Process guidelines for global leaders: How to effectively manage international teams

Rob van der Burg [a], Raul Valverde [b], Beatriz Torres [c]
[b] Supply Chain and Business Technology Department, [c] Département d'informatique et d'ingénierie
[a] Microsoft, [b] Concordia University, [c] University of Quebec at Outaouais

[b] 1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W, Montreal, QC H3G 1M8, CANADA
[c] 283 Alexandre-Taché Blvd, Gatineau, QC J8X 3X7, CANADA
, raul.valverde@concordia.ca, beatriz.torres@concordia.ca

Abstract: - The purpose of this paper is to show how leaders can be supported in creating and managing international teams in a more effective and efficient way. This paper tries to fill the gap between the more theoretical findings as presented in the literature and a pragmatic approach which can be used for execution by these leaders and teams. The main findings in the research is that although the leaders have a vast set of skills they require to do their jobs, it seems that the major issue is the different 'view on the world' and in more detail the differences between a leader and his team if he or she comes from a different cultural background. The paper aims to support people who work in international teams in different roles and locations.

Keywords: Team Leadership, Leadership styles, Cultural Awareness, Emotional Awareness, and Leadership Processes.

1 Introduction

In large organizations teams tend to be multi-cultural and they cross boundaries across the globe. Different cultures produce different leaders (Dickson et al, 2012) and that is one of the drivers of this research; why are some team leaders successful in creating a productive team and what is the 'magic' they are using to create one and sometimes even more important how to maintain one. To create a successful team there are different aspects which can influence this process; the leadership perspective, the team member's perspective and the interaction between the leader and the team members. From the leadership perspective there are for example the leadership style as in (e.g. [1],[2],[3]) and the level of a team leaders cultural Intelligence as in (e.g. [4],[5]) which are important aspect in this process as in [6].The research is focused on finding the structure behind this magic; what kind of processes are these team leaders using and to what extent do they influence the development and improvements of international teams. The scope of the research is to identify and explore how leadership processes influence the development of international teams and to develop guidelines on how these processes

can be changed in order to improve the development of international teams.

Achieving the research goal is supported by the following two research questions which will be used as guidance in analyzing the results of the qualitative semi structured interview sessions:
Research Question 1: How do leadership processes influence the development of international teams?
Research Question 2: How can leaders change these processes in order to improve the development of international teams?
Which will lead the research to the final goal of this paper that is a series of guidelines on how to change leadership processes in order to improve the development of international teams.

2 Literature Review

Leadership and the different leadership styles are defined in a comprehensive range of papers, books and articles. Alon& Higgins (2005) explain this in detail and state that there are three intelligences which support leaders in their road to success; the rational logic of the leaders' knowledge or IQ, the emotional intelligence (EQ), the cultural intelligence (CQ) and

Motivation which is defined as in [7] as direction, intensity and persistence.

2.1 Leadership

Regardless of the organization or leadership style, a leader should maintain a set of basic skills to become successful or stay successful as in [8]. The models described below can help to assist in identifying some of these basic skills.

2.2 Lewin's Framework

Leadership frameworks have evolved over the last century/ Kurt Lewin, a psychologist who created a framework on leadership in the late 1930s as in [9] described the main leadership styles below:

- The **autocratic leadership style** or the **directive leadership style** is one where the leader makes all the decisions and the team members are executing these without any form of input or consensus.
- The **laissez-faire leadership or the "hands-off" or "letting things ride" style** as in [10] is the opposite of an active leadership style as in [11], it is both weak on task orientation and relationship orientation and can be seen as a passive form of leadership in general as in [12].
- The **democratic leadership style or participative leadership style** which is a two way, participative, way of leading a team as in [13]. People acting in this leadership type showed a lot of co-operation and enjoyed working in the team and team members are participating in the decision process and provide suggestions to the leadership team as in [14].

2.3 The Blake Mouton Managerial Grid

This model is focused on the concern for production (X-Axis) and the concern for people (Y-Axis). As in [15] calls this typology in his research a very powerful typology. These two concerns, people and production are plotted against a nine-point scale where 1 shows a low concern and 9 a high concern. The Grid combines these two concerns in such a way that they show the interaction between these two concerns on every intersection of lines. Of these 81 styles, there are five who stand out;

- The **Impoverished Management style** which is low on people and low on production is that of a leader who is not capable of his job, he is ineffective and hardly gets the job done (Concern for Production) or to create a motivating work environment (Concern for people).
- The **Country Club Management style**, high on people and low on production, is focusing on the

needs of the individual team member and aim at a perfect working environment.

