Cross Cultural Consulting
Cross Cultural Consulting

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Master of Business (Organization Behaviour)
Declaration

This thesis is submitted as the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business (Organization Behaviour).

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other higher degree in any tertiary institution and to the best of the candidate’s knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Malcolm Cantor
December, 2000

Confidentiality
For purposes of confidentiality in this study personal names, company names, and product names have been changed.

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This study would not have been possible without the generosity of the consultants who agreed to be interviewed. I thank them for their time, for their thoughtful responses to my questions, and for their willingness to include me in their working lives.

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Synopsis
This thesis is concerned with cross-cultural consulting. The research examines how a multinational consulting team worked with a multinational client. The consultants were from Taiwan, Japan, Singapore, Indonesia, USA and Australia and the client was a multinational oil company located on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia.

The study employs the narrative theory of Ricoeur together with the research findings on culture of Hofstede, Trompenaars, Hall, Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck. The study relies on a comparison of national cultural characteristics as they were enacted during the conduct of a consulting project. The research emphasises the roles of the consultants, the consulting process and the consulting outcomes.
Table of Contents

Cross Cultural Consulting ........................................................................................................ii
Declaration..................................................................................................................................iii
Confidentiality ........................................................................................................................iii
Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................iii
Synopsis .....................................................................................................................................iv
Table of Contents .....................................................................................................................v
List of Tables and Figures ........................................................................................................v
Preface .......................................................................................................................................1

Self in Research .......................................................................................................................6

Part 1: Theoretical Perspective ...............................................................................................10
  Chapter 1 - Culture .................................................................................................................11
    A Dominant Culture .............................................................................................................12
    Culture as a Social Defence ..............................................................................................13
    Culture and Context .........................................................................................................13
  Chapter 2 - Cultural Patterns ...............................................................................................15
    Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck ...............................................................................................15
    Hall ......................................................................................................................................16
    Hofstede .............................................................................................................................17
    Collectivism – Individualism .............................................................................................17
    Avoidance – Uncertainty .................................................................................................17
    Power-Distance ..................................................................................................................18
    Masculinity-Femininity ......................................................................................................18
    Trompenaars ......................................................................................................................18
    Relationships ......................................................................................................................19
      Particularism – Universalism: (relationships- rules) .........................................................19
      Collectivism – Individualism: (the group - the individual) ...............................................19
      Emotional - Neutral Affect: (the range of feelings expressed) ......................................20
      Diffuse - Specific Involvement: (the range of involvement) ...........................................20
      Achievement – Ascription Status: (how status is accorded) .........................................21
    Time ....................................................................................................................................21
    Nature .................................................................................................................................22
  Indonesian Survey ................................................................................................................24
  Chapter 3 - Narrative Theory - Method ..............................................................................25
    Culture and Narrative ......................................................................................................25
    Narrative Sensitivity .........................................................................................................26
    Narrative and Change ........................................................................................................27
    Meaning Made Public - Through Narrative ....................................................................27
Preface

The purpose of this study is to show how culture and cross-cultural differences affect the consulting process. It is expected that the research will show how cultural characteristics and differences shape consulting roles, the consulting process and consulting outcomes. The consulting company being studied is a multinational organization that contracted to provide consulting services to a multinational oil company located on the island of Sumatra in Indonesia. The study was conducted by interviewing twelve people over the four-month duration of the consulting project.

The research question is important in an increasingly global world where cross-cultural business is becoming common. The incidence of multicultural work environments is increasing and is due to a number of factors, most importantly the growth of US and European multinational companies. These international business arrangements often result in individuals from one culture working not only with, but also for individuals from another culture. One of the bases for this research is the assumption that “the most successful firms in the global arena will be companies whose employees not only understand world economics and global competitiveness but also have the ability to communicate effectively with international counterparts”.¹

The subjects of the research are a consulting company (CGL)² and their client (OIL). CGL is a division of a multinational computer manufacturer and services group, and has an office in Jakarta, Indonesia. The Indonesian client is Oil Indonesia Limited (OIL), which also has an office in Jakarta Indonesia. In 1993 OIL signed a contract with CGL, engaging CGL to perform consulting work for their oil exploration and production operation.

OIL’s exploration and production operation is located on the island of Sumatra in the Eastern Indonesian archipelago. The oil fields are extensive in size and geographically remote from major cities and towns. OIL has built a number of company owned towns in order to accommodate its workforce. It is at one of these towns, Pelembang, that OIL has its regional office and it is here that the CGL project was located and the research was conducted.

The research included interviewing twelve people associated with the consulting project. Nine interviewees were consultants from CGL, the tenth was an OIL employee, the eleventh was an independent consultant and the twelfth a Pelembang resident. Each person was interviewed two or three times over the four-month duration of the project.

The interviews allowed the principal players in the project to relate their experiences of events. Interviews with the consultants reflected their concerns that they had been thrust into a remote, strange and unfamiliar work environment. They observed that they were not prepared for the tropical environment, the heat, the humidity and the isolation. An example cited frequently during the interviews was the difficulties of

² As noted on page iii all names of places and people have been changed in order to ensure confidentiality.
making a simple phone call to their respective homes to stay in touch with family and friends. On many occasions it was simply not possible to make an overseas phone call. This added to the sense of isolation and remoteness.

The remote location provided a refractive device upon which the consultants could reflect about the nature of the consulting project. Their experiences of the consultancy included their personal feelings in relation to the events of the day and their relationships to other people involved in the project. All expressed feelings and concerns about the isolation and difficulty engendered by the multicultural nature of the project work. In this way the interviews were used to reflect on different matters.

Frequently interviewees noted they did not know their work colleagues prior to coming to Pelembang. They noted this in the context of developing rapport and the need to complete work tasks and assignments. Consultants from many nationalities had been assigned to the project. The interviewees remarked on the multiplicity of languages required to communicate within the consulting team and with the client. These included consultants from Indonesia, USA, Japan, Australia, Hong Kong, India, Singapore and Taiwan. English was the common language although the consultants used whatever language they felt was most effective for the circumstances.

The research methodology was based on the use of narrative. The interviews were conducted in English and proved to be a useful forum in which the interviewees could give expression to their experiences and emotions. They storeyed these experiences and delivered accounts, or narratives about their experiences of the consulting project, fellow consultants, the leadership of the consulting team and the leadership of the project.

At various points throughout the dissertation the personal pronoun is used, which reflects the notion that the researcher is not outside the study, but integrally part of a joint construction of meaning with the interviewees. This is particularly so in the narrative constructed from the interviews presented in Part 2. Not only was I in the role of researcher but I was also involved in a consulting role with my own professional problems, challenges and worries. I was paradoxically both researcher and researched. By day I worked as a consultant and by night I worked as a researcher. In order to maintain some separation between my work role and those I interviewed I kept a diary of events and of my thoughts and feelings from my perspective as researcher and as a consultant.

At the outset of the study I was confident that the study would provide me with a project to occupy my time while consulting in a remote location. I was to participate in a cross-cultural consulting engagement where I was “faced with a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures.” I was required to deal with these whilst juggling the simultaneous demands of the consulting task and research task. I was a stranger to the world of oil production, the complexities of the client organization, the working environment and my colleagues. However because of my consulting experience I was

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3 Drummond G., unpublished Doctoral dissertation Understanding Organization Culture, Leadership, Conflict and Change, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, p.11.
confident that I had the skills to quickly learn about the oil business and the client organization. I therefore felt confident and excited by the prospect of researching and consulting in a cross-cultural context.

Each person I interviewed spoke about the demands of the consulting assignment, and the problems of managing in a multicultural environment. In some cases I was involved in the same meetings and incidents. In other cases I did not have the opportunity to attend these meetings. However, I was presented with various views and outcomes of these meetings. I was provided access to individual reflections about the consultancy including observations regarding many daily events such as meetings, personalities, decisions, effects of decisions and the many matters which gave meaning to the daily lives of the consultants.

Through the interviews and the informal talks after the interviews and through socialising after work had finished for the day I came to know the interviewees. I gained considerable knowledge about each of them, as well as the client and the consulting project through the descriptions and anecdotes provided by the interviewees. I came to know the client organization through working and living on the client site 24 hours a day over a period of four months. I also interviewed many of the client’s middle managers and client executives during the course of my consulting work. Further, I became familiar, through daily association, with my fellow consultants and with client personnel who had been assigned to work on the project.

Being privileged by being both researcher and researched I came to understand the project from a unique perspective. Flaws, misunderstandings and emotional rawness became apparent during the research. In this remotely located consulting engagement, where the consultants had to work and live together, it became apparent through my privileged role as researcher that the “cracks and flaws” which came to the surface through the interviews, were exacerbated by the multinational, multicultural nature of the consulting project. In another setting these “cracks and flaws” might have otherwise been rendered over and not articulated or disclosed to me during the interview process. As researcher and researched I contributed to the construction of a world which was temporal and at times unbelievable. I mirrored the thoughts and feelings of the interviewees.

The data gathering for this research occurred in circumstances which can never be repeated. Data gathering occurred over a four-month period. It was conducted with

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6 Berg, D. & Smith, K. (1985) The Self in Social Inquiry, Sage, Beverley Hills. They refer to parallel processes in which the researcher will be “playing through, in parallel form, the key dynamics that are driving the system being researched”. An alternative expression is mirroring. p. 30-31

7 Ibid. p. 135. These authors raise the question “How do we know the resulting account is surreal or real? The process of collecting data, reducing it, analysing and interpreting it and writing it up the information requires substantial reductions”. They suggest qualitative studies allow for the study of intact social settings, flexibility with regard to the best people to reflect on the determinants of these local environments, and direct observation, coupled with continuous testing of the emerging data against diverse explanations with the approach adopted for this study. Further comment is made on this topic in ‘Self in Research’ at the end of the Preface.
a variety of people at a particular time in history. A great number of people whom I interviewed now no longer work for CGL or OIL. The research is verifiable only in the sense that a series of audio tapes were generated, from which transcripts were made, which in turn formed the basis of the narrative presented in Part 2.

However, it must be recognised that this narrative cannot capture all the intonations and nuances of the spoken word. The narrative is my construction of my interviewee’s narratives. It is therefore selective and partial in that it represents only that which I thought was important and which made sense to me as I constructed my story. Another narrative could be written from the same transcripts, which would be equally as valid as the narrative presented in Part 2. However, the narrative which I have presented is the best I could present. It includes extensive quotes in order to stay as close as possible to the meanings represented by the interviewees, yet it is my construction. As such it includes my subjective rendering of what I believed was important.

Like my interviewees, I make no distinction between the subjective and what is objective. This is a holistic representation of what is both objective and subjective. I wanted to capture subjective experiences within the narrative I constructed. Recognition of the juxtaposition of both the subjective and objective treatment is made possible in the narrative form. This would not have been the case if I had chosen another research design. As the “dust bowl of empiricism”\(^8\) has cleared in the last few years in academia so the importance of other than objective knowledge generated through the scientific paradigm has raised the importance of subjective experiences. The narrative presented is a particular type of knowledge which is equally valid. What is hoped for is verisimilitude within a narrative which captures the essence of the interviewees experience.

In contrast a rational, objective, research design predicated on the basis of a priori hypotheses would have led me as researcher to pursue avenues of research not central to the experiences of the interviewees.\(^9\) The search for truth and laws is therefore transformed into a search for coherences. It is hoped that the experiences of the interviewees will provide to the reader resonances at the emotional, the intellectual and practical level.\(^10\) I have not produced a model which can provide guidance for future consultants working in a cross-cultural context but a narrative construction of those who did so. My account of their collective experience may provide some idea of what is in store for those who contemplate such an endeavour themselves. The best I can hope for is that the reader will be able to draw some understanding from the interviewee’s predicaments, their emotions, their reflections, decisions and actions in

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9 Geertz, C. (1973) The Interpretation of Cultures, Op. Cit. p. 26. He asserts ...”Just as the diagnostician does not predict measles, neither does the ethnographer made predictions”. This is consistent with the present study in that a central intention was to allow the study to unfold, and by taking this approach, I was open to diversity of opportunities, which were presented by the exigencies, which were generated either externally or internally. In contrast, watertight a priori categories, would have lead me as researcher to pursue avenues central to the design of the study but not central to the interviewees.
an empathetic manner. I have contrived a story of a cross-cultural consulting team which includes their good and bad times in the hope that it may be of some instruction to those readers who would also contemplate such a journey.

Part 1 begins by introducing concepts of culture. The literature on national cultural differences cultures is reviewed and it is shown that an opportunity exists to provide some insight into the effects of cross-cultural differences on the consulting process. A rationale is then presented for the adoption of narrative theory for this thesis. Finally the research design is explicated.

Part 2 begins by contextualising the project before presenting the narrative, derived from the interviews and observations. The narrative begins with the commencement of the consultancy, the process of contracting and entry with a focus on the experiences of the consultants. The narrative follows the experiences of the interviewees throughout the consultancy.

Part 3 presents the findings of the research. The consulting context provides an opportunity to demonstrate the effect of different approaches to common problems. Specifically, I review the experiences of the consultants during two incidents and reflect on some of the people involved in the project. Throughout the analysis attention is given to the impact on the roles enacted by the consultants, the consulting process and the consulting outcomes. The research context provides the opportunity to compare how culture shapes approaches to common problems concerned with relationships, time and nature within a consulting context.
Self in Research

David Berg and Kenwyn Smith remind us that relationships are central to social research.\textsuperscript{11} They note that the nature and quality of the research findings are powerfully influenced by the relationship between the researcher and the researched. Berg and Smith maintain that this relationship should therefore receive the same intense scrutiny as other methodological issues in the research process. They support this by noting that virtually no information about a person, group, or social system exists without a relationship with that person or social system.\textsuperscript{12} Indeed our knowledge of the social world is a consequence of our relationship with this world through our exposure to the relationships of others. In short our research relationships create what we see. Therefore the nature of that relationship is an extremely important determinant of the quality of the data. It stands to reason that a trusting relationship will more likely lead to the disclosure of information which is sensitive and well thought out than an untrusting one.

Berg and Smith note that the processes operative within the researcher will also result in a playing through of key dynamics that are driving the research. They refer to these alignments as parallel processes, which they define as the tendency for two or more social systems that have significant contact with each other to show similar behaviours and cognitions.\textsuperscript{13} Therefore, guided by Smith and Berg a description of my relationship to the research will provide the context necessary for interpreting what has been discovered. The general context for the research has been described elsewhere in this study.\textsuperscript{14} In this part I propose to analyse the relationship of the researcher to the researched by disclosing my professional attributes, formative experiences and personal characteristics which I believe were important in shaping the nature of that research relationship. Firstly, I will discuss my background in general terms and then analyse my attitudes to authority and key relationships and my approach to the resolution of conflict.

Academically I earned an undergraduate business degree from an Australian university, an MBA from a US business school and a Graduate Diploma in Organization Behaviour from an Australian university. My perspective on management theory and practice was conditioned by exposure to what was taught in Western universities in the 1970’s and implemented in Western organizations during the 1980’s.

I am an Australian citizen who for the period of the research worked as a management consultant for CGL. Prior to the research CGL employed me in a technical role. I was required to provide advice to customers and colleagues on the technicalities of computer systems. After ten years in this capacity I found myself looking for challenges of a different nature. As a technician I had developed an interest in the business use of technology and observed the difficulties of implementing such

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid. p. 25.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid. p. 31.
\textsuperscript{14} refer to Chapter 6, pp 86 – 92, Industrial and Commercial context including the Geographic context
technologies. The process of developing this interest led me to undertake a Graduate Diploma in Organization Behaviour at Swinburne University of Technology. The conclusion of this academic work coincided with the opportunity to reinvent myself professionally.

This opportunity presented itself through the restructuring of the computer industry in the early 1990’s. At this time a worldwide recession, together with a change from mainframe computing to networked computing, caused many computer companies to search for additional sources of income. Many, including my employer, began professional services businesses to augment computer equipment sales. During the early 1990’s my employer struggled to change from a distribution company to a services company. Through this process the opportunity to become a management consultant presented itself and I made the transition from a technical professional to a management consultant. By the commencement of this research I had worked on several consulting projects and was considered by my employer as a qualified and experienced management consultant.

