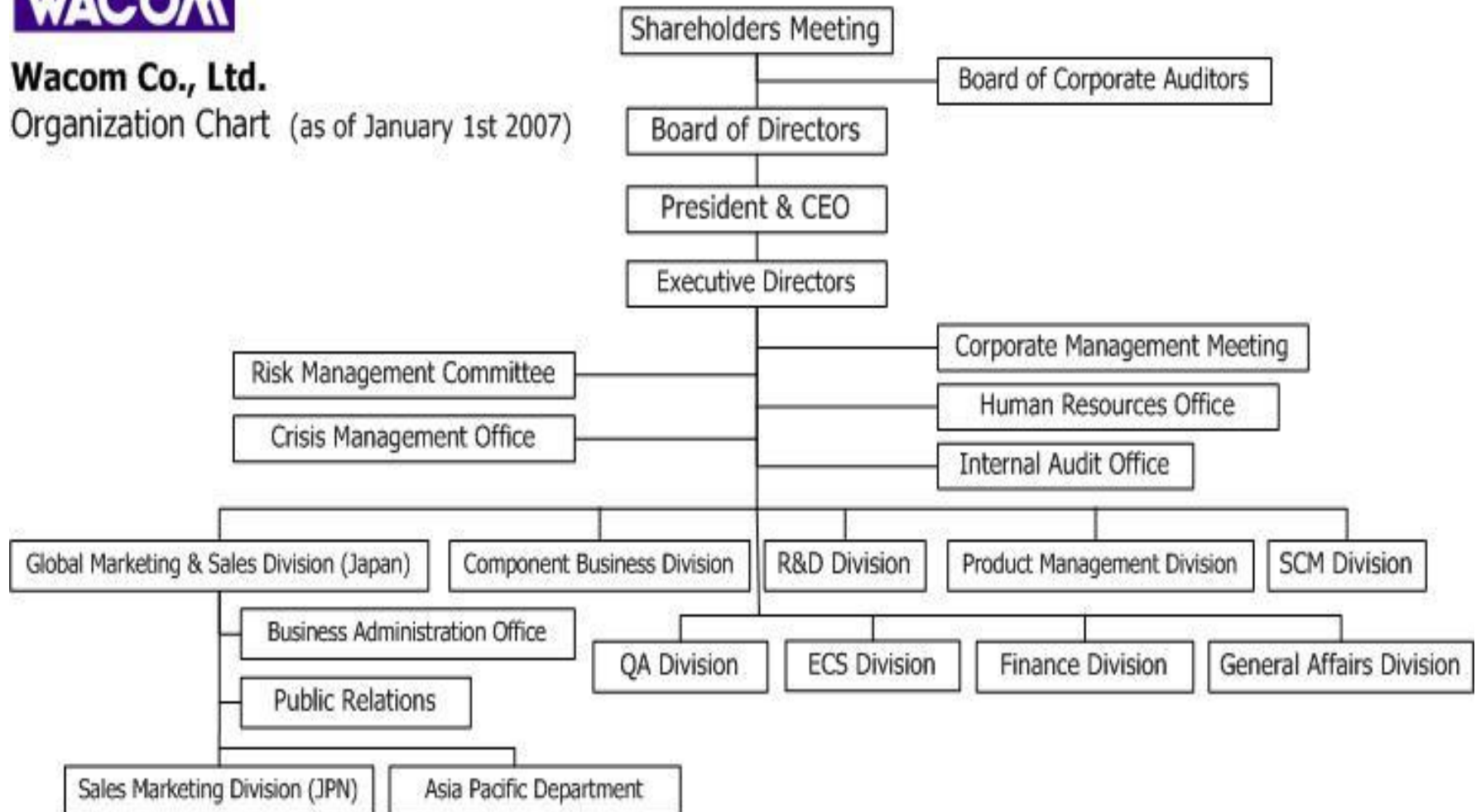
- Organizational structure
 - Scalar chain
 - Unity of command
 - Unity of direction
 - Division of labor
 - Span of control
- Organizational power
- Organizational reward
- Organizational attitude

http://www.wacom.co.jp/english/corporate/outline_diagram.html



Wacom Co., Ltd.