- The **Middle of the Road style**, medium on both people and production, is a compromise of both opposing concerns. The result of this style is that neither goal will be truly met and that there will be an average result in both concerns
- The **Task Management style**, low on people and high on production, is focused on getting the job done and the employee is seen as a production factor. The leader, often an autocratic leader, who provides the rules of engagement to his employees and does not expect, nor ask for feedback. Another term for this leadership style is **dictatorial or perish leadership style**.

- The **Team Management style** as in [2] the most effective style to run a desirable organization and is high on people and high on production. Employees are asked for input in the decision-making process and therefore have trust in the organization.

2.4 Goleman's six emotions leadership styles

Goleman's six leadership styles are defined as Coercive leadership, Authoritative leadership, Affiliative leadership, Democratic leadership, Pacesetting leadership and the Coaching leadership styles as in [3] which provide a holistic overview of the different styles which can be used by a leader.

2.5 Emotional Intelligence

No matter which of these styles is the preferred or the primary style, to build a relationship with an employee it is important for a team leader to have a certain level of emotional intelligence. This makes it evident that it is important to have the ability to read and manage the emotions of yourself, your employees and all people that you want to interact with in your professional career to become a successful team leader. Having a high level of emotional intelligence will help the leader to build maintain and develop his team.

2.8 Cultural implications of Leadership

From learned believes' to a 'set of values' or 'shared motives', they all have the same value in common, they all share the capabilities a person has to effectively adapt a new or different cultural aspects as in [4]. This concept is defined as **Cultural Intelligence**, which is split into three facets; the cognitive facet, the motivational facet and the behavioral facet.

The cognitive facet of Cultural intelligence is all about learning how to adopt and apply the learning about

other cultures and the ability to understand the other culture in a better way as in [16]. It is composed into four different parts; Meta Cognition which is a **person's ability** to gain deeper insight and knowledge and a better ability to knowledge processing as in [17], **Cognition** is the part of Cultural intelligence which refers to the knowledge of the individual himself, his **social environment** and the way information is processed as in ([17],[3]). **Motivation** is all about a person's interest in learning of cross cultural aspects as in [17] and finally Behavior, which is about an individual's ability to (re)act to a certain situation as in [18]. Regardless of the leadership style, different awareness to emotional intelligence or cultural intelligence, a leader has he always has a standard set of processes at hand to build a successful team as in [4].

2.9 Leadership in international teams
Leading an international team is different than leading a team of people who are all located on the same geographical location. For a team leader acting in an international organization it is important that he is able to focus on the different aspects in his organization.

3 Methodology & Research Resign
This research is created based on the qualitative research method and it will make use of the semi structured interview technique as in [19]. In the interviews as described in the next paragraph, the researcher collected data to find a way to setup and manage international organizations successfully.

3.1 Sample Selection and Size
For this research, the focus was on the **Microsoft organization**. This selection is used to create a manageable and focused research and the results can be used by the organization or any other given organization with similar structures to improve and manage its international teams.

The profile of the respondents for the sample selection is based on the role the respondent has in the organization, the participant must be part of an internationally operating team. For this research respondents have been selected from different parts of the organization, to have a consistent overview across the organization respondents are selected to participate in the research (horizontal segmentation) from the following regions:

Table 1 Regions used of the sample selection

• Asia Pacific (APAC)	• Greater China	• Latin America (LATAM)
• Canada	• India	• Middle East and Africa (MEA)
• France	• Japan	
• United States (US)	• Western Europe (WE)	• United Kingdom (UK)

The respondent are also selected from different organizational levels of the organization (vertical segmentation) and include Individual Contributors (IC), Virtual management (M0 Management), people managers (M1 management), Managers of Managers (M2 Management) or higher (M3 Management). A total 22 interviews took place between the 24th of November and the 19th of December 2014. Each interview took approximately one hour.

3.2 Information on the respondents
The individual characteristics are presented based on the information in *Respondents overview* which provides an overview of the different respondents based on area, role and gender.

3.3 Instruments development
3.3.1 Data Collection Process
The data collection process was conducted in different ways, depending on the location and the availability of the respondent:

- In a Face to face meeting were possible.
- By using Microsoft Lync where face to face meetings were not possible.