Encouraged by my graduate work at Swinburne University of Technology I developed an interest in culture and its effect on the work place dynamics. To further this interest, I committed to undertaking a Masters qualification by research. Simultaneously I was also assigned to the OIL consulting project in Sumatra, Indonesia. My assignment to this project provided an opportunity to study how national cultures cohere to shape the consulting process. In this manner I was able to combine academic and vocational interests.

The geographical and social context of the research is described in Chapter 6 where I have noted that the headquarters of the client organization were located in a small Indonesian town called Pelembang. Daily life in this small township of approximately 600 families was similar to my formative years as a youth growing up in a rural town located in the Australian state of Queensland. Within this small rural community our family owned a small retail store. As employers we were considered by the townsfolk to be in the upper social layer of that small community. Other employers and landholders, the farmers and graziers who regularly visited the township for the purpose of selling livestock, produce or acquiring supplies were also considered to be within the upper socio economic layer.

The reality of living in such a small community required that one did not offend fellow citizens who in the morning could be your best customer, in the afternoon might fix your house plumbing and in the evening would play with your brothers and sisters. The outcome of being in the upper socio economic layer in this community meant that one acquired social skills to communicate across the cultural divide between the working class, the land owners and professionals such as solicitors, bank clerks and teachers. These skills proved useful on this project as the research was also located in a small Indonesian town where I, as a Western management consultant, enjoyed the privileges of being the guest of a multinational oil company.

Business reality within many small rural communities in Australia in the 1960’s and 1970’s meant one’s business success was limited by the intense competition for the limited local demand for basic goods and services. Business opportunities were limited by the small size of the town and the seasonal nature of the rural economy.
Although one made the most of the opportunities economic survival became a priority and economic success or progress was simply not possible. Essentially this meant that the development of social and sporting interests became a priority, as economic opportunities were limited. In this manner the boundary between economic and social activities was crossed several times during the course of one day. Accordingly one developed the ability to run a business, lead where and when required and at the same time meld seamlessly into the social fabric of a small rural township.

The township of Pelembang where the research took place was similar in size to the rural community my youth. I found I was socially well equipped to work effectively this small township. The Pelembang community was dedicated to the single endeavour of drilling, producing and shipping oil. It was comprised of professional managers, professional technicians and a larger community of relatively unskilled labour. I spent most of my social and working time with the former group. Because of the remoteness and size of the township I could not afford to make enemies or develop close friendships. I was required to provide leadership and at the same time do so in a manner which was professional yet friendly.

Additionally, I found there was little difference between my consulting and research roles. During the day I was a consultant and after work I was a researcher. Both roles required that I collect data through my professional relationships. The skill set was largely the same and the people were the same. My colleagues were fellow consultants during the daylight hours and research subjects by night.

I contributed to the social pattern of local life in the town by playing golf, working out at the gym and going to the movies. A favoured pastime was the participation in dinner parties and Friday night drinks at the country club bar. These activities required little social adjustment for me. I found Pelembang an easy community in which to work, relax and conduct the research.

My family structure also influenced my approach to the research process. This structure largely determined my response to authority and to authority figures and is therefore worthy of some analysis. I am the second of four children with an elder brother and a younger sister and brother. The inevitable family conflicts with my brothers and sister were resolved through a process of vigorous debate. This style of problem resolution characterises my approach to the resolution of business issues. The process I favour is an engagement with others, which is robust and spirited. This parallels my collaborative approach to the business of consulting and to the research. Hari, one of the interviewees in the research, reinforced this observation when he noted, “for example you (Mal) like to discuss first and then try to resolve together.”

My relationship within my family structure was also played out during the research. For example I admired my older brother when I was a child and this continues to this day. I have found that I work best in a situation where I have a secure relationship with a person senior to myself. I have found such a relationship provides an

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15 Gathered from page 6 of Hari3.doc. (The interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. The naming convention adopted for the transcripts included the name of the interviewee followed by the interview number. Hari3.doc is the third interview with Hari and the page number locates the quote within the transcript).
environment which enhances my professional and personal performance. It is not surprising that my first job was working for my father in the family business and it is therefore not surprising that my relationship with Ray, the BPR Assignment Manager\(^{16}\) was also professionally close. At school I found my teachers authoritarian in their teaching style. I did not respond to this directive style. On the occasions where I developed a good relationship with a teacher my academic achievement also improved.

My tendency to develop a close relationship with a significant senior person was also reflected in my research and consulting relationships. The reader may wish to examine the project organization chart on page 96 which shows the project organization structure. This chart shows I am subordinate to the BPR Assignment Manager and to the Practice Leader. During the period of the research my relationship with the former of these two managers was professionally close. I admired and supported the leadership provided by Ray, the BPR Assignment Manager. I relied on him to teach me how to acquire and practice the skills of a professional management consultant. In many ways this paralleled my family relationship with my elder brother and father. I relied on them for support of a different nature however the support pattern established and reinforced in my family was duplicated in the research.

My parents’ backgrounds and interests are also worthy of note and as this is also reflected in my approach to the research. My father owned and managed a small business and my mother was a teacher before her marriage. She returned to the teaching profession after she had raised her family. My mother’s interest in education and my father’s in business parallel my interests in graduate education and in management consulting.

\(^{16}\) The reader should refer to the chart on page 96 for a description of the project organisation structure.
Part 1: Theoretical Perspective.
In Part 1, the main aspects of narrative theory are presented to assist in answering the research question, namely, how cross-cultural differences affect the consulting process. It is argued that the research is important in an increasingly global world where cross-cultural business is becoming common. It is also argued that narrative theory, and especially that of Ricoeur, provides one pathway to demonstrate the nature of cross-cultural consulting.

Attention is directed to the centrality of culture in providing solutions to common problems. It is demonstrated through the literature search that different solutions to common problems have evolved from different cultures.

Lastly the literature is reviewed with respect to the nature of the consulting profession, the major roles in a consulting team and how a consulting team is typically organised to address the various aspects of the consulting process. The consulting process is described and a definition defined to provide a lens through which to view the research.
Chapter 1 - Culture

The concept of culture upon which the whole discipline of anthropology arose can be captured by Taylor’s definition that culture is “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society.”\(^\text{17}\)

Morgan notes that the term itself is based on the cultivation of land and the “process of tilling and developing”\(^\text{18}\) and includes all aspects of human activity including language, values, traditions, attitudes, buildings and rituals and the concrete objects of a community. Values and traditions, rituals and “the way we do things around here”\(^\text{19}\) are aspects that are often emphasised in describing culture. By describing culture in terms of all aspects of human behaviour we are taking a holistic rather than an atomistic approach to culture.

Geertz refers to culture as that which is “located in the hearts and minds of men … it consists of whatever one has to know in order to operate in a manner”\(^\text{20}\) acceptable to others. A similar definition is proposed by Kilmann, Saxton and Serpa who argue that culture contains norms, values and beliefs which act as “primary points of reference”\(^\text{21}\) when people think about and make sense of the contexts in which they work and which become important cues in terms of what is considered acceptable behaviour within the culture.

Triandis also reinforces this understanding when he notes that one useful way to think about culture is of “unstated assumptions, standardised operating procedures, ways of doing things that have been internalised to such an extent that people do not argue about them.”\(^\text{22}\) He notes that a test for cultural rules would include ideas and behaviour patterns that are “obviously valid”\(^\text{23}\) for members of the culture and are therefore not debated.

This understanding is similar to that of Schein who argues that culture is “a pattern of shared basic assumptions.”\(^\text{24}\) Schein extends his analysis by noting that culture can be considered at different levels depending upon the purpose of the writer. His

\(^{18}\) Burrell G. & Morgan, G. Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis, Gower, England, p.112.
\(^{23}\) Ibid p. 17.
suggested taxonomy for analysis are firstly artefacts, which are visible structures and symbols such as language, buildings, technology, architecture, physical environment, artistic creations. Secondly, he notes that artefacts are underpinned by values which are the criterion by which one determines the choice from alternative courses of action. Assumptions about existence represent the third level. At this level meaning has escaped from conscious questioning and has become evident, because it is a result of routine responses to the environment. These unstated assumptions give rise to a dominant culture and to related sub cultures.

A Dominant Culture

It is important to clarify my point of reference when I use the term “culture”. For this study, I am applying the term to the dominant culture found in each country or region. Samovar, Porter and Stefani\(^ {25} \) note that a dominant social group in a society will greatly influence the perceptions, communication patterns, beliefs and values of that society. Folb\(^ {26} \) reinforces this finding and notes that certain people within every culture have a disproportionate amount of influence, and that influence gets translated into how people behave. The people in power are those who historically have controlled, and who still control, the major institutions within the culture: including church, government, education, military, mass media and monetary systems.

Notwithstanding this research finding Triandis\(^ {27} \) notes that all dominant cultures have differences and these may be described as sub cultures. Sub cultures are defined by Samovar, Porter and Stefani\(^ {28} \) to mean groups of people, who while living in the dominant culture, have membership in another culture. Sub cultures may result from racial, religious or ethnic backgrounds. For the purposes of this dissertation the characteristics of dominant cultures are relevant to the research while at the same time the existence of similarities and differences are acknowledged to exist amongst those who belong to the dominant culture. The existence of similarities and differences is discussed further in Chapter 2, Cultural Patterns.

As the focus of the research is cross-cultural consulting I have been drawn to the research of Trompenaars\(^ {29} \) who takes a business perspective on cultural differences and notes that culture presents itself at three different levels, which he classifies as national, corporate and professional. The East European, North American, Australian, West European, Indian, Chinese, Malaysian or Japanese are all examples of regional

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or national cultures. Trompenaars\textsuperscript{31} defines the manner in which attitudes are expressed within an organization as a corporate or organizational culture. Lastly he identifies the culture of particular functions within an organization: marketing, human resources, and information technology observing that people within certain functions or professions will tend to share certain professional and ethical considerations. For the purpose of this cross-cultural study we will adopt Trompenaars’ definition of national cultures as noted above.

**Culture as a Social Defence**

It would be an oversight not to make a brief mention of the works of Chris Argyris in *Overcoming Organizational Defences – Facilitating Organizational Learning*,\textsuperscript{32} Robert De Board *The Psychoanalysis of Organizations*, Isabel Menzies *The Functioning of Social Systems as a Defence Against Anxiety*,\textsuperscript{33} Larry Hirschhorn *The Workplace Within*,\textsuperscript{34} Wilfred Bion *Experiences in Groups*\textsuperscript{35} and Elliot Jaques *Social Systems as a Defence Against Persecutory and Depressive Anxiety*\textsuperscript{36} for their contributions to the issue of social defences and defensive routines. These writers note that defensive routines provide people with a mechanism for avoiding the anxiety of work. National cultural parameters perceived as defensive routines provide a further perspective through which to understand the nature of cross-cultural work.

It is expected that the cross-cultural context of the research will highlight differences in approach to the same issue. It is also expected that the ineffectiveness of the (culturally ordained issue resolution) approaches will be due to the cross-cultural context. It will be shown that inflexibility of these approaches (when cross-cultural circumstances render them ineffective) is evidence of the existence of defensive routines.

**Culture and Context**

Everything has to happen some place and in this study the context is one of business with a focus on management consulting. This includes the attitudes to such matters as managers, authority, hierarchy, achievement, success, communication, negotiation, appointment seeking, greeting behaviour, gift giving, strategies, sources of truth, trust and women in business. Samovar, Porter and Stefani\textsuperscript{37} note that rules are culturally diverse for any given social setting. Therefore the solutions to these business matters

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. p. 8.
are likely to vary from one national culture to another. It is expected that these cross-
cultural rule differences will be made apparent as a result of the research.

As all cultures have developed solutions for common problems it will be instructive to
identify and describe those problems and those solutions. As the study is concerned
with cross-cultural consulting Chapter 2 will examine in detail the research on cultural
patterns.
Chapter 2 - Cultural Patterns

The following vignette will be used to support the analysis of cultural patterns.  

**Figure 1 Cross-Cultural Vignette**

There was an oil village in Indonesia where some Western consultants were working on a project with an Eastern client team. Each knew the others to have many strange ways but were mystified at how strange the ways could be.

**When a Western consultant “borrowed” a computer from an Eastern team, he filled out no forms, certainly had no forms signed by anyone, asked permission from no-one, took it at night, used it, and then “returned” it, pleased with himself that he had accomplished the task quickly and with no fuss.**

The Eastern team began work the next day to find that their work-files were missing. Who had taken their computer, and why? The work-files should have been backed up by the main frame, but they weren’t, so they could not avoid this incident. They needed to find the computer. They waited until night so that they could search through all of the rooms without causing loss of face. But the computer was not to be found.

The next day they boldly approached their superior with a story of files and computers. He in turn approached his superior, who was more accustomed to Western ways, and by late afternoon he was ready to speak directly with the Western consultancy team. He would ask them if they knew of files being deleted. This would open up the discussion to the loss of the computer. His tactic worked.

One of the Western consultants immediately admitted to the theft and returned the computer to its rightful place. He showed no shame, no embarrassment. **He said that he had borrowed the computer and he must have made a mistake when he returned it. He and his Western colleagues couldn’t understand why it had taken nearly two days before being asked about it. They were shocked to discover that people had gone sneaking around in the offices, trying to track down the computer instead of just asking! So much wasted time! So much avoiding the issue!**

Research by Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck; Hall; Hofstede and Trompenaars identifies and describes dominant cultural characteristics. This chapter reviews these research findings and in the process identifies parameters and deeper structures that underpin cultural patterns

Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck

After examining hundreds of cultures, Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck reached the conclusion that people rely on culture for answers to the following five questions:

- What is the character of human nature?
- What is the relation of human kind to nature?
- What is the orientation towards time?
- What is the value placed on activity?
- What is the relationship of people to each other?

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38 It is presented in three fonts in order to distinguish between cultural patterns.
- **New Roman italic font** distinguishes an Eastern cultural perspective and
- **Arial Black font** distinguishes a Western cultural perspective.
- New Roman font distinguishes a “neutral” perspective.

The answers to these critical questions serve as the basis for their value orientations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Orientation</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Nature</td>
<td>Evil</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to Nature</td>
<td>Subject to nature</td>
<td>Master of nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Past orientation</td>
<td>Future Orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Being</td>
<td>Doing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationships</td>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>Individualistic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck

Samovar et al have found that, generally, the values in the left column are aligned with those from Eastern cultures and the values in the right hand column are typical of those from Western cultures. The values identified in Table 1, underpin reasons why cross-cultural work can often lead to misunderstanding. If we focus on the Relationships parameter from the above table and consider the following example: in Western cultures it is considered polite to thank someone who offers to help. In Eastern context cultures, on the other hand, to thank a person risks offending them. Indeed it is a cultural paradox that a Westerner who “politely” thanks her Eastern host may be committing a rude and offensive indiscretion. It is expected that this study will make apparent paradoxical and unintended consequences of cross-cultural work.

**Hall**

Hall offers an effective means of examining cultural similarities and differences. His study of high-context and low context cultures offers insight into what it is that people pay attention to and what they ignore. Meaning is not necessarily contained in words: it is also contained in gestures, the use of space and the use of silence. Meaning is also conveyed through status and through an individual’s friends and associates. The High Context mode of communication is indirect and implicit, whereas Low Context communication tends to be direct and explicit. High context cultures perceive Low context people who rely on verbal messages for information as less credible, and Low context cultures perceive High context people as being “inscrutable” and devious with their indirect and implicit mode of communication. In the vignette at the beginning of this chapter aspects of this finding are played out. The Indonesians, not wishing to be disrespectful, adopt an indirect approach. However, the Western management consultants are offended by the Indonesian’s indirect approach, perceiving it as “sneaky”. The Indonesian behaviour seen through Eastern eyes is discrete and respectful. The Indonesian behaviour, seen through Western eyes, is underhand and sneaky. On the other hand the Western bias for direct action has unintended consequences. In this instance the Indonesians were inconvenienced and much face was lost rectifying the situation. The process of crossing cultural boundaries can be confusing: a short exchange bears a heavy cultural load and can push participants well beyond the limits of shared expectations and mutual understanding.

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**Hofstede**

Hofstede conducted ground-breaking research within a business context during the 1980’s. He surveyed over 100,000 middle managers in a multinational organization in 40 countries. Hofstede identified and named four value dimensions as having a significant impact on behaviour in all cultures: collectivism - individualism, uncertainty – avoidance, power – distance, and masculinity – femininity. He argues, in concert with Schein that these patterns represent deeper structures and are resistant to change.