Organization Chart (as of January 1st 2007)



Organizational Chart



Organization's characteristics

- Closed system
- Driven by rational and legal authority
- Centralized power and control
- Clearly established hierarchy and rules of behavior, subordination and working culture:
 - One best way to do a job
 - Proper selection of workers for a job
 - Proper training
 - Division of labor between manager & workers
- Void of emotions

Communication in the Organizations

- The communication content within a classic management organization is task-based (maintenance)
- The direction of communication within a classic management organization is mainly downward.
- Written communication is the pervasive channel for communicating.
- The style of communication is formal and distant

„Corporate rules”

1. Dress code – business casual, meaning - no trainers, sneakers, jeans (unless its Friday). Remember that you must seem deadly dull and serious, and even when you think you are not – you can't be different, because this is not a place to show it. There is still some freedom for details and jewelry – earrings, scarf's, bracelets. It is better not to attract attention of others, because why to do so?
2. Remember about SILENCE! Everyone is working hard on a very important project, so - do not yell, do not laugh, do not show emotions. This is not the time and place to do so. You can do it out of work during the weekends. Conversations do not have to be live - you have an internal communicator precisely for these reasons. Therefore, you do not have to get up from your desk. You work all the time and can have a chat with your colleague sitting next to you through the chat programs installed in your computers.

3. Vocabulary - even when you do not know what the query means, do not say it - check the dictionary and pretend you always knew. You no longer have pauses (pl. przerwa) – you have break and lunch. You do not have time frames – you have deadlines and cut offs. We do not use words that sound bad (Ex.: Restroom - oh please ... No one has a right to rest here!)
4. Work - it's no picnic or fun! You do not have time for a chat or drinking coffee, because it's not fair to your colleagues – sit and work. And if you have nothing to work on – pretend. You have to be busy the whole 8 hours! Well, 7.45 – you have 15 minute brake during the day. Besides, everyone is working on something very important, and when you tell your friends about you job – you must be filled with pride about it. The sad truth is – you do important job only from the perspective of small group of people. Well, everyone is going through this stage in one point or the other.

5. Reports - about everything – on quantities, qualities, time effects. They have to be in excel, contain advanced command and a lot of columns that do not bring any additional information, because no one reads from cover to cover. And even if someone would – heshe will use filter anyway to find the needed information. Generally, reports containing tables and charts are welcome. Always, everywhere!
6. Emails– put in copy everyone, even those who have no interest for this matter. It doesn't matter that the majority will hide this message into assigned folder, even without reading. Maybe one day they can open it and find neded information. If they write in English – do the same, although, everyone you are writing to are Poles – it will not hurt. Write the same way as others, because if you don't - someone will write the message not to you, but to you boss, complaining about you.

7. Attitude - accept the attitude of lack in knowledge and wonder. You do not know how to do things, you never worked, you have lack of knowledge and you need to be taught how to do things. Crossing the lines in doing bigger amount of work will lead you to nowhere, and it will not reward you with the appreciation from your fellow colleagues. Everyone is busy with own project sand things. Therefore, do not bother people with your enthusiams.
8. People - you think you are special because you know two languages? Corporations do not employ ordinary people – they employ outstanding individuals, who then have to get rid of individualism in favor of the common good, fit into the schemes of the company. At the same time – they have to give the best or their talents. In short, once you were unique, now you have standard and direction of thinking. Most of your colleagues have the same or greater achievements and it is normal. We can say that there is no one who wouldn't have an interesting life story to tell.

9. Talks – if they are not connected to work – they are not valuable or serious. Every talk should either be connected to work or to general matters. There is no time or place for private matters.
10. Enthusiasm – why bother? There is no place for it. You have to be honest, hardworking and focused. Emotions are distractions common for children. After all, you're serious and adult. And if you're not - it's time for you to be, because you are working in a very important company! The less you know the better, believe me.

Dilemmas of Multi-Cultural Leaders by Fons
Trompenaars