In both cases the same technology was used to record the interview; Microsoft Lync was used to make a recording of the interview which was used to create the transcript for the analysis of the collected data.

The interview was structured in five main topics, each containing a set of core questions with a set of follow up questions

- Effective Leadership processes
- Ineffective Leadership processes
- Effective teams
- Ineffective teams
- Making teams more effective

3.3.2 The interviewing process
As in [20] stresses the importance for the researcher to prepare for his interviews. In his E-Book he explains the seven stages of an interview investigation which were used by the researchers as a guideline in his interviewing process as a high level methodology for the interviews. For the data analysis itself the

researchers made use of Corbin & Straus's coding methodology as in [21]. The first stage is the **Thematizing** stage. In this stage the researchers formulated the purpose of the investigation, this can be found in the research questions (see paragraph 1.3). The second stage is the **Designing** stage. In this stage the interviews were planned based on the acquired knowledge (see literature research). The third stage is the **Interviewing** stage, at this stage the actual interviews took place based on the structure in paragraph 3.7. In the next stage, the **Transcribing** stage where the translation from speech to writings took place before we went to the Analyzing stage where the model was chosen in order to fit for the interviews which have taken place. The last two stages; the Verifying stage where we can check the viability of the results and the **Reporting** stage were also part of the study.

3.3.3 Planning the interviews

The research is based on the social constructionism epistemology which examines how people perceive truth. Using this we can 'make sense of the social world' as in [22] or as in [23] defined and later as in [24] this can represent a valuable definition of the world (truth), and by using this framework we can make an accurate impression (believes) of the organization we are going to observe as in [25] and in this context the researchers used the qualitative research methodology. By applying this model, interviews can be conducted in their natural environment and the researchers can see if the person in the interview is drawing the information from his own experience or from a so called recalled experience as in [26] and this will drive the researcher responses to the answers as in [27]. This way the interviews will provide data which were used to answer the two research questions and ultimately provide the desired outcome of this research. The interviews itself were done in the form of semi structured interviews. This way the researcher had the ability to create a set of core questions on which the interview was conducted and gives them the flexibility to use follow up questions for in-depth questioning of the people in the interviews as in [19].

Each interview was done in a 1:1 setting, in a face to face meeting. If this is not possible the interview took place by using a LiveMeeting session. This way the content of the interview was recorded for data analysis. The duration of each interview was approximately one hour.

3.4 Conducting the interviews/Instrument

By using the semi structured interviews the researchers made use of open ended questions based on a core set of questions. This cross analysis provided a deeper insight on the answers provided by the respondents' intelligence and leadership styles. The questions used in the interview were divided in seven different sections.

The first four sections are closed questions which are created to support the above. The first section asks a set of generic questions focused on the person itself; Name, age group, level of education, function and gender. This gives us a high-level overview of the person in question. The second section is about the geographical background of the person; where is he/she born, where did they follow most of their education, where did they work the most in their working live and where do they live at present. The third and the fourth sections are focusing on the leadership styles and the emotional and cultural intelligence of the persons being interviewed; the leadership style according to Blake and Mouton (2009) and the dominant and secondary leadership style according to Goleman (1998). The next 2 sections are constructed of open questions; Section five asks a set of questions focused on effective leadership processes, section six is about effective teams and section seven how a participant feels about making teams more effective. Section eight is a placeholder for the participants if they want to add additional comments. This took only place in a few cases and was limited in length.

3.4.1 Measurements

The constructs which were investigated are based on the two-research question:

- How do leadership process influence the development of international teams?
- How can leaders change these processes to improve the development of international teams?

The model which is used in this section is based on the theory of groups as defined as in [28]. The measurements are:

- How can a leader influence the team processes?
- What can a leader do to prepare himself?
- What are good forms of communications?
- What is important for a leader to do to make his team successful?

3.5 Analysis of findings

Analysis is a process of generating, developing and verifying concepts as in [21]. When the interviews have been conducted and the qualitative data is gathered using our semi structured interviews the researcher will use Corbin and Strauss's grounded coding methodology to further analyze the data. The

grounded coding method is not a new design, it dates back to 1967 when Glaser and Strauss introduced the concept in their book The Discovery of Grounded Theory as in [29] and this concept consist of a set of activities;

- **Gathering Qualitative data**; in this stage the data is collected in the semi structured interviews and this aligned with Kvale's third interviewing stage.
- **Organizing the data**; in this stage the data is transcribed in a structured format, also this stage is aligned to Kvale's fourth stage, the transcribing stage.