**Collectivism – Individualism**

According to Hofstede’s findings, the United States, Australia, Great Britain, Canada, the Netherlands, and New Zealand tend towards Individualism. In these cultures the individual is the most important unit in any social setting, regardless of the size of that unit, and the uniqueness of each individual is of paramount value. Personal goals take priority over any given group, including the family or the work organization. Asian countries such as Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Indonesia tend to value a collective approach. Hofstede argues that group cooperation, concern for others, indirect communication patterns and face saving devices are linked to these cultures orientation towards collectivism.

Collectivist behaviour is exhibited in the vignette at the beginning of this chapter. The indirect action to avoid offending the management consultants saves face for both parties by avoiding embarrassment and thereby maintaining the relationship with the management consultants. This indirect behaviour demonstrates a collective readiness to cooperate with respected group members, namely the Western management consultants. On the other hand Individualistic behaviour is exhibited by the Western consultant who approaches his task without reference to the group.

**Avoidance – Uncertainty**

Hofstede uses the terms Avoidance - Uncertainty to indicate the extent to which a culture feels threatened or anxious about uncertainty and ambiguity. Accordingly in high uncertainty – avoidance cultures there is a strong and positive emphasis on rules, planning, regulations, rituals and ceremonies. Low certainty – avoidance cultures such as Australia, USA and Canada dislike the structure associated with hierarchy; prize initiative, flexibility, “common sense” and are not threatened by deviant ideas or people.

The vignette provides an example of this uncertainty – avoidance characteristic. A Western management consultant acting independently, uses his initiative in the interests of speed and alacrity and borrows a PC to solve a problem. The Indonesians,

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45. Ibid p. 35.
from a high uncertainty avoidance culture, are unable to make sense of this behaviour, 
perceiving it as deviant as it ignores the management hierarchy and socially 
prescribed roles. However the Western consultant does not understand that these 
matters are important considerations, and is unaware of the weight of his culturally 
inappropriate actions. What one culture considers essential, in this case regard for 
socially prescribed roles, may have little value in another culture.

**Power-Distance**

Hofstede classifies cultures on a continuum of high to low power distance. He 
discovered that in some cultures, those who hold power and those who are affected by 
power are significantly far apart (high power-distance) in many ways, while in other 
cultures, the power holders and those affected by the power holders are significantly 
closer (low power-distance). People in high-power distance countries such as 
Singapore and Hong Kong teach their members that people are not equal in this world 
and that everyone has a rightful place, which is clearly marked by countless vertical 
arrangements.46 Low power distance countries such as Australia and USA hold that 
inequality in society should be minimised.47 People in power, be they supervisors or 
government officials, often interact with their constituents and attempt to look less 
powerful than they really are. When the Western consultant in the vignette 
commandeers the PC to quickly work out a problem he unwittingly crosses a work 
and social boundary, causing confusion.

**Masculinity-Femininity**

Hofstede uses the words masculinity and femininity to refer not to men and women, 
but rather to the degree to which masculine and feminine traits prevail. In a 
masculine society men are taught to be domineering and assertive and women 
nurturing; men do most of the talking and decision-making and in Indonesia this is 
also the case as the following quotation from an Indonesian middle manager indicates. 
“The culture is that a male usually finds it difficult to accept female ideas. It is easier 
to accept male ideas rather than female ideas.”48

A feminine worldview holds that men need not be assertive and that gender roles in 
feminine societies are more fluid than in masculine societies. It is expected that the 
research will demonstrate how these different world views around gender are enacted 
in a cross-cultural business environment.

**Trompenaars**

Trompenaars has published most recently on cultural differences and their effect on 
the process of doing business and managing.49 He, like Hall50 argues that what is

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47 Ibid. p. 46.
48 Gathered from page 10 of Hari2.doc
observable to different cultures will not have the same meaning to each culture. Western consultancy and management methods and techniques must therefore be modified to account for cultural differences. Failure to account for such differences will result in the silent forces of culture undermining the implementation of Western developed tools. An understanding of cultural differences is critical to the success of cross-cultural consulting because culture sanctions the accepted approach for problem resolution within that culture.

Trompenaars provides a taxonomy of cross-cultural problems and solutions. He identifies three parameters around which cultures develop solutions. These parameters are Relationships, Time and Nature. As will be seen below these parameters expand and echo the Continuum values described by Hofstede, the Context parameters explicated by Hall and the Value Orientations exposed by Kluckhorn et al.

**Relationships**

Within the relationships parameter Trompenaars extends his analysis by providing five parameters that describe how people deal with each other. These are: Particularism – Universalism; Collectivism – Individualism; Emotional - Neutral Affect; Diffuse – Specific Involvement; Ascription – Achievement Status.

**Particularism – Universalism: (relationships - rules)**

Cultures at one extreme adhere to standards that are universally agreed to by the culture. At the other extreme relationships determine action. In particularist cultures, far greater attention is given to the obligations of relationships as well as unique circumstances. This parameter loosely corresponds to Kluckhorn et al’s Being and Doing orientation, (see Table 1, on page 26) and Hall’s Contextual parameters.

It was found that business people from both societies tend to think of each other as corrupt. A universalist will say of a particularist “they cannot be trusted because they will always help their friends”; a particularist conversely will say of universalists “you cannot trust them; they would not even help a friend.”

**Collectivism – Individualism: (the group - the individual)**

This cultural parameter is similar to that of the same name and described above in the discussion on Hofstede’s findings. Within this parameter decisions are based on

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52 Ibid. p. 29.
55 Ibid. p. 29.
whether people regard themselves primarily as individuals or as part of a group. In collectivist/Eastern cultures the organization provides a social context which all members share and which provides meaning and purpose. In individualistic/Western cultures organizations are essentially instruments. Members of organizations enter into relationships because it is in their interests to do so. Their ties are abstract legal ones obligated by contract.

**Emotional - Neutral Affect: (the range of feelings expressed)**

Emotionally expressive cultures perceive that Affect and Face are of prime importance and must be taken into consideration so that work can be done. On the other hand emotionally neutral cultures perceive that emotions confuse issues, and should be kept in check so that work can be done.

**Diffuse - Specific Involvement: (the range of involvement)**

This parameter is closely related to the previous one. It can be explained as the degree to which we engage others in specific areas of life and single levels of personality, or diffusely in multiple areas of life and at several levels of personality. In a sense this can be seen as the distinction between private and public space. Through this distinction the principle of losing face can be explained - when the private is made public. The importance of avoiding loss of face in diffuse cultures means that much more time is taken to get to the point. Specific cultures, with their small areas of privacy have considerable freedom for direct speech.

In diffuse cultures getting to know someone is essential to the task of doing business with them and much time is spent “circling around” a new contact. In specific cultures it is the activity of business which is essential, “becoming friends” is optional or problematic. A “good” negotiator would come straight to the point, to the neutral, objective aspect of the deal.

As Trompenaars notes both these approaches are about strategies of getting to know people. The former is a deductive approach, which begins with the general and then moves to the particular. Therefore, general questions about who you are and how you approach issues precede a discussion of business. The latter is an inductive approach, which begins with the specific and leads to the general. Questions about the specifics of a current business deal precede discussing the possibility of a longer-term relationship. Both strategies are designed to save time and both are effective.

The cultural parameter of Involvement is similar to the characteristic defined by Hall as high context and low context. Context in this sense has to do with how much you have to know before effective communication can occur. Low context cultures such as USA and Australia look at objects and things before they look at how they are related. High context cultures value relationships and look at connections before considering the separate parts. The potential exists for problems in the intersection

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56 Ibid. p. 29.
57 Ibid. p. 29.
58 Ibid. p. 78.
between diffuse and specific cultures because what is considered private in a diffuse
culture may be public in a specific culture.\textsuperscript{59} It is expected that the research will show
how this affects the consulting process.

**Achievement – Ascription Status: (how status is accorded).**\textsuperscript{60}

In ascription cultures status is attributed to you by birth, kinship, gender or age, and
also by your connections and your educational record, (this being a question of
where you studied rather than what and how well).\textsuperscript{61} By contrast in achievement
cultures you are judged on what you have recently accomplished.

Asian countries tend to be ascription based. In such societies business hierarchies
are established in the context of status, power and influence. In such hierarchies
status is independent of task, function or skill. On the other hand achievement
oriented cultures justify their hierarchies by claiming that senior status is attributed
to those have achieved more for the organization. Their authority is justified by
skill and knowledge.

**Time**

Societies differ in the manner in which they look at time.\textsuperscript{62} In some societies past
achievements are less important than future plans. In other societies past
accomplishments are more important than those of today. Running through these
concepts are two contrasting notions of time: a line of discrete events and a circle of
synchronous events where past, present and future overlap.

In societies where time is linear business managers use such concepts as Time and
Motion, Time to Market and Just in Time inventory management techniques. Time
is regarded as manageable and is equated with money.

In contrast where societies regard time as synchronous it is common practice to
make time for whatever occurs. People will do more than one thing at a time. For
example, a business manager may talk to someone on the phone as well as another
person in his office at the same time. Synchronous cultures are less insistent on
punctuality. It is often necessary to give time to people with whom you have a
particular relationship. Prominent people in the management hierarchy will be
given time if encountered. In these cultures the past and present are figured into
decisions. In cultures where time is considered to be linear the future is more
highly valued than the present or the past.

It is expected that this study will reveal these contrasting perceptions in play. The
Indonesian client holds a view of the world which values the past and the present
relatively highly compared to the future. This contrasts with the American
consultancy organization which values the future and the present more highly than

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. p. 77.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid. p. 29.


\textsuperscript{62} Ibid. p. 107.
In low context cultures, time is generally regarded as an instrument, a commodity to be expended and to be valued. The Americans and the Australians in this study worked to their schedules as if Time was a concrete reality and regarded schedule deviation as a serious matter to be discussed, examined and understood in the context of contractual obligations. The Indonesians on the other hand managed their schedules more flexibly to allow for changes to events.

Nature

A final important cultural difference can be found in the attitude to the environment. Since the beginning of time humanity has been besieged by natural elements: wind, floods, cold, earthquakes, famine, pests and predators. Survival itself has meant acting against and with the environment in ways to render it both less threatening and more sustaining.

This translates into two distinct orientations towards business. On one hand some cultures believe that they can and should control nature by imposing their will upon it, as in the ancient biblical injunction “multiply and subdue the earth”. Other cultures believe that they are a part of nature and must go along with its laws, directions and forces.

There is a strong relationship between cultural perceptions of Time and Nature. Those who experience Time as synchronous, fluid and abstract and therefore not a managed entity will perceive Nature as something to be accommodated rather than managed. Conversely those whose perception of Time is linear, static, concrete and with monetary value will see that Nature must be directed and managed.

The Time and Nature as manageable entities’ orientation can be described as inner directed. An inner directed culture tends to identify the act of organising as the creation of a machine that obeys the will of its operators. When Time and Nature are perceived more fluidly the culture can be described as outer directed. The organization is seen as a product of nature, owing its development to the nutrients in its environment and to favourable ecological balance.

Trompenaars found that the American culture is inner directed compared with Asian cultures that are largely outer directed. Managers in an outer directed culture, such as Indonesia, would make adjustments to the ups and downs of the environment. Managers in the US would overcome natural obstacles to achieve their personal goals, and see themselves very much in control and regarding achievement as a vindication of their judgement.

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64 Ibid. p. 125.
65 Ibid. p. 136.
66 Ibid. p. 125.
Summary
Hall, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, Hofstede and Trompenaars each provide insights into aspects of cultural differences. Through each set of parameters we have observed cultural behaviours and assumptions and it is apparent that cross-cultural consulting will have challenges and demands beyond mono-cultural consultancies. The table below summarises all of the parameters discussed in this chapter. The High Context parameter clusters with the Eastern parameter, Collectivism, High Uncertainty Avoidance, High Power Distance, Masculinity, Particularism, Emotional Affect, Diffuse Involvement, Status by Ascription, Synchronous Time and Nature as something to be accommodated.

Table 2 – Integration of Cultural Theorists and Cultural Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>East</th>
<th>West</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hall</td>
<td>High Context</td>
<td>Low Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck</td>
<td>East</td>
<td>West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hofstede</td>
<td>Collectivism</td>
<td>Individualism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
<td>Low Uncertainty Avoidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Power Distance</td>
<td>Low Power Distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Masculinity</td>
<td>Femininity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trompenaars</td>
<td>Particularism</td>
<td>Universalism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collectivism</td>
<td>Individualism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Emotional Affect</td>
<td>Neutral Affect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Diffuse Involvement</td>
<td>Specific Involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status by Ascription</td>
<td>Status by Achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Synchronous Time</td>
<td>Discrete Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nature to be Accommodated</td>
<td>Nature to be Manageable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, the Low Context parameter clusters with the Western parameter, Individualism, Low Uncertainty Avoidance, Low Power Distance, Femininity, Universalism, Neutral Affect, Specific Involvement, Status by Achievement, Discrete Time and Manageable Nature.

It has been shown through the discussion that these clusters often provide insight into behaviours and attitudes. The parameters clustered under the East West in Table 2 on page 39 provide the research with a vehicle for cross-cultural comparison. The research will undertake to analyse the data through a comparison of process, behaviour, actions, decisions, roles and incidents. Schein noted that the pattern of shared basic assumptions, which underpin culture remain relevant regardless of context. Therefore, it is expected that the research narrative will be sensitive to cultural changes in context and through the East West clusters identified by Hofstede, Trompenaars, Hall, Kluckhorn and Strodtbeck provide a vehicle for analysis and cross-cultural comparison.

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Table 3 – Indonesian Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indonesia</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>&quot;Barat&quot; (Westerner)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoiding conflict</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Managing conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harmony</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group initiative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Self initiative - action oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group decision making</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Individuals credit</td>
</tr>
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<td>Personal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Impersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaders credit</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Individuals credit</td>
</tr>
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<td>Individuals responsibility</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cohesiveness</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Competency</td>
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<td>Co-operation is valued</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Competition is valued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covert behaviour</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Overt behaviour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discretion</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non verbal / symbols</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Verbal / written communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Outspoken / straightforward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power &amp; image oriented</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prestige</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Achievements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timing / time</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promptness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Achievements</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promptness</td>
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<td>Multiple job functions</td>
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<td>Specialist job functions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vague job descriptions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Detailed job descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerance for ambiguity</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Tolerance for precision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for long term</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Requirement for short term success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation on feelings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Operation on logic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 shows the results of a survey, administered by the author to 62 Indonesian nationals in Pelembang on 5th June 1994. The survey instrument was constructed from the private research findings of a Melbourne consulting company. The respondents were employees of OIL at the time of the survey. They were asked to score each parameter from one to five. The graph represents the number of people who scored that particular square for that particular parameter. It is not claimed that the results are statistically significant or a valid representation of Indonesian culture along with parameters presented; rather it is presented as a data point which the reader is asked to consider together with other material from the literature search. The results show that of the 21 parameters scored, 15 are weighted towards “Indonesian” and reflect the values of the Indonesian participants. Tables 2 and 3 visually demonstrate the key theoretical elements so far discussed.

Chapter 3 - Narrative Theory - Method

In this chapter emphasis will be given to the importance of narrative in culture and set the scene for employing narrative to present the data.

Culture and Narrative

Culture and communication, although two different concepts, are directly linked. They are so inextricably bound that some anthropologists believe that the terms are virtually synonymous. Smith noted, “Whenever people interact they communicate. To live in societies and to maintain their culture they have to communicate.”

Culture is acted out, transmitted, learned and transmitted through communication or narratives.

Parry and Doan argue that narrative is important as it provides “a web of meaning and of connectedness to events”. They refer to the view of Hardy who says “we dream in narrative, day dream in narrative, remember, hope, despair, believe, doubt, plan, revise, criticise, construct, gossip, learn, hate and love in narrative.”

Culture is created through narratives that produce a collective understanding of society. Geertz supports the notion that without culture there would be no meaningful existence. He notes that culture makes people and people make culture. The two are intertwined.

The symbols which constitute culture and guide personal development are encoded and visible through narratives, rites and rituals within a society. People within a society participate in these narratives, rites and rituals. This ensures that deeper values and basic assumptions referred to by Schein, are made manifest and visible.

Geertz in application of this theory argues that culture provides a mechanism for social control. In a similar manner Bruner refers to these control mechanisms as “predispositions or intentional states”. He notes that the latter underpin a society’s beliefs and basic assumptions. Through participation in society each individual demonstrates implicit understanding of the existence and meaning of the cultural system, its beliefs and basic assumptions. Geertz argues through participation in society the meaning of a culture becomes public and this process ensures that “a

71 Ibid. p. 3.
73 Ibid. p. 23.
society’s culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members”.

**Narrative Sensitivity**

Not only is culture made public through participation but it is mediated through the same process. Bruner reminds us of this when he notes that stories are offerings of culturally shaped imagination or real experience. Narrative accounts are culturally sensitive as they are based not only upon actions, but also recounting and justification for these actions. Narrative accounts are dynamic in the sense that they are a mirror of what the community is collectively and individually thinking at any point in time. They are a culturally shared medium for sharing experience and for managing the making of meaning. Through this process narrative prevails throughout a society, and is sensitive to the dynamics of such society.

Smith also found that relationships are best understood as metaphor. These in turn shape cultural understanding according to the attributes of the metaphors in question. Smith examines the intrinsic qualities of a metaphor and the relationship to the object it represents. He goes on to elaborate that the meanings attached to the metaphors depend on the context in which they are embedded. It is expected that the cross-cultural nature of the research will demonstrate how this is so. The research will explore the differences between Eastern and Western cultures across the parameters of relationships, time and nature. For example it is likely that Indonesian time has a quality unlike Western metaphorical experience particularly for consultants where “time is money”. It is expected the research will sensitively reflect through narrative these different metaphors and the conflicted meanings attached to such metaphors.

Smith notes that in order to change or indeed to have the potential to change we must have the ability to constructively think about change. He describes this process as analogical and digital thinking. Smith argues that it is only if organizational participants can separate the process of describing experiences (analogue) from the process of talking about experiences (digital) that they can develop an identity and therefore develop alternatives to that identity. Smith refers to this as the development of an understanding of what is and what is not. It is expected that the research will show how this might be so and thereby demonstrate the potential for cross-cultural cultural learning.

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80 Ibid. p. 320.
81 Ibid. p. 327.
Narrative and Change

Guided by Bruner, we are reminded that narratives are located within a culturally defined context where they serve the function of forging links between the canons of that culture and deviations from it.\(^8\) Cultures are comprised of rules or canons, which Drummond\(^8^3\) argues may or may not be articulated. Drummond describes these as articulated and embedded narratives. In the latter case Drummond argues that embedded narratives continue to shape action, despite the original reason for the existence of the myth or symbol having fallen from cultural view. Smith\(^8^4\) and Sievers\(^8^5\) have both observed that metaphors, particularly management and organization metaphors tend to become reified over time. Through this process they argue that new metaphors are superimposed over old and the latter thus diverge from their original meaning. The narrative itself therefore changes because of an emphasis on different aspects of the reified metaphor. In this manner cultural norms may be concealed from consciousness.

It is expected that in a cross-cultural context cultural deviations will be the source of further narrative explanation for the participants. For example, it is expected the research may show that breaches of the rules become a medium for restating the reasons for those rules. The intended operation of the rule may not have been articulated, due to the process described by Drummond. In any event the restatement of the canon in the context of its violation establishes the legitimacy and authority of the rule and the sharing and continuation of the culture. Moreover, such a cultural rule now has the potency of explanation. The associated explanation should clarify the violation and provide the opportunity for understanding the intention of the participant who initiated the violation.

Bruner states that believability and plausibility of such explanation gives a story verisimilitude.\(^8^6\) In the cross-cultural context in which this research is situated it is expected that beliefs and canons will be shared through the narratives and demonstrate and perhaps explain the underlying cultural rules. Through this process it is expected that cross-cultural rules and assumptions will be made visible.

Meaning Made Public - Through Narrative

Quan and Zimmerman\(^8^7\) provide evidence of the instructional nature of narrative provided by fire-fighters. Their findings are fourfold: firstly narrative fire fighting discourses reduce uncertainty by providing information about organizational

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activities. Secondly, narrative discourse provides a means of framing organizational activities in terms of organizational values and thirdly, organizational discursive practices acted to bond members together by presenting points of shared identity. The authors also cite the functional characteristics of narrative as important to organizational social processes. For example they show that fire fighting stories act as a framing device to facilitate recall of core values and provide a means of negotiating different scenarios which could emerge as a result of the telling and retelling of the story.

In contrast Hart, Willihnganz and Leichty provide a narrative account of the experiences of ten employees of an automobile parts manufacturer during which the organization grew from a two person entrepreneurial operation to an organization with over 100 employees and a staff of professional managers. The account traces the development of an informal “family culture through a period of strong growth which eventually leads to early ‘retirement’ of the company founders”. The company founders handed over day to day management to professional managers. The narrative account records this period of change from the viewpoint of the employees. What emerges is a painful, radical and threatening change process. The narrative chronicles the emergence of a professional management culture, which inherits only some of the values of the former entrepreneurial culture. The narrative demonstrates the positive elements of the dominant entrepreneurial metaphor as well as the negative elements, such as “family fights and family favourites” within the original management team. During the process of change the employees perceived the proposed changes as more radical than they turn out to be.

Both of these examples are cited as evidence of the use of narrative discourse to identify and sustain cultural norms and values within dynamic contexts. They demonstrate that new narratives can arise in relation to changing events and therefore continually reshape culture. These examples support the view that narratives change over time. As narratives fall into incoherence other narratives emerge which then offer new schemas for behaviour within society.

Another study by Cole developed narrative training interventions around workplace practices with a view to promoting workplace (mine and farm) safety. The approach adopted by BRASH uses “stories from the field” of underground mining operations to create interactive simulation exercises to train problem solving and decision making skills for miners and mining engineers. The events in the simulation are based on mine fires and subsequent reviews of the operational responses to those incidents. The plot presents characters, goals, obstacles and predicaments

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90 Developed by Dr H Cole, Head, Behavioural Research Aspects of Safety and Health (BRASH) Working Group, and member Southeast Centre for Agricultural Health and Injury Prevention University of Kentucky.
characteristic of mining communities. The simulations produced are based on actual cases presented from miners accounts. Coles’ training approach is compatible with mine workers and mine community story telling traditions. A key finding of this research was that work related stories translated socially relevant didactic (or inert) information into memorable and compelling instruction (active knowledge).

**Narrative: A Mediated Reality**

According to Bruner, our sense of the normative is nourished in the narrative, and so is our sense of breach and exception. This practice of story telling makes ‘reality’ a mediated reality. It is this mediated reality which is important for sustaining culture. It renders cultural breaches meaningful by reference to the underlying values of the culture. These underpinning values are the impetus for what Bruner calls “intentional states” and Schein refers to as “basic assumptions”. These intentional states point to cultural values and, equally importantly, to these meaningful ways of participating in that culture.

All narrative accounts have a dramatic character derived from the structure of the narrative. This is reflected in the stories we tell each other. Such structure includes attributes such as sequence, plot, the separation of reference from fact and substitutions by the narrator to create sympathetic effects. This latter attribute is achieved by including specific detail from the narrator’s own sense of the occasion. As a result the account contains a sequence built around devices such as agents, actions, scenes, goals and instruments narratively constructed to produce trouble. Burke discusses the construction of dramatic stories which demonstrate the utilisation of such devices. The story, he argues, is produced by a protagonist whose beliefs and desires conflict with intentional states and hence require interpretation. Narrative accounts of deviations from cultural values have a quality of verisimilitude to actual events, achieved, to a greater or lesser extent, by the skill of the narrator.

The process is inductive and connotative. A message or moral of the story is apparent, more or less, depending on the skill of the narrator. It is these meta level messages which are possible through narrative accounts. It is expected that the narrative presented in Part 2 negotiates and re negotiates meaning at a meta level and communicates this to cultural participants, researchers and readers.

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92 Burke, K. (1964) *Perspectives of Incongruity* Bloomington, University of Indiana Press. Indiana p. 54.
Chapter 4 - Epistemological Issues

Introduction
The intention of this chapter is to show how a narrative constructed from 25 interviews will attend to the research questions. (The purpose of this study is to show how cross-cultural differences affect the consulting process.) It will be argued that narrative is a powerful means to present the operative dynamics of the consulting team and the client group. Narrative allows for the incorporation of emotions (anxiety, fear, uncertainty etc.) as well as the rational and irrational aspects of human behaviour together with the actions of the actors and consultants. The chapter explores some of the epistemological issues associated with narrative. It will deal with the following issues:

1. plot in narrative
2. understanding
3. interpretation
4. meaning
5. narrative truth
6. narrative cause
7. historical narrative or narrative history
8. time in narrative
9. context
10. the act of reading
11. narrative theory and the narrative presentation
12. explanation
13. narrative research

I also review my approach to interviewing and the research design and conclude with a brief review of the logical scientific research methodology.

1. Plot in Narrative
Alverez suggests that business use of systemic frameworks of reference are inadequate for managers in contemporary organizational life, as these organizations tend towards greater chaos and less hierarchy. He argues that narrative fiction is a

94 Moss, K.R. (1983) The Change Masters - Corporate Entrepreneurs at Work, Unwin Hyman, Boston p. 138. “The tidy work of the neat and orderly job in a simple structure barely exists for the middle ranks of an innovating, change - embracing organization. Instead, managers and professionals function in a world that often contains vague assignments, overlapping territories, uncertain authority and resources, and the mandate to work through teams rather than to act unilaterally. But then creativity does not derive from order but from the attempt to impose order where it does not exist, to make new connections.”
95 Ibid, p. 27.
mode of knowledge which is especially useful in connecting us to the human aspects of organization development.

Polkinghorne defines plot as “the organising scheme that identifies the significance and role of the individual events”. He regards plot as an interpretative scheme since “plot functions to transform a chronicle of listing of events into a schematic whole by highlighting and recognising the importance certain events make to the development and outcome of the story. Without the recognition of the significance given by plot, each event would appear as discontinuous and separate, and its meaning would be limited to its categorical identification to spatiotemporal location.” The function of plot is to imaginatively create a coherent story from otherwise unrelated events.

Psychological tests such as the Thermatic Apperception Test demonstrate the human capacity to imaginatively create meaningful plots. Peirce refers to this as abductive thinking and notes that it is similar to that used to develop a hypothesis which can serve to explain some puzzling phenomena: “Abduction produces a conjecture that is tested by fitting it over the "facts". These are interactive activities that take place between a conception which might explain a sequence of events and the resistance of the events to fit the construction.” This is similar to the process of emplotment. The creative capacity of emplotment, according to Ricoeur, is a uniquely human process. Through this process goals, causes and chance are synthesised in a temporal unity of whole.

The significance of plot is not simply that it unites disparate events into an ordered whole but that time itself “becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through a narrative mode, and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of temporal existence.” Through narrative and specifically the agency of plot, a reader can apprehend the “present of the past, the present of the present and the present of the future.”

To this extent plot is grounded in the world of action. “It is grounded in a pre understanding of the world of action, its meaningful structure, its symbolic resources and its temporal character.” Central to this concept is that life itself is a text and people’s lives are lived stories.

98 Ibid, p. 18.
100 Ibid, p. 19.
2. Understanding
Ricoeur\footnote{Valdes, M.J., (1991) \textit{A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination} \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 15.} argues that interpretation is a dialectic of explanation (exegesis) and understanding (hermeneutics) in that the actions presented in the sentences cohere and make logical sense, proceeding to understanding. He says that “to understand a text is to follow its movement from sense to reference, from what it says to what it talks about.”\footnote{Ricoeur, P. (1981) “Hermeneutics and the Social Sciences” University of Cambridge, Printed in the USA, p. 218.} The process of testing and understanding rests upon a process of hermeneutic interpretation. The “rightness” of one reading of the text in terms of other readings is resolved by examining the constituent parts of the text and the function they play by reference to other constituent parts and to the text as a whole.\footnote{Bruner, J. (1981) “The Narrative Construction of Reality”, \textit{Critical Inquiry}, 18, Autumn, p. 8.} This is known as the hermeneutic circle or hermeneutic dilemma. With regard to the process of hermeneutic composability (which Ricoeur\footnote{Valdes, M. J. (1991) \textit{“A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination “ Op. Cit.}, p. 20.} calls configuration) Bruner observes we are “dealing with meaning, and making sense, where expressions only make sense or not in relation to others, the readings of partial expressions depend on those of others, and ultimately of the whole.”\footnote{Bruner, J. (1981) “The Narrative Construction of Reality”, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 8.} What is meant here is understanding with respect to the whole text, which will manifest as an emergent pattern or gestalt.

The reader will develop his or her own understandings depending on individual experiences and point of view. Although these understandings will vary in detail and emphasis, the main threads of the logic and the story line or plot will be common. Interpretation of a text may vary between author and reader. This is to be expected. It does not make the text invalid but emphasises that the viewpoint of the author and reader can be at variance. At the same time there may be some areas of agreement. There is a separation of the text from the original intentions of the author and interpretation by the reader.

3. Interpretation
The distinction between understanding and interpretation has arisen from epistemological differences between the "natural" and the "human" regarding intelligibility distinguishing between understanding used by the natural sciences; the latter relies more heavily upon interpretation.\footnote{Valdes, M.J. (1991) \textit{A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination Op. Cit.}, p. 43.} Valdes\footnote{Ibid p. 31.} notes that Ricoeur establishes four guidelines to facilitate the process of textual interpretation:

- Interpretation is a dialectic process that enjoins the reader's sense making appropriation of the text and the text’s formal directions and injunctions
- the author's intentions have become irrelevant for interpretation of the text
- the analysis of depth semantics becomes a dynamic process when the reader's participation in the making of sense is considered
meaning is neither stable or fixed, but rather a continuous process.

It is important to note that interpretation is not an arbitrary process. It allows for self-realisation through the text resulting in a fusion of textual interpretation and self-interpretation. Realisation of the self is integral to the interpretative process.

4. Meaning

If interpretation depends upon a dialectic between explanation and understanding to create narrative meaning for the reader, meaning is therefore a refined abstraction of the text. Polkinghorne provides us with useful insights into the concept of meaning, which he defines as “an integrated ensemble of the connections among images and ideas that appear in various forms of presentation such as perception, remembrance and imagination.” He goes on to state that the making of meaning is particularly central to the disciplines associated with the human sciences. It is above all an activity not a substance or a thing. As an activity it is described with verbs in order to capture the relationships or connections between things which in turn form the basis of awareness. Polkinghorne defines the central role and function of language in this process:

"The position taken is that language does not have an innocent and transparent function in knowledge creation, that is its grammatical, rhetorical and narrative structures constitute (or impose form on) the subjects and objects that appear in the order of meaning. Linguistic forms have as much reality as the material objects of the physical realm. For human existence, linguistic forms are paramount, for they filter and organise in formation from the physical and cultural realms and transform it into meanings that make up human knowledge and experience. On the basis of this constructed experience, we understand ourselves and the world, and we make decisions and plans regarding how we act."

Meaning is abstracted from the material objects of the physical realm which in turn become meaningful realities, in their own right, through linguistic expression. Furthermore, any study of the realm of meaning, according to Smith, will be determined by the researcher’s own predilections. Smith elucidates the nature of meaning particularly its relationship to realisation of self via the psychological filters through which an individual "reality" is interpretated and developed and states: "If we wish to understand realities, perhaps the most central themes to be explored are the social processes that led to the particular sets of meanings and symbols being defined as acceptable. These realities are so much a creature of their time that the historical contexts and social structures in which they are created, exist, and extinguished are all important determiners of what realities are like. If a particular reality is limited or restricted, that may well be because the social processes that gave it birth, sustain it, and determine its existence are unsophisticated and restricted. If a particular reality is confusing, it may well be that because the social processes that gave it birth, sustain it,

and determine its existence are conflicted and confusing. If we want to enrich our realities, it may be that we need to enrich the social processes which make our realities what they are. If we want to discover new worlds, it may be that what we need to do is make ourselves available to experience new and various social processes, which in turn will enable us not to discover, but rather to create new worlds.”