At this point the grounded coding methodology of as in [21] takes precedence and we will begin to analyze the data;

- **Fragmenting the data;** using the open coding technique the transcripts will be analyzed and the text of the transcripts will be coded based on a simple question "what was this about"? While this sounds easy, this is the hardest, most time-consuming step of the grounded coding method and a maximum of 50 codes should be created from the text as in [21].
- **Categorizing the data**; when the open coding activity has been completed the data will be structured using axial coding. During this stage the open codes will be categorized in similar codes, somewhere between 5 and 10 axial codes and each of these codes can be grouped into a subcategory like effective or not effective as in [30].
- **Selective coding**; in this stage the researcher will select an axial code as a core concept, the concept which will be selected will be the one closest to the original research questions in which case they can be answered by the research as in [31].

3.6 The Research constructs

To achieve this; the two research questions are linked to the individual questions and in retrospect these questions are supported by sections in the literature review with a supporting reference.

3.6.1 Research Question 1

The question "How do leadership processes influence the development of international teams" is supported by the open questions in section 1 personal questions and section 2 geographical questions which are not supported by the literature. Section 3 management questions is supported as in

[3], section 4 cultural and emotional intelligence questions supported by as in (e.g. [32],[33]) for emotional intelligence and as in [4] for cultural intelligence and section 5; effective leadership, supported as in [2].

3.6.2 Research Question 2

The question "How can leaders change these processes in order to improve the development of international teams" is supported by open questions. Section 6, effective teams and section 7 making teams more effective are supported as in [34] and as in [35]. Section 8 leaves space for additional comments if they are needed.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

Both validity & reliability are defined in different contexts but for this research paper we will use the definitions from Campbell & Fisk as cited by Hammersley as in [36]:

- Validity: "An agreement between two efforts to measure the same thing with different methods".
- Reliability: "An agreement between two efforts to measure the same thing with the same methods".

This way we can see that both support the same principle from a different perspective; where validity means that we found a good match between different observations, reliability means that we receive an identical response from different people to the same question. For the research both validity and reliability were checked in various ways, the sampling questions were asked to each individual (reliability) and the different respondents were approached in a different way to see if the outcome was identical (validity) as in [37].

3.8 Ethical Aspects

There are several ethical aspects which play an important role in any form of research. For this research paper. the researchers made a note to the following aspects of ethical issues in a research process as in [38]:

- Questions are defined before the interviews start and will not be altered to fit the results.
- The research is explained to the participants before they agreed to participate.
- Participants can refuse to participate at any stage of the research.
- Participants will remain anonymous and their data will be treated as confidential based on their consensus.

- All data will be treated with the utmost objectivity.
- The university is leading if anything might happen which needs further clarification.

All collected data was handled with the highest form of confidentiality. No names will be disclosed in the research. The researcher will make sure that no data can be aligned to a person or a team in the research.

4. Findings & Discussions
4.1.1 Individual characteristics
For this research twenty-two people have been interviewed in the period between the 24th of November and the 19th of December 2014. They **range in age** between the age groups of 25 to 34 and 55 to 64, with one undisclosed response and the average age group was between the ranges of 35 to 44, which was 50% of the respondents.
The **roles distribution** varied from Individual contributors (ICs) or team members which was 59% of the respondents, the virtual team managers (M0 managers) 14%, the people manager (M1 managers), 9% and the managers of managers (M2 managers) which were 18% of the respondents.

From an **educational level** most respondents carried out a university degree 81% of which 45% carried a bachelor's degree and 41% carried a master's degree.

4.1.2 Geographical characteristics
The group of twenty-two respondents are located in the three different areas or regions with their respective sub regions; The America's, Europe, the Middle East & Africa (MEA) and Asia Pacific: APAC, Greater China, India, and Japan. Of these people 77% are still living in the same country they were born in, worked most of their careers and followed the university. 23% of the respondents are now living in a different country in relation to their study or origin. With the exception of two sub regions, CEE & Germany, respondents came from all regions.

4.1.3 Leadership characteristics
The respondents have been asked to provide a short self-reflection on their leadership styles. To identify the respondent's leadership style according to Blake and Mouton a short questionnaire has been used, the questions are learning the respondents different aspects of their leadership typology and will result in a two dimensional scale plotted in the Blake & Mouton managerial grid. The result of this survey shows that 95% of the respondents are identified by the "Team Management Leadership" style and 5% falls under the "Middle of the Road" style.
Based on the responses in the interviews we can see that while they all fall under the same leadership style not all answers are identical while falling in the same cluster. These results come from question 3.1 which was generated by the short survey.

Authoritative was selected in most cases, 41% and **coaching** came second with 36%. **Democratic** was selected in 23% of the cases. This result is generated from question 3.3 and this was supported by the definitions in Truth, Believes or Knowledge as in e.g. ([23], [24]).
Based on the research as in e.g. ([2],[8]), we identified in the literature research four leadership styles; **democratic**, **coaching**, **authoritative** and **affiliative** who combined in one leader could improve the business performance and the working climate in a team. Of the respondents 18% mastered all four of these styles, 32% master different combinations of three styles, 45% mastered two of these styles and 5% mastered one style. This shows a mean of 3.05 leadership styles on average per interviewed person and which is well above the average amount of defining a good differentiation in leadership style as in e.g. ([2],[8]) . Another interesting finding is that all respondents who scored 100% on this combination they all had the cognitive intelligence "**self-aware**" selected as their primary or as a combined initial selection.

Looking at the number of times a leadership style was selected we can see that **coaching** was selected by 86% of the respondents followed by **authoritative** with 77% and **democratic** with 59%. **Pacesetting** and **affiliative** followed with respectively 41% and 36%. **Coercive** was not selected by any of the respondents.

Looking at how the respondents answered the two different leadership classifications we can see that based on the Blake and Mouton management grid survey 95% responses answered they have Team Management as the primary skill. Compared to Goleman's leadership classification this should reflect in a similar number of authoritative leadership style. From the survey results the number of primary or secondary responses with this leadership style is 77%; 41% selected it as his primary style and 36% selected it as his secondary style. 23% of the respondents did not select this style at all; 80% of

these selected coaching as their primary style and 20% selected democratic as their primary style. While these are not directly correlated they are still leadership styles who can be found in the same sector as the authoritative style and therefore no further research will take place on this topic in this research.

4.1.4 Cultural and emotional intelligence

For the emotional Intelligence (EQ) questions the research also used as in [2] and to identify which EQ style was mastered by the respondents they were presented five definitions for self-aware, self-regulated, motivation, empathy and social skills. This style is generated based on question 4.1 and was supported by the definitions which can be found in Table 20, Appendix A. The respondents could select on a scale from 1 to 5 if they do not have this skill (answer 0) or if they master the skill (answer 5)

Emotional Intelligence distribution

Motivation was selected in 55% of the responses, followed by **self-aware** with 18%, **self-regulated** with 14%, **social skills** with 9% and **empathy** with 5%.

Cultural intelligence (CQ) questions

Used as in [4] definition for the cognitive, motivational and behavioral aspects. This was asked in question 4.2 and supported by the definitions in Table 22 which can be found in Appendix A. And the respondents could also use the same 1 to 5 scale. Both the **motivational style** and **the behavioral style** where selected by 36% of the respondents and **cognitive** by 27% of the respondents.

4.1.5 Additional questions

The last questions in the interview asked three supporting questions; across the regions 59% of the responses answered that training only helps to some extent and only 32% answered that training would help accommodating the creation of a team. Technology was seen as a better enabler, 55% answered that it would help and an additional 41% answered to some extent. The biggest contributor to the creation of a successful team is culture, 73% answered that culture is important and 27% answered that culture would help to some extent with no responses that this would not help. To what extend this is important can be seen in the constructs and the research questions.

4.2 Coding the data

The interview transcripts have been coded into 50 codes, see Table open codes for the results. These Codes are the result of an analysis of all the twenty two different transcripts and consists of the codes which were used most excessively by the respondents. In this step, the codes are listed in

Table 2 Axial coding

Communication	Motivators
Communication	Challenge
Email	Commitments
Lync	Direction
Phone	Encourage
Processes Unknown or not needed	Feedback
Rhythm	Goal
Structure	Incentives
Webcam	Mission
	Objectives
	Recognition
	Scope
	Vision

Emotions	Cultural
Attitude	Clarity
	Coaching and mentoring
Empowered	Culture
Focus on others	Diversity
Fun	Face to Face
Informal	Honesty
Inspire	Online
Motivation	Organizational Impact
Personality	Participate
Style	Respect
Trust	Transparency

Knowledge	Facilitators
Experience	Accountability
Maturity	Leadership
Skills	Management
	Ownership
	Responsibilities
	Stakeholder

alphabetical order without any grouping. These codes are used by the respondents to explain how they felt their personal situation was reflected by one of the questions. After the initial coding the codes are grouped into categories, see the next table axial Coding for the resulting tables.