Smith reminds us that we create our own meaning or reality from the social world we inhabit and from structures which prefigured that meaning. Meaning is a combination of the prefigured structures of mind, the material objects of the physical realm, and the social fabric we engage. With respect to the former he refers to the “pre contoured dimensions of our minds” which shape and determine what and how we see reality and ascribe meaning. The “reality” as presented in the narrative in Part 2 is the meaning that I have appropriated from other people’s realities; in particular, the consultants who worked on this multinational multicultural project in Indonesia.

5. Narrative Truth

In narrative research “validity” retains its ordinary meaning of “well grounded and supportable”. Polkinghorne claims that “the researcher presents evidence to support the conclusions and shows why alternative conclusions are not as likely, presenting the reasoning by means of which the results have been derived.” An argument or conclusion presented in this way is valid when it is strong and has the capacity to resist attack. Rather than a test of logical or mathematical validity, narrative research uses the ideal of scholarly consensus as the text of verisimilitude or results that have the appearance of truth or reality. In this way narrative truth goes beyond logical scientific “truth” as it includes formal logic as well as an account of motivations and intentions in order to provide a coherent and logical account.

Polkinghorne notes that, as in psychotherapy, facts do not speak for themselves. Narrative truth rather than historical truth prevails. What the former lacks in raw facts it makes up for in form and content. Mishler argues that once a construction has been accepted as narrative truth it becomes as real as any other kind of truth. Therefore we use narrative processes to mitigate incoherence; this gives form and substance to our lives thereby providing a kind of reality.

The narrative presented in Part 2 is an attempt to lend coherence to the various episodes and hence provide a persuasive and coherent account of a consulting experience in a particular environment. Its plausibility depends not only on the coherence of the narrative, but also the reader's understanding or interpretation of that account.

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115 Ibid. p. 9.
6. **Narrative Cause**

If a deductive system of inquiry were adopted for the purpose of exploring human phenomena then much of what is described as human phenomena could not be presented as evidence, claimed as knowledge and accepted as causal. Statements about “values,” “intentions” “reasons”, and “motivation” are inadmissible as evidence in the logico scientific approach. Such evidence would only be regarded as opinion and not as fact or knowledge.

Polkinghorne\(^{118}\) cites the work of historians as being instructive with respect to understanding causality in narrative accounts. Historians in choosing from amongst possible causes subject the selected cause to the test ; “if the causal event had not happened would the event to be explained have happened?”. If it would have made no difference then it is likely that it was not a significant cause of the event. Von Wright\(^{119}\) as cited in Polkinghorne argues for a narrative explanation which is quasi causal or which accounts for the most typical explanation. He argues that stories emerging from historical accounts should hold no surprises and the conclusion of the story should be acceptable or right for the reader, rather than a predictable outcome. He maintains that a story should be internally coherent, instead of logical concepts composed from existential human elements. In the process of providing causal explanation for human action one uses metaphor to give meaning to and provide a coherent explanation for a broken window. The logic employed is recursive. That is, the effect is experienced and then a causal explanation derived.

7. **Historical Narrative or Narrative History**

It is important to distinguish the narrative presented in Part 2 as either narrative history or a historical narrative. A narrative history includes the narrative of historical events but allows for a future narrative. The narrative presented in Part 2 is written from the perspective of an involved participant and is led by the chronology of events of the research purpose and the perspective of the writer. Accordingly, that which is presented in Part 2 is an historical narrative in that it is more than simply a listing of events. The narrational aspect adds a significant human element to the historical chronology of events by linking and relating the isolated events and by interpretation thereby presenting a coherent human account of events. Mink\(^{120}\) as cited in Polkinghorne provides further insight into this when he says “things (or historical events) are understood as elements in complex of relationships. It may have relieved a misunderstanding, raised question, or changed plans at a crucial moment. As a letter, it belongs to a kind of story, a narrative of events which would be unintelligible without reference to it.”

According to Ricoeur\(^{121}\) “narrative form is not simply imposed on pre existing real experiences, but helps give them form”. Therefore historical narratives help

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\(^{119}\) Ibid. p. 48.


\(^{121}\) Ibid. p. 68.
transform a culture's repository of experience (its first order reference) by shaping them into second order patterns of meaning. This view is extended by Smircich who maintains that narrative serves the function of providing shared meaning, “the group narrative provides information about norms and values, and it fulfils a number of functions. An organization’s culture is expressed through the particular narratives that carry and create the meaning that informs members. The narratives - also called organization myths, stories, sagas and legends - function to help members interpret and signify the purpose of the organization and the role of its individual members. The group narrative provides information about norms and values and it fulfils a number of functions. Reduction of tension, concealment of power plays, mediation of contradictions between theory and practice and between group and individual needs and building of bridges between the past and the present.”

Narrative testifies to the human enterprise of making meaning. The narrative account which is presented in Part 2 is grounded in the interview data; indeed such references guide the presentation. They are embedded in, and provide dramatic character to the structure of the historical narrative.

8. **Time in Narrative**

Ricoeur argues that the relationship of the "human experience of time" is dialectically related to the process of emplotment. It is through the process of emplotment that the temporal nature of human existence is realised.

He maintains that this unique synthesis is derived through language. Through language narrative time, as distinct from abstract time or "clock" time is created. Ricoeur ascribes a special quality to the temporal nature of human existence and its realisation through the narrative process. It operates on an integrating mechanism, which brings about a “synthesis of the heterogeneous between circumstances, goals, means, interaction and intended or unintended results.” Polkinghorne notes that “narrative is always controlled by the concept of time and by the recognition that temporality is a primary dimension of human experience.” Therefore human time is realised through narrative via the agency of plot.

9. **Context**

Two aspects of context are particularly important. The reader should account for the intentions of the writer. Bruner defines this as intentional attribution - why the narrative was written. The relevant existing knowledge of both the writer and the reader is also important.

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122 Ibid. p. 62.
The intentions of the writer with respect to the research questions, their purpose and significance are made clear in Part 1. The narrative in Part 2 includes the participant's thoughts, actions, narrator's personal diary extracts, and direct quotes from transcribed interviews with the consultants and project managers on the project. Moreover directly preceding Part 1, Self in Research provides insight into the writer's relevant life experience which may have influenced this research. Social, political and geographic background is also included in the narrative account. Situational context is given in each episode or chapter as the narrative unfolds for the reader. Given this background, the overriding context is driven by the experiences of consultants working on multinational multicultural consulting projects.

10. The Act of Reading

The reader is asked to make sense of the relationships between the events and episodes presented in the text. The comprehension process is enforced as the reader makes sense of the whole text by reference to the context in which the narrative is presented.\(^ {128}\) Meaning is hermeneutically composed in that a gestalt in meaning is created by the text as a whole. What the reader interprets or concludes will be influenced by the reader’s own predispositions.

Analysis and understanding have been brought together in the narrative account in Part 2. I cannot influence what is understood or explained because of the separation of the configuration and refiguration act: the reader privately oscillates between explanation and understanding, compared to a dialogue or conversational process where a question obtains an explanatory response which in turn provides more explanation until, eventually, full mutual understanding is achieved at that time and place. This is quite different from the private process which occurs where there is a separation of creator of the text and the reader of the text.

11. Narrative Theory and the Narrative Presentation

The first chapter of the narrative presented in Part 2 deals with the context of the study and details the background of the participants and the organizations to which they belong. This chapter also provides details of the remoteness of the location as well as a description of the industry and the particular problems confronting the client. It provides context and background against which the subsequent events are played out.

The narrative account presented in Part 2 is my rendition of the interviewees' renderings. This narrative account was guided by the research questions which were in turn refined by the interviews. This circular and iterative approach facilitated development of a coherent presentation by identifying and developing related themes by means of transcript quotes. Quotes from the various transcripts are linked or expanded to provide explanatory coherence. In this way the reader is admitted into the experiences of the consultants and the client's staff. My renderings of their

renderings are expanded upon to make explicit “references to other material as well as
shared knowledge between participants, and introduces factual material from other
parts of the interview or from general knowledge of the world.”

I created the narrative by reviewing the interview data in various ways. These
included listening to the interview tapes several times, reading and re-reading the
transcripts, and transferring to cards material relevant to consulting including culture,
conflict, leadership and change. In addition I made searches by way of the computer
for key words. At all times I was guided by the research questions, which were linked
to and modified according to my own understanding of the interview data.

12. **Explanation**

Polkinghorne, drawing on the work of Atkinson, lists three characteristics of
explanatory narrative accounts.  

1. It should be intelligible in human terms.
2. It should have an appropriately unified subject matter.
3. It should be causally related.

As can be seen from the above definition cause and explanation are closely related.

As with historical explanation, narrative explanations are the result of an explanation
of the cause of an event. Furthermore, narrative explanation is more than a reporting
of events in chronological order. Such a chronological listing may not constitute a
causal explanation at all. Explanatory cause is constructed from the pieces of
evidence available at the time. Only necessary or essential information is presented as
explanation. The narrative explanation may be revised in the light of events which
provide evidence to the contrary. Narrative explorations are consistent with the
everyday explorations we give our friends and with which we give coherence to our
experiences.

13. **Narrative Research**

The narrative from this research will not provide generalizable prescriptive models
which would be used by management or organizational consultants to facilitate
multinational multicultural diagnosis and interventions. Prescriptive action presented
in the analysis is limited to the specific situation, events and people who represent the
subject of the research. The lessons learned will vary depending upon which parts of
the narrative resonate within the experience of the reader. What sense the reader
makes of this resides with the reader and is dependent on his or her own motives,
desires and interests. The report is retrodictive rather than predictive. It is organised
retrospectively to provide a reasonable and believable explanation of specific events.
The events are configured in such a way as to provide a coherent account with the

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narrative to explain the outcome. Each event is located within the narrative account, and is configured in such a way that it contributes to the clarity of the whole story.

As described in Part 1, cultural narratives are created around violations of canonicity. The narrative accounts of the violations of the assumptions around which meaningful ways of participating are structured provide insights into the meaning of the violation, and the intentions of the agent.
Chapter 5 - Research Design

On arrival in Pelembang in January 1994 I negotiated the approval to conduct the research with the management of the CGL and OIL. With this approval I then approached each of the consultants and their managers to seek approval to conduct the interviews. I initially planned to conduct three interviews with each person over the duration of the consulting engagement. However as the project progressed some of the consultants were not available for a second or a third interview because they were not on the client site.

Interview Schedule

The interview schedule is shown below. It covers the period of the PHOENIX consulting project from January to the end of April 1994.

Table 4 - Interview Schedule - OIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>No. I/views</th>
<th>Date of I/views</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Native language</th>
<th>Facility with English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hari</td>
<td>Senior Accounting Supervisor</td>
<td>OIL Assignee to the BPR Team</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31/1/94 16/3/94 26/4/94</td>
<td>CPI - Pelembang</td>
<td>Bahasa Indonesian</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johan</td>
<td>CGL - Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20/1/94 2/4/94 22/4/94</td>
<td>CGL - Taipei</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet</td>
<td>CGL - Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>29/1/94 6/3/94 22/5/94 27/4/94*</td>
<td>CGL - New York</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>CGL/JAD Facilitator</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29/1/94 13/3/94</td>
<td>CGL - Prairie City Kansas</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa Leung</td>
<td>CGL - Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23/1/94</td>
<td>CGL - Singapore</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>CGL - Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24/3/94</td>
<td>CGL - San Francisco</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg Wong</td>
<td>CGL Practice Leader</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31/1/94 22/3/94 27/4/94*</td>
<td>CGL</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray</td>
<td>CGL Engagement Manager</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19/1/94 3/3/94 27/4/94*</td>
<td>CGL</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darsono</td>
<td>CGL Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31/1/94 21/3/94 3/5/94</td>
<td>CGL - Jakarta</td>
<td>Bahasa Indonesian</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timbul</td>
<td>CGL Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23/1/94 5/3/94 4/5/94</td>
<td>CGL - Jakarta</td>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rinaldo</td>
<td>Independent Consultant</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24/1/94</td>
<td>Self Employed Consultant**</td>
<td>English and fluent Bahasa Indonesian</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aline</td>
<td>Moslem student &amp; local resident***</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27/4/94*</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Bahasa Indonesian</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
* After the final report and presentation was completed I recorded a group discussion on the evening of the 27th April 1994.

** Rinaldo was an independent consultant employed by CGL to do a specialist piece of work on the project. He worked on the project for a period of four weeks.

*** Aline was a student from Cirabon who developed a relationship with Janet and through this association to members of the BPR consulting team.

My definition of “fluent” is based on a review of the transcripts and the tapes. I formed the view that he / she understood more or less immediately what was being discussed and could participate constructively. “Poor” I have defined based on a review of the transcripts and the tapes and from which I formed the view there were frequent pauses during an interview. This created much difficulty in holding a two-way conversation.

When Janet and Kate arrived in the second week of the engagement I also negotiated to include their participation in my interview schedule. As can be seen from the interview schedule Kate was interviewed twice. When Kate returned to Pelembang for a second visit in early March 1994 her commitment to the project was reduced from three months to three weeks. Fa Leung was interviewed only once. I expected Fa Leung to be assigned to the project for six months and I was surprised to hear after the first interview that he had returned home to Singapore in February and did not return to Pelembang. Timbul, Darsono and Hari were each interviewed three times.

Although I intended to interview both Ray and Greg Wong three times I interviewed each only twice. It was difficult to schedule a third interview with Ray and Greg Wong as they were frequently not in Pelembang and therefore not available for a third interview. I recorded the after dinner time conversation on the 27th April 1994. Greg Wong was present at this group interview as was Janet, Aline, and Ray.

Additionally I interviewed two of the many short-term visitors to the project. The visitors interviewed were Bob and Rinaldo. Bob was a consultant who worked for CGL in their San Francisco office. Rinaldo was an independent consultant recruited by Greg Wong to complete a specialist piece of work for the PHOENIX Project.

Aline was a student from Cirabon who had spent a year as an exchange student in Canada. Aline was Janet’s dinner guest on the evening of the 27th April 1994. This group interview occurred after the presentation of the final report to the OIL Steering Committee. During this group discussion and interview Aline explained cross-cultural differences to the BPR team.

**Research Relationships**

My relationship with each person was necessarily professional as I was as much a part of the events as they were and I was engaged as a professional consultant working on the BPR project team.
Many of the interviewees enjoyed the interview process. Kate observed that it was akin to “free counselling”. However, the interview process with the Indonesians, whose English was not easy for me to understand, was a very much harder task. A review of the transcripts and the tapes shows a higher level of interaction and initiation on my part during the course of these conversations. In comparison the interviews with personnel who had English as a first language was much easier to conduct.

Throughout the narrative presented in Part 2, I have written myself into the storyline. In so doing I have provided some indication of my actions, feelings, hopes and anxieties in order to inform the reader and indeed to shape the outcome. Such commentary and self-reflection is provided in order to inform the reader as to the ongoing nature of the research relationships between the interviewees and interviewer.

**About Interviewing**

Mishler\(^{132}\) provided guidance for conducting research interviews.

1. Interviews are speech events
The interviews were event focused and left much opportunity for the interviewee to construct his or her responses and indeed to subsequently develop those responses. Accordingly the interviews were conversational in nature.

2. The discourse of interviews is a joint construction of meaning.
The interview tapes and transcripts show a joint development of primarily although not exclusively the interviewee’s experiences. For the initial interviews at least I often stated that "we conduct the interview together" and for it to be "conversational" by nature. For example the following quote from my third interview with Hari is typical of how I introduced and conducted the interviews.

Mal: ...We will make this more of a conversation than an interview because at this point in time you and I are as much a part of the culture as anything and I don’t think I can separate myself from it.\(^{133}\)

Here I was explicitly recognising that although I was “interviewing Hari” I could not separate myself from the activities and events in which we were both involved and which were subsequently discussed. Typically this was how the interviews were conducted and were therefore “joint construction in meaning”\(^{134}\) and subsequently allowed as much “space” for the respondent to develop his or her personal narrative account.

Specifically the process of construction of the narrative presented in Part 2 was as follows. The transcripts were taped, typed and then key quotes and descriptions of key events were transcribed onto 5 inch by 7 inch cards. As far as possible the transcripts are an accurate transcription. In some particular instances, for Timbul and


\(^{133}\) Gathered from Hari3.doc., p. 23.