This was done because responses could be in some cases both seen as positive or negative; these will be identified in the next paragraph where the feedback is aligned to the constructs. The selective coding activity shows the different categorizations and their relation towards each other in the model which will be used in the descriptive findings to work towards the aim of the research. The categorization "**cultural**" shows those codes who will be the core concepts. The reason for selecting this categorization is because it contained the most codes in the **top 10 of selected codes** and it contained also in total the most selected codes, 23% of the codes falls under this categorization compared to 21% for motivators, 19% for ownership, 18% for communication, 13% for emotions and 5% for knowledge. The model in figure Selective Coding shows how the different categorization support each other and the core concept; culture, Drivers, Communication, Knowledge and Emotions are defined as input for the core concept "cultural" and this results in the output of ownership. For the research construct the focus

will be on the **cultural categorization** as this is the core component of the selective coding.

4.3 Descriptive findings

During the interviews the focus was initially on the leadership styles of the leaders as well as the team members. This was done because at Microsoft there is an open culture which is reflected by the distributed leadership style as explained as in [39]; everyone at Microsoft can see another team member as a perceived leader while still one person is the appointed leader. Examples of this type of leadership is the M0 level manager, 14% of the respondents answered that they were a M0 level manager.

During the different interviews it became clear that most respondents looked at this construct in a similar way. Leadership was mentioned by most respondents in their responses directly followed by Communication and Culture. To create a weighted average the following tables are calculated based on the following formula:

Responses by Area (Time zone)

- 64% of the responses come from the EMEAarea which is made up of CEE, France, Germany, MEA, the UK and WE.
- 18% of the responses come from the America'sarea which is made up of Canada, the United States and Latin America.
- 18% of the responses come from Asia Pacificarea which is made up of: APAC, Greater China, India and Japan.

The formula to create a weighted average of the responses for each area is based on the formula which can be seen in next figure:

Table 3 Area weighted average calculation:

(# of responses for area X / the % for area X)
((# of responses for area X / the % for area X) + (# of responses for area Y / the % for area Y) + (# of responses for area Z / the % for area Z))

Where X is the calculated region and Y and Z the two other regions. To do this for the distribution between a Leader and a team member we can see in figure 21 that the distribution between Leaders and team members is 41% and 59%. The formula for the role distribution can be seen in next figure:

Table 4 weighted average calculation Role :

(# of responses for EMEA / the % for EMEA)
((# of responses for EMEA / the % for EMEA) + (# of responses for the America's / the % for the America's) + (# of responses for Asia Pacific / the % for Asia Pacific))

As an example this formula will be applied to the Culture reference item in the categorization table below Cultural categorization to calculate the number for the EMEA region.

Table 6 Cultural categorization table, absolute numbers

Reference Item	Total references	Leaders	Team Members	EMEA	America's	Asia Pacific
Culture	59	29	30	42	6	11
Impact	31	14	17	21	9	1
Honesty	21	9	12	14	4	3
Respect	21	10	11	14	5	2
Face to Face	14	10	4	13	0	1
Participate	12	2	10	3	4	5
Diversity	9	8	1	8	0	1
Clarity	3	1	2	2	0	1
Online	3	0	3	2	0	1
Transparency	2	0	2	1	0	1

Applying this formula with the data from table the Open Coding (Cultural reference item) for the regional weighted calculation is 41%:

$$\frac{(42 / 64\%)}{((42 / 64\%) + (6 / 18\%) + (11 / 18\%))} = 41\%$$

The result of applying this formula to all the data in table Cultural categorization table can be seen in the table below:

Table 7 Cultural categorization table, weighted averages

Reference Item	Total references	Leaders	Team Members	EMEA	America's	Asia Pacific
Culture	59	58%	42%	41%	21%	38%
Impact	31	54%	46%	37%	57%	6%
Honesty	21	52%	48%	36%	37%	27%
Respect	21	57%	43%	36%	46%	18%
Face to Face	14	78%	22%	79%	0%	21%
Participate	12	22%	78%	9%	41%	51%
Coaching and mentoring	10	68%	32%	100%	0%	0%
Diversity	9	92%	8%	69%	0%	31%
Clarity	3	42%	58%	36%	0%	64%
Online	3	0%	100%	36%	0%	64%

Geographical distribution and for the role distribution. If we look at the highest-ranking results per region the following applies:

Table 8 highest ranking results per region

EMEA	America's	Asia Pacific
1. Coaching and Mentoring	1. Impact	1. Clarity& Online
2. Face to Face	2. Respect	2. Participate
3. Diversity	3. Participate	3. Culture

And for the highest ranking in the role distribution:

Table 9 Highest ranking in the role distribution

Leader	Team member
1. Diversity	1. Online
2. Face to Face	2. Participate
3. Coaching and Mentoring	3. Clarity

4.3.1 Regional awareness

Relating the data back to the findings we can see that there are in cases of the leadership style and the emotional intelligence according to Goleman similarities in the results.

Table 10 Leadership & cultural dominance

Area	Leadership Style	EQ	CQ
EMEA	Authoritative	Motivation	Behavioral
America's	Authoritative	Motivation	Motivational
Asia Pacific	Coaching	Self-Aware	Cognitive

If we look at both the leadership and the emotional intelligence we see that the dominant responses from EMEA and the America's are identical and are not in line with the dominant responses from Asia Pacific. For the leadership style this shows that the Asia Pacific area is focusing more on people development than EMEA and the America's where leadership is more focused on setting the vision and lead by example. This is in line with the findings for the emotional intelligence where Asia Pacific has more focus on being self-aware and thus supports his people to grow (coaching him) and EMEA and the America's show a leader who is motivated to undertake his current role.

The cultural intelligence dominant responses are different across all Areas. For Asia Pacific the dominant cultural intelligence is the cognitive style, very much in line with the prior two findings; this is again about the individual and his social environment. For EMEA the dominant factor is behavioral, a person's ability to respond to a situation and for the America's the motivational style; a person's interest in cross cultural aspects.

4.3.2 Discussion on Research question 1:

How do leadership processes influence the development of international teams; developing a new team requires not only a drive by the team leader and the initial team members. It also requires several aspects from the cultural aspects both need to take into account.

It is interesting to see that both from a regional perspective as well as from a role perspective we can see that there is almost no overlap between priorities. This might explain why this field of expertise is such a hard one to be successful in. A manager from a cultural background having people from another region reporting to him has even more challenges than a manager who has reports in his own area.

To find a common ground in this construct we can look at the code with the most absolute mentioning's. All respondents mentioned **culture** as an important enabler of the creation of new teams and two other codes are "**Impact**" & "**Honesty**". While most feedback was positive or supporting, not all comments showed a positive impact on the organization. The other codes which are part of this core categorization are: **Respect**, **Face to Face**, **Participate**, **Coaching and mentoring**, **Diversity**, **Clarity** and **Online**.

What we see after looking at all the different codes is that the leadership processes are being influenced in various ways. Codes like **culture**, **impact**, **honesty** and **respect** are influencing the way a team is being led based on the leader as well as the individual team members. This means that every additional person in the team adds to the improvement as well as the complexity in such a team. The other cultures influence the leadership processes in a more direct matter. **Face to face** and **online** will impact how a leader will interact with his team and this can mean that some of the tools as being mentioned in the different interviews will be excluded or just in a different way. An example in this matter is the use of email.

4.3.3 Discussion on Research question 2:

How can leaders change these processes in order to improve the development of international teams; in this second research question these responses will be further looked at to see how they can be used to improve the already established processes. In most cases the codes are impacting this in a similar matter and the improvement lies in a different angle. After reviewing the initial responses an important anomaly can be seen: All areas have a different set of priorities. This aspect is an important one and stresses the importance of the leaders to be able to work in an

international team. Supporting factors for the leader are communication and the way communication is being used. Types of communication which are being provides are Email, Lync, Live Meetings, Webcam, Face to Face, online and a phone. A second identifier for improvement is that Leaders and Team members have different priorities. Where leaders seek the importance of diversity, Face to Face meetings and being a coach, team members are more focused on participation, clarity and the concept of online. A third finding is that the responses from EMEA and the America's in regard to the leadership style and the emotional intelligence are similar.