Johan, it was not possible to understand what was being said due to either their difficulty with English or the distance from the microphone or a combination of both. These instances were rare and the interviews were transcribed including pauses as well as "umms" and "ahhs".

Epistemological issues addressing analysis and interpretation based on a theory of discourse and meaning have been attended to earlier in this part. However it is worth re-emphasising the general assumption of narrative analysis that telling stories is one of the significant ways individuals construct and express meaning. Hence the use of event focused interviews allows respondents to speak in their own voice, thereby allowing the locus of control to move to the interviewee. As can be seen from the interview schedule the main “characters” were interviewed several times over the course of the consulting engagement. The events referred to in the analysis were occurring at the time of the interview and over the three months of the consulting engagement. Each interviewee described the events from their perspective. In this way the interviews are contextually grounded.

Recording the Interviews
Each interview was audio recorded with the tape recorder and the microphone clearly in view on a table or desk. Generally there were no problems with interviewing and recording. In most cases these interviews occurred in a project office or in the privacy of a company house in the town of Pelembang. However on one occasion I interviewed a consultant beside the swimming pool over the course of a weekend. Notwithstanding the circumstances of this particular instance the quality of the tape recording was acceptable. At the end of the project there was a dinner within one of the company houses in Pelembang for the consultants. After this dinner the conversation turned to the subject of the project and I was granted permission to record this conversation. The quality of this recording due to the number of people around the table and their different distances from the microphone was not as good. The transcription of this interview reflected the quality of the recording with some sentences not fully transcribed because the recording did not pick up the complete sentence.

Transcription
I typed all of the interviews guided by the principle that this was not a study of language per se. Nevertheless typing was carried out as close to the spoken word as possible. The interview was typed and then the interview was double checked with the recording. There were times when parts of an interview were inaudible, either because of distance from the microphone, or surrounding noise. A series of three dots in the transcripts indicate where words were lost. As noted above with the exception of the group after dinner discussion at the conclusion of the project external noise was rare in terms of the total number of interviews. In the main the interviews were an hour duration. However there were occasions when the discussion was sufficiently compelling for the interviewee to continue for an hour and a half. In these instances this was achieved with the permission of the interviewee. A text processing package, ISYS, was employed to search the data for key words, to extract quotations and move them into the narrative.
Secondary Data
There was ample material available by way of promotional brochures and company employee briefing material. This data was used to develop the social, geographical, political and organizational material presented in this part. It provides necessary context for understanding, explaining and interpreting the narrative account.

Construction of the Narrative
In order to construct the narrative, the interviews were examined for logical groupings, which could serve for sequencing the presentation. Quotations were transfixed to index cards and arranged under the various episodes. Quotations were included in the narrative in order to highlight the thoughts, opinions and emotions of the consultants and the project leadership. The intention was to provide material, which would inform the research questions. Cultural differences surfaced directly and indirectly via the incidents in which the interviewees were involved and through the reflective observation of the interviewees about these incidents.

The effect is to see consultants of the consulting project as both competent and incompetent, as both sensitive and insensitive to cultural differences as both rational and irrational and so on. Using this approach I provide a perspective for example on rationality within a consulting project. This perspective is derived from the interviews. Responses by way of quotations and perspectives regardless of formal status and position are included to provide a collective perspective of rationality and irrationality. To study organization without disorganization, order without chaos; rationality without irrationality; cognition without emotion; quality without defective or inferior product or service would be a highly one-sided affair. 135

Presentation of the Narrative
Part 2 presents the narrative account commencing with a contextualizing chapter. The narrative episodes are ten presented as chapters. The initial chapter deals with issues of entry and contracting as well the environment. Subsequent chapters provide an account of events related to the conduct of the consulting project. The narrator presents these events. Quotes supporting the narrative account provide insight to the mindset of the consultants, client assignees and project managers. The presentation invites the reader to enter into the world of consulting in this remote location thereby providing a glimpse of emotional responses including humility, confusion and anger.

The Act of Creation and the Act of Reading
This section will briefly comment on the style used in the narrative presented in Part 2 and also make reference to the work of Iser, The Act of Reading. 136

Style

The style is not in the form of an academic journal. Rather it is in the form of a story and is narrated in a form to present the perspectives of the consultants and project leadership. These perspectives relate to the different stages of the consulting project. By way of example the issues related to entry and contracting are addressed in the second chapter of the Narrative presented in Part 2. Some of these issues were attended to and some were overlooked. The narrative shows not only what occurred but also how the consultants managed these issues. In this manner ample evidence of cultural differences of both Eastern and Western perspectives are provided and commented upon by the consultants. In this manner the consultants’ experiences of a multicultural multinational consulting project are presented.

The narrator introduces a scene and then the dialogue between the researcher and the respondent takes place. The narrator returns to emphasise some aspect and to carry forward to the next piece of dialogue. The intention in this way is to involve the reader in participating in a play, with the narrator. The style is intended to engage the reader and to arouse in the reader some resonances with the emotions and circumstances which were operative for the consultants during the study.\(^\text{137}\)

Considering the drama or dramatic effect, dramatic effect is created by the unexpected turn of events, a sudden increase in “the acceleration of the narrative slope.”\(^\text{138}\) As the narrative slope increases or decreases rapidly toward or away from a valid state so the dramatic tension is heightened. This end state is the conclusion of the narrative, the resolution of the complex web of events, that completes the reader’s understanding of an individual event, and the relation between series of events or episodes in the narrative. If understanding derives from the sequential presentation of events, or the demonstrated connection between individual events or episodes, meaning is derived from the whole, a meta reading, an abstraction from the text and a Gestalt where the whole is more than the sum of its parts.

Not merely the sequencing of events creates the realities in the narrative but also the interlacing of events with quotations in such a manner that events, thoughts, opinions and feelings of the participants form a texture such that the reader is invited to participate in the tensions, angers, hopes, disillusion, and fears of the consultants. In this way the style assists the reader to be a quasi participant in the unfolding drama. Through quasi participation in the drama the reader can engage in the emotions, nationalities and irrationalities of the participants and thereby appropriate the meanings of the narrative.

The Act of Reading


It is assumed the reader will select themes, motives and arguments together with a myriad of other aspects that resonate with the reader. Different readers will select different aspects of the narrative for emphasis. There would be likely differences as well as agreement that would be as circles, overlapping to a greater or lesser degree. In this way the reader appropriates different aspects of the narrative depending on the reader's orientations. The meaning of a text is not in the text or the reader but between the text and the reader; the meaning is derived from the interaction between the two.
Part 2: The Narrative
Part 2 presents the start up phases of the consulting project together with various episodes which were integral to the period under study, as an integrated narrative.

Prior to commencing the narrative there is a chapter which provides the context for the narrative. I compiled the narrative twelve months after the project was completed. It is interesting to note that a number of the comments I made then show an ethnocentric understanding of many of the events and people, which contrast with the findings arrived at in Part 3, when the data from the Narrative has been integrated with theories of Culture and Cultural differences.
Chapter 6 – Context

The map in Figure 2 shows the geographic location of the research in South East Asia. The geographic location is a town called Pelembang situated north of the equator on the Indonesian island of Sumatra. Sumatra is located on the west coast of the Malaysian peninsula and is separated from Malaysia by the Malacca Straits.

Definition of Terms

A glossary is provided on page 268. It is desirable that the reader of the narrative understands the consulting terminology and abbreviations used to identify places and company names. Technical jargon and technical terms are also defined in the glossary. Additionally, a map of Indonesia and nearby countries is located above. The map shows the location of the Indonesian island of Sumatra relative to Singapore, and the Indonesian capital of Jakarta. A second map shows the island of Sumatra and the location of the town of Pelembang where events described in the narrative presented here occurred.

In order to orient the reader to the narrative it is important for the reader to understand something of the two companies which are central to the research. The client company is an oil company called Oil Indonesia Limited (OIL). This company is referred to throughout the narrative as OIL. OIL is a joint venture between the Indonesian Government and two US based oil companies. This joint venture company was established shortly after World War II. The joint venture partners provided technical and operational support to develop the oil production areas on the central coastal plains of Sumatra. The oil production area is extensive and covers many hundreds of square miles.
Figure 2  Map Showing the Geographic Location of the Research

Figure 2  Map Showing the Geographic Location of the Research
At the time of the research the oil production area had been in operation for over 40 years and a significant amount of infrastructure had been established to support oil production operations and house 20,000 employees. This infrastructure included several company built and managed townships which housed OIL employees and contractors. Pelembang is the name of one of these townships. It is the headquarters for the company’s operations in Sumatra. It was in Pelembang where the consulting project was located. The research interviews occurred in Pelembang. The map located on page 82 of this document shows the island of Sumatra and its geographic relationship to Singapore and Malaysia.

**Historical Context**

In the early 1990s the Consulting Group Limited (CGL) company, recognising the need to counter falling profitability, decided to create a consulting services company. This company was to add value to CGL customer business rather than simply provide hardware and software. The CGL Consulting Group (CGL) was founded in 1992 and set out to develop closer relationships with CGL's key customers. The hope was that by providing consulting services to its customers CGL might continue to generate sales of hardware and software. In June 1993 CGL Australia (CGL) appointed Ray as a senior consultant to manage this business in the Asia Pacific region. He was well regarded within the industry as very experienced and capable person.

It is common practice for countries with oil potential to develop an association with the major oil companies which have the technical expertise to find and produce oil. In the early 1950's, Pertamina was aware that certain parts of Sumatra had high potential as oil production areas. Exploration teams had found evidence of oil in Sumatra before the second world war. The Japanese, during their occupation of Sumatra during World War II, were the first to produce oil in eastern Sumatra. OIL was established the early 1950s. OIL was granted an exploration area in eastern Sumatra and subsequently the joint venture partners entered into a production sharing contract with Pertamina. The contract defines the commercial conditions under which OIL operates, and outlines how the joint venture partners will share the oil produced.

**Geographic Context**

Most of the civilian population near to OIL’s operations live in the city of Cirabon which is located on the Kampar River about six miles from the oil production areas managed by OIL. Cirabon is a town of about 100,000 people. The OIL production area stretches north west along the coast and includes four smaller townships where most of the 20,000-strong workforce live. The lack of roads means that everybody, including OIL expatriates and employees, fly in and out of an airport located outside Cirabon. OIL employees and contractors are then transported by bus to the OIL owned towns located within the operations area. Cirabon is a forty-five minute flight from Singapore. There are only two flights to Cirabon each week and therefore visiting personnel such as vendors, suppliers and government officials have to stay for at least several days. The project which is central to this research was located in the company owned town of Pelembang. Pelembang is 20 minutes from the town of

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139 Pertamina is the Indonesian Government owned oil company.
Cirabon. The reader is encouraged to review the map shown on page 82 which shows the relative positions of Singapore, Sumatra and Pelembang.
Living Conditions

Pelembang, with a population of approximately 1,500 residents, could be mistaken for any of the mining communities in remote parts of Australia such as Karratha, Weipa or Mount Newman. Located in jungle terrain, it has about 600 houses as well as its own power supply, water, sewerage system and modern amenities such as office blocks, swimming pool, eighteen hole golf course, gymnasium, tennis courts, schools for the expatriate children, a high school and junior high school, a community centre and mess-hall. It also has the typical oil town facilities: warehousing, heavy equipment engineering facilities and workshops. Guards and a twelve-foot high fence secure the compound. Life inside the compound is very different from that outside. It was in this community that most of the activity presented in the narrative.

Members of the consulting community were allocated three houses in the Pelembang community. Women consultants shared one of these houses, Asian male consultants shared the second and Australians shared the third. Each of these houses was assigned a driver and a car to take them to and from work. In addition each team member had a bicycle, which was the favoured mode of getting around the compound.

Industrial Context

As a contractor for Pertamina, OIL has grown to be one of the largest producers in Indonesia. However, the cost of oil production from 1985 increased as oil reserves depleted. As a result, OIL moved from primary to secondary and tertiary production.

Primary production recovers about seven to eight percent of available oil; Secondary production, with the help of water infusion, recovers up to twenty percent of the oil in the field. Tertiary production is achieved by pumping steam or gas into the oil wells, and recovers more than fifty percent of available oil reserves.

As a result of falling oil production, a major engineering initiative was begun in the early eighties to increase production by the process of steam injection. This was carried out in oil fields located around Pelembang. This engineering project was called the Nias Steam Flood. The Nias Steam Flood project is one of the largest engineering projects of its kind in the world. It covers an area of 15,000 acres, utilises one and a half thousand steam injection wells, and recovers oil from over four thousand production wells. As a result of the scale of engineering projects associated with the Nias Steam Flood, production costs in this oil producing area have begun to steeply increase. It was this engineering effort and the subsequent increase in production costs that motivated OIL to look carefully at ways of controlling production costs.

Consequently OIL initiated procedures to monitor, manage and control its production costs. One initiative was to re-examine the financial systems supporting the purchase of engineering supplies and services for the construction engineers involved in building the Nias Steam Flood project.

Negotiation of the CGL – OIL Contract
Ray worked for CGL as a Senior Consultant. He became involved in negotiations with OIL, in the winter of 1993, with a view to evaluating the potential for reviewing the financial and administrative procedures at OIL with a view to evaluating the benefits to OIL. These negotiations eventually led to a feasibility study which was carried out in the last quarter of 1993. As a result of this feasibility study OIL accepted Ray’s offer to assemble a team of management consultants to change selected financial and administrative procedures at OIL’s headquarters in Pelembang.

**The Consulting Profession**

I shall now discuss the consulting profession from two perspectives. The theoretical consulting model, which CGL has developed, will be compared to the consulting organization and structure, which is the subject of this research. This will serve the purpose of providing the reader with the necessary understanding of the consulting profession generally and specifically how this is relevant to the consulting structure, which is relevant to the research.

**The Consulting Model**

The theoretical consulting model developed by CGL is based on a seven person team. This consulting team is shown graphically in Figure 4 below and is known within CGL as a Consulting Practice.

Consulting Practices are created to provide a service of one type or another to clients. For example a Practice may be established to provide consulting advice with respect to mergers and acquisitions. On the other hand it may related to the implementation of a computer system. The consulting service which is the subject of the study was related to the implementation of a computer system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Leader</th>
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<td>Manages the Business</td>
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<td>Works on Projects</td>
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<th>Assignment Manager</th>
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<td>Manages and</td>
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<th>Consultant</th>
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<tr>
<td>Works on Projects</td>
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140 The consulting model described in part above was sourced from CGL training documents.
Figure 3 The Consulting Practice

A Consulting Practice is a business unit and is managed for profit by the Practice Leader. In simple terms the Practice Leader sells the services, the Assignment Manager directs delivery of the services and the Consultants provide the services. As the graphic shows the “span of control” is one over two. The model shows two Assignment Managers reporting to a Practice Leader and two consultants reporting to an Assignment Manager.

All consulting businesses earn revenue from selling the skills of their consultants. In turn, consultants earn their living by billing time to clients. It is notable that the two senior positions in this theoretical model, Assignment Manager and Practice Leader, are considered to be roles and not jobs: these senior positions are required to perform other work in addition to billing time to clients. This additional work is related to the management of the practice and to the management of client assignments.

As consultants earn revenue for the Consulting Practice from selling professional services time to clients it is a common practice to establish annual targets or objectives for each consultant. These annual objectives are related to the amount of time billed to clients and are known as utilisation targets. The members of a Consulting Practice are rewarded in two ways: they receive a salary which is then augmented by an annual performance bonus. Typically a bonus is paid at the end of each year and is related to the achievement of each consultant’s utilisation target.

In addition to utilisation the Practice Leader is rewarded for the profitability of the Practice. One of the downfalls of this practice is the commitment of too many consultants to a project. In this manner the Practice Leader will maximise revenue received from each client. However this often results in the delivery of poor quality professional services and associated morale problems within the Consulting Practice.

During the conduct of any particular assignment all personnel working in the Consulting Practice are expected to contribute to the resolution of complex and difficult client problems. Resolution of these problems can be categorized or described in five ways. These categories are quality management, thought leadership, team, task and client management. All members of a Consulting Practice are responsible for assisting with the resolution of these complex and difficult client problems. In practice the capability of the consultants to work together as a team depends upon the leadership provided by the Assignment Manager and the Practice Leader. The degree to which the client considers the work team effective depends upon this leadership. It is expected that the research will demonstrate how this is enacted in a cross-cultural environment.