4.4 Concluding remarks

Finding 1: All areas have a different set of priorities

Based on the literature research we can see that this shows the EMEA area has a **dominant authoritative leadership** style with a **dominant behavioral cultural** style and a dominant **motivation emotional** style. All three are focused on similar aspects:

- Lead and Inspire the people and the team
- High quality in work (ethics)
- Re(act) to changing situations

The America's EMEA area has a **dominant authoritative leadership** style with a **dominant motivational cultural** style and a dominant **motivation emotional** style. All three are focused on similar aspects, closely related to the EMEA analysis:

- Lead and Inspire the people and the team
- Cross cultural learning
- Re(act) to changing situations

The Asia Pacific area has a **dominant coaching leadership** style with a **dominant cognitive cultural** style and a dominant **self-aware emotional** style. These three are focused on a different set of aspects:

- Grow & develop the people and the team
- Individual knowledge & personal social environment
- Support people around you & aware of personal strengths

This shows why leaders with a dominant authoritative leadership style might find it difficult to lead a team of people who have a combination of different dominant forms of cultural intelligence. While one individual is focusing on the self-learning aspect of his role others are focusing on external aspects of their role. Also a reactive /pro-active

difference can be identified based on the cultural intelligence definitions. A second finding is that the leaders and the team members have a different set of priorities.

Finding 2: Leaders and Team members have different priorities

Where the leaders focus on diversity and coaching and mentoring the individual team members see participation and receiving a clear message as more important. While these dominant priorities contradict they seem to be compliant from a team perspective. A leader is still able to provide a clear message while focusing on growing the team and team members by mentoring them where needed.

5. Conclusions, implications & Future Research

Based on the coding analysis of the collected data we can see that all areas have a different set of priorities and that leaders and team members also have different priorities. The results show that for EMEA the focus is on coaching and mentoring, Face to face meetings and diversity, the America's focus on impact, respect and participation and Asia Pacific on clarity, online, participation and culture.

When looking at the different leadership styles found as dominant in the different areas we can see that EMEA & the America's have the authoritative style as the dominant style and Asia Pacific have the coaching style as the dominant one.

From a cultural perspective we see that EMEA has the behavioral cultural intelligence style as dominant, the America's motivational and Asia Pacific the cognitive cultural intelligence style.

5.1.1 Conclusion on Research Question 1

Leadership processes are an important factor on the development of international teams. In the analysis we found that leaders and team members have a different view to priorities, this makes it critical for a leader to understand not only the business but also the team members and team dynamics.

5.1.2 Conclusion on Research Question 2

Based on the team construction a leader can prepare himself and the processes he is implementing based on the cultural diversity of his new team. A leader should never imply that based on his prior experiences this new team will follow the same learning path as the one before; it is extremely important that a leader understand his individual team members, there cultural background and their emotional intelligence before he tries to embed his processes on top of this new team.

5.2 Implications

It is essential for the leaders in an international team to understand that his leadership style might not be received the way he perceives this. It is important for a leader to learn and prepare on the different styles he can encounter in his team and be open and respectful to these different emotional and cultural intelligence styles. No matter what background a leader has and what kind of dominant style he has it is important that a leader understands the differences. For a team member it is important that he understands that the way his leader communicates is not the way he expects to be communicated to and he also should learn that there might be inconsistencies in this.

5.3 Guidelines

The proposed guidelines based on the conclusions is that a leader building a new team or improving an existing team needs to invest in the personal relation between him and his team members and the team members between themselves. A leader should initially invest in developing this awareness between his team members individually and himself. By doing this he will not only make his individuals better but it will also improve the team and its results as a whole.

A leader should learn that the way he communicates is the way his leadership style is anticipated by his team members. This implies that he needs to be aware how this can be perceived and thus he needs to study his team's cultural intelligence Styles.

5.4 Limitations

This research has a few limitations; the first is that the research has been conducted in one organization; Microsoft. It would have been interested to see if there are similar results in other organizations with international teams and how these would relate to the results from the Microsoft employees. A second aspect which is considered to be a limitation is the choice for a quantitative research. This limits the amount of people who have been involved in the research.

5.5 Future recommendations

For the research to gain more validity in the field it would be of interest to extend the research to other companies; adding a combination of leader and team member of different companies will add value to the results of this research and show if the conclusions are also valid in those companies.

A second recommendation is to us a quantitative approach and to create a survey in which we can reach a large sample group in Microsoft to check their emotional and cultural intelligence. This way we can check if our sample is indeed valid across the different areas.

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