The Consulting Process

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141 Sourced from CGL training materials for the consulting profession
Consulting assignments progress through a number stages or activities over the
duration of the project. CGL defines these five stages as:

1. Defining the commitments
2. Planning the thinking and doing.
3. Fact gathering.
5. Communication of the results and renegotiation of the contract.  

The activities associated with each of these stages constitute the consulting process. These activities are taught to CGL consultants through the CGL corporate training
programmes. In this theoretical model the Practice Leader is responsible for stage 1
“Defining the commitments”. The Assignment Manager together with the team of
two consultants is responsible for stages 2, 3 and 4. The Assignment Manager is also
responsible for stage 5 “Communication of the results and renegotiation of the
contract.”

Smith and Corse define the consulting process in similar terms. However they extend
the definition of the first stage of the consulting process defined by CGL as “defining
the commitments”. Smith and Corse refer to the initial step of crossing the boundary
that defines the client organization as “entry and contracting.” In a commercial
context the formal act of entry may be viewed as ended when all relevant parties agree
that a consultation will be undertaken. In practice, the “entry and contracting” activity
takes place while there is still much ambiguity and at a point where neither party
knows enough to formulate a contract which will cover all contingencies. It follows
that the next activity of “planning the thinking and the doing” may uncover additional
information, which is cause for renegotiation of the contract as well as the consulting
effort, activities, scope and commitment of resources to the project. However it is
rare that commercial contracts allow for this process or review and renegotiation.

Smith and Corse argue that client boundary systems may be such that the conditions
encountered are inappropriate for the consulting work required in order for the
consultation to be successful. As noted above the activity of “entry and
contracting” requires the crossing of these boundaries. This activity is complex and
provides opportunity for significant misunderstanding between the consultant and the
client. In practice problems which occur during the conduct of the assignment can be
traced back to issues which were not identified and resolved in the entry and
contracting stage and when realised were not renegotiated.

Smith and Corse argue that consultations that span cross-cultural boundaries are very
complex, and their very complexity makes apparent the differences between

142 Ibid, p. 27.
(ed.) The Handbook of Mental Health Consultation Irwin Professional Publishing, New York. pp. 247-
278.
144 Ibid, p. 255.
consultant and the client. Smith and Corse note that differences are potentially present in all consultative interactions, but that ethnicity will provide insight into differences in a vivid form. However, they do not apply this theory and show how ethnicity shapes the consulting process nor do they show how vivid ethnic differences are enacted.

Smith and Corse and CGL provide theoretical models of the consulting process. However the literature does not show how this process is followed in practice and this provides a research window to demonstrate how these theories are applied. It is expected that the research will provide insight into how this is enacted in a cross-cultural context.

The narrative presented below commences with “planning the thinking and doing”. The Practice Leader has signed a contract with the client and the narrative begins with the arrival of the consultants on the client site.

**PHOENIX**

OIL assembled a team of managers, IT professionals and management consultants to work on the project. The project was called the PHOENIX Project. PHOENIX is an acronym which associates the names of the OIL joint venture partners with the OIL finance department.

**PHOENIX Project Organization Structure**

CGL consultants and OIL personnel supported the consulting assignment which is the subject of this study. The client, OIL and the consulting firm CGL collaborated on the creation of a joint organization structure to support the project. The diagram in Figure 5 shows this organization structure. This structure has many of the basic elements which are similar to the theoretical model described above.
The client organization created the OIL Steering Committee to oversee and to authorize the project. This committee met monthly to review progress and resolve issues. They assigned a senior manager from the OIL business to supervise the conduct of the project on a daily basis. This position is shown on the diagram as the OIL Project Manager. The diagram also shows two Project Managers providing staff support for the OIL Project Manager. Representatives from CGL and OIL were assigned to these Project Management roles. Darsono was the CGL Project Manager and Petrus the OIL Project Manager.

The CGL Practice Leader Greg Wong was responsible for two consulting teams and reported to the OIL Project Director. Darsono and Petrus also assisted Greg Wong in his role. Specifically it was expected that Darsono would provide a communications link to the local offices of CGL and Petrus would provide a similar link to the OIL offices and management structure. Additionally it was expected this support structure would provide advice and guidance to the Software Implementation Team and the BPR Team.

The task of the Software Implementation Team was to identify the requirements of the computer system and the task of the BPR (Business Process Reengineering) team was to implement the business changes required to support the software. CGL consultants and OIL personnel were assigned to these two teams. In addition to his role as Practice Leader Greg Wong was also responsible for Assignment Management of the Software Implementation Team. Figure 5 shows Greg Wong with two roles, the first as Practice Leader and the second as Assignment Manager for the Software Implementation Team. The three consultants in the Software Implementation Team were Kate, Timbul and Fa Leung. The BPR Assignment Manager was Ray. The four consultants in the BPR team included Kate, Hari, Johan and myself.

The reader should be aware that apart from the one Software Implementation Team shown on the diagram in Figure 5 there were an additional three other Software Implementation Teams making a total of four Software Implementation Teams. These three additional Software Implementation Teams are not shown on the organization structure in Figure 5 because the consultants on these teams were not included in the interview schedule. However, these three additional Software Implementation Teams were structured in the same way as the Software Implementation Team that is shown in Figure 5.
Chapter 7 - Consulting Project Commencement

The story began in January 1994 in Singapore. I was a management consultant working for CGL, a multinational consulting company. CGL had signed a contract with their client OIL to provide consulting services. Their client, OIL was an oil exploration, drilling and production company located in Sumatra Indonesia. CGL had won the contract to replace OIL’s financial and accounting system with a new software package. The software package replaced an aged financial management system which would not satisfy the needs of OIL past the year 2000. The contract required the delivery of various types of consulting services to implement this new software package.

The consulting contract was for a period of two years and allowed for several phases over that period. This narrative focuses on the start up phase of the project. CGL was to provide consultants for the various phases. These consultants were from countries across the Asia Pacific region including Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Australia, Indonesia and the U.S. They were directed to assemble in Singapore on 18th January 1994. From Singapore the consultants flew to the client site in Sumatra. The consultants did not know each other and had not met before.

OIL owned and operated an oil production area on the eastern coastal plain of Sumatra. The Indonesian government leased the oil production area to OIL in exchange for a share of the oil produced. The relationship between OIL and the Indonesian government was formalised through a production sharing agreement signed by OIL and by the Indonesian Government owned oil company Pertamina. The first production sharing agreement had been agreed just after the Second World War and had been regularly reviewed and renegotiated ever since.

The story begins in OIL’s regional headquarters which were located in the company owned oil town of Pelembang situated a few hundred miles west of Singapore on the Indonesian island of Sumatra.
Chapter 8 - Environmental Issues

The Environment

I had been in Sumatra prior to this visit and I knew what to expect in terms of living conditions and work environment. Kate and Janet on the other hand had no idea what to expect and I wondered how they would react to the rudimentary conditions. For example, I knew that there would be no electronic mail which would leave me out of contact with the CGL world. All consultants were expected to be in Pelembang for a thirteen-week period and to have no home flights for the duration of the project.

My conversations with Johan taught me that because of the small size of Taiwan and lack of natural resources its citizens had adopted an international perspective and Taiwan had developed as an exporting country specializing in high technology products. He believed this international perspective provided him with appropriate experience to adapt to the local environment.

Johan I believe I adapt to this kind of environment quickly, as I say, because I have previous experiences, and Taiwan is a very small island. Our domestic market compared with international trade, our market is very small, so we are heavily rely on international business, so we are more and more internationalised. So I believe, I adapted to this kind of, you know, international team very quickly.

However, Johan felt that he was not well prepared for this particular consulting project, despite the diverse nature of his business experience.

Johan ... I have been with the CGL company for a long time, it's an international company, and I have many chance to work with different country people, I've worked with headquarter people, including some years in the Hong Kong headquarters, and then the Tokyo headquarters and sometime even in New York headquarters, so I've had many, many, many chance to work with foreigners who are different types of people. But those experiences, if compared with this project, I would think they are worth nothing.

Fa Leung, however, felt quite comfortable working in Pelembang. I assumed this was due to the close proximity of Singapore to Sumatra; moreover Fa Leung had previously worked on other projects in Pelembang, and Singapore's status as an island nation was conducive to an international perspective. Fa Leung remarked that his facility with languages also helped him settle into a multinational environment.

Fa Leung I do feel that we are able to talk with each other very openly, very straightforward, if there's something I need to ask you, I can just come to you, ask you straight forward questions and you give me a straightforward answer, no problems. I do not feel that I have to be very conscious of any sensitivities, whatever, that I need to, ah, that I would have to make sure that I would phrase my questions any differently. So that was something that made me feel at ease, despite the fact that we are dealing with people from many different nationalities, many different personalities, I don't have any problems.

Mal Your native tongue, your first language is not English?

146 Gathered from page 2 of Johan1.doc
147 Gathered from page 1 of Johan1.doc
Yes, my mother tongue is, of course, Chinese.

You can talk to Johan in Chinese?

Yeah

And to Greg Wong in Chinese?

Ah, yes, I use his dialect. So I, in that sense, I don't face any problems. It could also be because I am quite used to working with foreigners, and obviously language is not a problem. So it makes things very easy. I don't feel I have any communication problems.

Timbul, who arrived in Pelembang from Indonesia two weeks before myself, expressed similar confidence:

I think working with, ah, people that we know is, ah, it's easier than rather working with ah, people we don't know, or personalities that we don't know. So, ah, I think that if we know the people, .... , we can make (it), ah, work better.

However, as subsequent events revealed, Johan's concerns about the difficulties of working in this environment proved well founded.

The Language Barrier

Language was a barrier to effective communication from a number of viewpoints. Native Indonesian speakers from the PHENIX team, including most of the client team as well as Darsono and Timbul from CGL, experienced language difficulties. Therefore, their ability to fully comprehend and discuss project issues was limited. From my perspective it appeared they were exceptionally quiet and withdrawn during meetings at the project offices. A solution was for initial discussion to be in Bahasa Indonesian. The disadvantage of this was that non Bahasa Indonesian speaking team members were then excluded from the conversation.

Yeah, language will be some of my, ah, disadvantage because sometimes I, have difficulty, to describe what I have in my mind.

Can you talk about that a bit more.

Yeah, ah, sometimes I have, well, idea, but difficult to express easily. But Greg Wong if he had some idea, he just ah, ah, talk without even thinking, without initially thinking. Well whereas if I have an idea, I have to think it in my language and then convert to English, to find the right word for that specific word.

At this early stage of the project, language appeared likely to negatively affect relationships within the project team. Specifically, it confirmed Greg Wong's tendency to treat Timbul as a subordinate.

148 Gathered from page 2 Fa Leung1.doc
149 Gathered from page 1 of Timbul1.doc
150 Gathered from page 20 of Timbul1.doc
Mal If Greg Wong does most of the talking? Is it 51% or 91%?

Timbul Maybe, 70% talk.

Mal How do you feel about that?

Timbul Hm. I think it's okay because he's capable and experienced and he talks about the content and stuff.

Mal And the 30% of the time that you have available, the space that you've got available is 30%, what do you do with that?

Timbul Ah, I just comment on his ideas.

Timbul's difficulty with the English language appeared to have a direct impact on who made decisions, and how they were made. He described the nature of Greg Wong's decision making:

Mal When you've got differences of opinion, how something should be done, how do you resolve that?

Timbul Ah, for myself I think as I'm not as experienced, I pass this conflict on to him.

Greg Wong, therefore, enjoyed a stronger position of power and authority with Timbul than with myself, for instance, to Timbul's poor command of English.

The BPR project team and client project teams, were made up of various nationalities and English language capabilities. This determined not only the course of discussion, but the agenda itself. Timbul maintained that Greg Wong dominated 70% of the time available for discussion. Since Timbul had to translate for Greg Wong, he had little time to contribute himself to the discussion. Consequently, there was little testing and development of ideas between Timbul and Greg Wong. Timbul observed his own tendency to refer difficult issues to Greg Wong, thereby avoiding conflict.

However, at other times language was not the only barrier.

Cultural Differences
The communication barrier had many unfortunate consequences. It was sometimes difficult to distinguish language problems from those related to cultural differences based on ethnicity or authority. For example, Kate found that some of the female participants were extremely reticent during a JAD session.

Mal I said I'm sorry Johan, but could you say it again slowly, ..., like this is the fourth time ....!

Kate Yeah

\[151\] Gathered from page 18 of Timbul1.doc
\[152\] Gathered from page 18 of Timbul1.doc
\[153\] Gathered from page 19 of Timbul1.doc
Mal I don't know what you're saying. 

I was perplexed about my inability to understand Asian-accented English. Within my team there were communication problems between Johan and myself. Both Kate and I had similar experiences in different meetings. We both had difficulty achieving our meeting aims simply through not having simple communications understood. Kate and I employed different strategies to try and understand what people were saying to us. Kate would persist until she understood what was being said. In doing so she often elicited the help of others in the meeting who would translate for her. I would try and pick up the meaning from the context as my communication was usually in the form of one on one interviews. It stood to reason that if Kate, Johan, Timbul and I were experiencing communication problems it was likely that other teams were in a similar predicament.

Hari explained to me that he had learned English in Indonesia and had plenty of opportunity to practice in OIL as there were many Americans living in Pelembang. Several years in Texas improved his English further. However, he explained that my Australian accent made it difficult for him to understand me.

Hari Yes you are right, language is difficult because, I have learned English not only in Indonesia, but also in the United States, but sometimes it is still difficult to understand new things, especially ...

Mal Right

Hari Sometimes the dialect, it influences my understanding, ah, you get the idea.

Mal Which dialect?

Hari Well ah, I think Australia is slightly different from the United States.

Mal Okay. So what does that do for you?

Hari Well first time around it's rather awkward for me, but after it's been said many times, then I get what it means.

Despite his relative fluency, Hari remarked to me that he had particular difficulty with new concepts. Therefore, he had developed the following strategy:

Hari ... Frankly speaking, sometime when you tell me something or explain something to me it's hard for me to grasp it the first time, so what I like to do is go and read about it and think about it and then try and put together the activities required to achieve that objective.

Hari Yes, not only a language barrier but new ideas, frankly speaking it's hard for me to understand a new ideas especially business re-engineering because well, that's new for me.

Mal So what is the effect of these things....?
Hari: The effect is I try to see another reference, another example, a hand out or a book to get the core idea. So that's why I try to buy re-engineering books, actually in order to understand, so I think the language barrier can be solved if we understand what we are going to talk about and what we are talking about. So for me it's not a big deal because the language does not really disturb the transfer of understanding because I can guess it.

Mal: Why can you guess it?

Hari: Yeah, because I have a framework that we are talking about, so if I don't understand what people say, then I can guess it from the direction.

Mal: Right

Hari: So I feel more confident reading rather than asking.

Communication

Communication difficulties not only affected the consulting team. The client project organization also had difficulties communicating amongst themselves and with us. This was compounded by individual considerations. For example, it seemed that Timbul, with his limited experience, was struggling to make a meaningful contribution. Despite these constraints he employed different strategies to accomplish important tasks and deliver value to the client. In particular, he sought out people more experienced and capable than himself.

Timbul: There are certain types of people here; there are people who can lead, there are people who have experience; and there are people who don't have experience but who talk a lot. I rely more on the people who are more experienced. So I first judge people on whether or not they experienced. If he's not experienced I don't rely too much on him.

Mal: Right

Timbul: Sometimes they are not experienced and they just talk a lot.

Mal: Hmm

Timbul: Talk, talk too much.

Mal: Oh right.

Timbul: Oh, and no experience, but just talking. So in that situation I don't rely too much on these people. So the first time I judge people it is if they have experience or not.

Mal: Right. So how do you make that assessment?

Timbul: Oh just by discussion.

Mal: Hmm

Timbul: And talking.

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157 Gathered from page 5 of Hari1.doc
158 Gathered from page 8 of Hari1.doc
Mal And that's influenced the way you've been working here this time around?

Timbul Yeah. But this time I know people here from before so we know.

Mal Right. 159

Timbul was careful to include some people in meetings:

Timbul Well I was just conducting a meeting; but at first I tried this matrix (idea) with Hari.

I think Hari is the leader of these people and he has the most experience and capability in the PHOENIX team.

So I just test this (idea) with Hari. I ask him what do you think of this and do you have any comments and I add his comments and after that I make a meeting with the other functional people. 160

However, despite the effectiveness of Timbul's coping strategies, the various barriers created by multiple cultures and languages hampered well-intentioned endeavours to achieve goals. It became apparent at about this time that, as consultants, we did not have the language and cultural skills for the task at hand.

Status

Timbul was aware that it was not only technical considerations that determined the effectiveness of a meeting. He knew he had to structure meetings to take account of the importance Indonesians placed on status. Before I went to Indonesia I had a vague notion that relationships were based on seniority and position, and status and hierarchy were therefore very important.

I was selected to work with Hari. Over the course of the project Hari and I spent much time in each other’s company. However, unlike Timbul, I did not understand the importance of including key senior members of the PHOENIX project team in my meetings. Timbul seemed to understand this from the outset.

He tried to structure his meetings so that senior and capable members of the PHOENIX team and the CGL consulting group were present:

Timbul I think in the meeting we should invite Petrus, ah, and maybe for the contents we more rely on the capable people (like Hari).

Mal So you're making some assessments not only about getting the job done, but about the political boundaries as well as the interface with the client.

Timbul Yeah, I think there are some political issues that we have to consider in every situation. 161

159 Gathered from page 2 Timbul1.doc
160 Gathered from page 11 Timbul1.doc
161 Gathered from page 14 Timbul1.doc
Timbul: Well I don't think Petrus is more capable than Hari, he's just more senior, so I rely more on Hari's comments.

Mal: You don't think Petrus is more capable than Hari. Petrus is more senior.

Timbul: Yeah, so I invited Petrus in the meeting so he didn't have some hurt feelings.

Mal: You invited Petrus to the meeting so he wouldn't have some hurt feelings?

Timbul: Yes

Mal: Could you explain?

Timbul: In the meeting he has some chance to give some comments, and he feels that he's part of the team.

Mal: Right.

Timbul: Plus if we neglected him, ah, maybe he feels that he's not part of the team.

Hierarchy

On a previous project Petrus had stated that because this was a project team we would all be treated equally; we would all work in an open office environment with one desk each. However, when Ray and I came back after lunch one day, we found that Petrus had set himself up in his own office with his own desk, separate coffee table area with comfortable chairs, and a high backed executive style chair. Hendri had a similar office arrangement. Ray and I summised that the hierarchy of the oil production company and the Indonesian way of life had infiltrated the project team.

Hari made a similar observation:

Hari: Yeah I actually believe we have a hierarchy here. Yeah well, actually it's my opinion that I think the hierarchy should be minimised. I believe we cannot eliminate it, but we have to minimise it, we have to minimise it in our daily work and we should not raise it.

Hari: Because in this kind of work we have to work together in activities.

Mal: Right

Hari: Because we cannot just sit, or arrange a meeting, we should also work.

Mal: How is that?

Hari: Well, yeah, actually there are some people who still hold to that old kind of position.

Mal: Right.

Hari: Yeah, especially from OIL, but I don't see it happening in the consulting group. Well um, that's alright because well, um, I realise that it's just human.

Mal: Right

162 Gathered from page 12 of Timbul1.doc
Hari: You cannot change people in a moment, in a moment's time. Sometimes I have feelings, frankly speaking, sometimes I feel I need some respect because of my project position here, but, well, ......

Mal: Hmm

Hari: Yeah, but I realise that's not correct emotion.

Mal: Not correct?

Hari: Yes, not correct emotion. Yes, well, I try to push it down because I realise the mission is more important than anything else.

Mal: Hmm

Hari: This project should be a success.  

Although the consulting team struggled with language and hierarchy issues, the client project team had problems with a less hierarchical work setting. This was a difficult transition for many senior OIL managers, such as Sukino and Petrus. One of the paradoxes was that the most capable member of the PHOENIX project team, Hari, was reconciled to having few symbols of status or power even though other managers, like Petrus, Hendri and Sukino had their own offices and 'Project Management' positions. Throughout the period of the project he continued to work with us in our project room.
Chapter 9 – “Forming, Storming, Norming”

Female Consultants
I mentioned to Ray and Greg Wong after work that Friday evening that there were no houses available in the Pelembang camp for Janet and Kate. Greg Wong replied that Darsono would take responsibility for their accommodation. I did not give the matter much thought thereafter and neither, apparently, did Ray or Greg Wong. In any event, Kate and Janet were disgruntled with this lack of consideration. They were even less impressed at being informed that they would have to return to the US within ten days of arriving on January 20th:

Kate Yes, I was a little disappointed in the attention given to taking care of team members. I mean the job was what they said the job was going to be.

Mal Yeah

Kate But the environment, I didn't ask a whole lot about the environment, but the environment could have used some explanation.

Mal Right. Would you like to explain that?

Kate Yes, yes, I would like to explain that. There are some real basic things, recognising that when you sign on for something that's in Indonesia, you're not expecting it to have the facilities that you have in Kansas. That's just common sense. I, at least, expected that we would be given about the same consideration as I feel the OIL employees are. Okay, I recognise they're going to be here for a lot longer, and I don't expect that they're going to bring my furniture over here and all those logistical things. Um, what I do expect is a little bit more planning that went in before you brought us over here. Hmm, real basic things, like a clean house, or a clean hotel room, access to emergency telephone numbers, access to addresses, access to mail, when you ask about the mail service here everyone looks at you like, well, you don't bother with mail here, when you know that it just can't be true.

Leadership
The arrival of Janet and Kate highlighted not only the lack of concern for the CGL consultants, but also shortcomings in the management of the project, particularly in relation to the JAD sessions. (JAD is a management tool developed in North

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164 OIL This is an acronym for Oil Indonesia Ltd (OIL). OIL is an oil production company, which is located in Sumatra in Indonesia. OIL has contracted CGL to provide consulting services.

165 Gathered from page 2 of Kate1.doc

166 Wood, J. & Silver, D., (1989) Joint Application Design – How to Design Quality Systems in 40% Less Time, John Wiley and Sons, Canada, p. 6. JAD is an acronym which stands for Joint Application Development. The authors note that JAD was devised by an employee of CGL and field tested and refined by CGL Canada in 1977. They define JAD as a joint venture between users and data processing professionals thus the name Joint Application Design. It centres on a structured workshop (called a JAD session) where the users and IT professionals come together to develop a computer system. The principle benefit of the methodology is that the social structure forces the key players to sit in the same room together and to discuss the project regardless of management position, gender.
America to facilitate the rapid development of software and Kate was an expert in the use of this management tool and had a reputation as a skilled JAD facilitator).

Kate would convene a meeting of all users of a particular software application. Those using accounts payable would gather in a large room, for the purpose of eliciting their needs and expectations. Open communication is fundamental to the success of a JAD meeting and therefore involves people from various departments. Kate was brought in especially to conduct JAD sessions for the PHOENIX project.

JAD sessions are very successful within American and European business environments in assembling and clarifying user requirements. It was Greg Wong's decision to run JAD sessions. Fa Leung recalled discussing the suitability and cultural appropriateness of the JAD concept with Greg Wong:

Fa Leung I would especially test with him whether a particular idea could work in this environment, because this organization has its own culture, its own way of working. I figure out whether it can work? Or whether it can not work.

Mal Can you speak of a specific task that readily comes to mind.

Fa Leung Okay, I was conducting a JAD session.

Mal JAD session?

Fa Leung Yeah

Mal Okay

Fa Leung But the question I had in mind is that whether the culture of this organization would make that idea feasible. Because in a JAD session we want people to contribute ideas and opinions very spontaneously and if the people are not use to that and they wait for their superiors to make a decision or the first move then the JAD session may not be an effective way to gather requirements. So this is the kind of thing that I would thrash out with him.

Fa Leung questioned wither JAD sessions were appropriate in the OIL environment. He felt that in Indonesian meetings only the senior managers would speak.

Mal And the decision whether to run a JAD session or not, how was that resolved, was your knowledge of the client taken into account in that discussion, how was it resolved, was there a decision made?

Fa Leung Yes we decided to go ahead.

Mal Right

Fa Leung Ah, he (Greg Wong) obviously thought it was workable.

Mal Yeah

167 Gathered from page 9 of Fa Leung1.doc
Fa Leung  Well I had my apprehensions with it initially. And I talked it over with him (Greg Wong) because I was not convinced about the benefits of using a JAD approach given the limited time we had to do the project. I thought that there was a better approach.

The JAD Incident

The JAD sessions scheduled for Kate included users of financial applications such as Accounts Payable. Users of this application included field engineers, warehouse personnel and administrative staff. These positions therefore included men and women from very different professional backgrounds, functional departments, management levels and nationalities.

Kate found it difficult to elicit comments from the Indonesian women:

Kate  I had not heard a single woman make a single statement in a meeting though, they had all been dead silent. Even when I went up and when in a session that I was actually teaching and prompted the women to speak, they, they couldn't do it. I mean, they would get out a word or so and then they'd back off.

Kate  And um, I hadn't quite figured out what to do about that yet, because these women are obviously there because someone thinks that they have subject matter expertise, and they need to speak. And in the States, it, um, you're always going to have what I like to call the quiet giant people, who don't speak as much as some of the others, but you can usually get some words out. With these women, even if I went right up to them, right in front of them and encouraged them to talk, they were very reticent about it. It made them obviously uncomfortable and maybe it was just this one meeting. I'll see how meetings go this week, but frankly I don't know what to do because I've never encountered it before. So I'm thinking that maybe I need to go into Janet's library, where she has her twenty five books on Indonesia and figure out what I can do to make these women talk. If anything you think it would be easier because I'm a woman, but I don't know. And the first session that I did on Friday, I frequently did not understand what they were saying, and that's another thing. I'd be interested on getting some advice from someone because, um, my entire job as a facilitator, it is communication, that's all it is. A job with communication. And I mean, it's basic, if I can't understand what people are saying, I'm screwed. And I frequently would have to ask them to repeat things three and four times and although they didn't seem to be concerned, they knew I was trying.

The lack of success of JAD sessions was due to perceived cultural differences which prevented lower status employees from contributing to the discussion. Although Fa Leung predicted this would occur, his advice was ignored. It is noticeable that women in Indonesian culture are reluctant to participate when there are employees present who are of a higher status, despite being given every opportunity to do so. Furthermore, it is unclear whether this was because the JAD session was conducted by a woman, or because of the presence of men with higher status. In any event, it may be concluded that if Fa Leung's advice was heeded, then the JAD facilitator may have been male, attendees may have been all of the same gender and status and the session may have been conducted in Bahasa Indonesian.

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168 Gathered from page 10 of Fa Leung1.doc
169 Gathered from page 6 of Kate1.doc
Leadership

Beyond issues of gender and language, Kate had additional concerns about how meetings were structured. The JAD sessions concerning the installation of the Finpak package did not include any technical person from the Finpak\textsuperscript{170} company. She questioned Greg Wong's decision not to include anybody from Finpak; in her view it was inadvisable to exclude a software package technical person out of the JAD sessions:

Kate I have been involved in several package installations in one way or another, and I have never been involved with one where they didn't bring in someone from the software company to attend the JAD sessions. This is the first time I've seen that and I think Greg Wong has a theory that it will work, but I haven't challenged him on it yet, but I think it's too late, frankly I flat out think he's wrong and I don't know if Greg Wong's going to listen or not, if I even raised it as a concern. ... I think it's really risking a lot by not having them here at all. I haven't told him that yet, but he knows, that I question it because I've asked him six times why they're not here, and I've said I've never seen it done this way before. Maybe he's right, but I think it's an area of concern. Greg Wong's background is not so much in running JAD sessions it seems as in regular application development .... If you implement a package you need to recognise that sometimes it's better to change your business to fit the package than it is to tear apart a very expensive package so that it meets your business needs. I was on a project that did that and it was an abortion, it was horrible. So I really need to talk to him. Sometimes I think he lives up in his ivory consulting tower saying, oh yes, the business requirements can be required in a JAD session, you run it, when I think I've spent too much time down in the trenches watching people spending a year re-writing a package to a point where it negated the whole idea of buying a package in the first place.

\textsuperscript{170} Finpak. This software package is a generic name for a product like Microsoft Word or Lotus Notes. The software package in the narrative is a financial package which accounts for the financial results for a company.

\textsuperscript{171} Gathered from page 20/21 of Kate1.doc
Chapter 10 – Disillusionment and Disappointment

The Project Team

OIL regarded the PHOENIX project team, managed by Hendri, Petrus and Sukino as an elite group:

Hari I feel that this group of people in this project are like special troops for hitting a special target and we are proud to be assigned to this project, and yes my head of department said that we are the chosen people and the best people. 

Hari Yes we are the best people from accounting and finance assigned to this project. 

Hari But not only from accounting, from IT as well, so they are the best people from that department, because our management and our department see that this project is critical to the company and they want this project to be a success.

Hari So that's why they've chosen the best people to do this. So I feel like a special army.

Hari For a special mission.

Hari Yes I think that's common. In our country and in our army there are special troops.

Expectations and Disappointment

However, Hari had reservations about the project, and confided his anxiety about satisfying the high expectations of the project held by OIL senior management. Some OIL expatriates I spoke to also felt that these expectations were unrealistic.

Rinaldo was an independent consultant whom OIL had contracted to evaluate computer system support for purchasing. The CGL team had helped OIL management locate a suitable person for this work. CGL had worked with Rinaldo on previous projects in the oil industry. Furthermore, he could also speak Bahasa Indonesian fluently. Bahasa Indonesian is a widely spoken dialect known colloquially as "market Indonesian", the customary language for business transactions in villages and community markets.

OIL requested that Rinaldo complete some work associated with the PHOENIX project. He arrived in Pelembang on the same flight as Ray and myself and was scheduled to complete his assignment within four weeks.

I was curious to hear his views on the PHOENIX and BPR projects. I suspected he would have a different opinion of the project, given his unfamiliarity with OIL and the PHOENIX project.

Rinaldo Yes well because, you've got this culture going on at the management level, that looks at this (business process re-engineering) project and pays lip service to it. I don't really have the feeling that (business process re-engineering) is heavily supported at the next level (down). I've just found in the comments a lot of cynicism and doubt about whether

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172 Gathered from page 17 of Hari1.doc
173 Gathered from page 18 of Hari1.doc
it's actually going to produce anything in particular other than more conversation. So in some ways I am a little cynical about it myself, I think it's kind of slow moving and self indulgent.  

Rinaldo believed that senior OIL management were committed to the PHOENIX project but there was much cynicism amongst middle managers. Hari's scepticism about management expectations was vindicated:

Hari Yes, I feel we are important. Yes, but sometimes I'm worried because they (OIL management) have too many expectations (of this project).

These expectations of the PHOENIX project team also affected the CGL project consultants, as Hari explained:

Hari Yes, my expectation is that the consultants will be like a teacher who will teach us everything from theory to practical use.
Hari But well, ..... I realise that the consultants will not do all those things.
Hari Ah, yes. Yes, that's my expectation.

Not surprisingly, Hari was perceived to be the most capable. He was very fluent in English and held clear expectations of the project outcomes:

Hari I have a clear expectation of the project and that is to have a new process which is very different from the current process and have a result that is breakthrough, that is not just improvement or incremental change.

However, there were other expectations of the CGL Consulting Group Project Management, related to training or professional skill transfer. Greg Wong defined these as follows:

Greg Wong ... you learn by doing the job, all you have to do is treat them like one of us and when you assign them a job, you watch over them, you mentor them, just like one of our junior consultants. That's all they ask, they don't want to follow us around. They just want to be involved.

Hari reflected upon the difficulties of maintaining and acquiring professional skills in this remote location.

Hari And also we actually want to assist the consultants from CGL. And also to get some knowledge of what you are doing as well. As we mentioned to the consultants it's not only the work that you deliver to us we also want transfer of technology. So besides helping you I also want to learn from you.

174 Gathered from page 13 of Rinaldo1.doc
175 Gathered from page 20 of Hari1.doc
176 Gathered from page 15 of Hari1.doc
177 Gathered from page 3 of Hari1.doc
178 Gathered from page 10 of Greg Wong1.doc
179 Gathered from page 3 of Hari1.doc

74
Authority and Control

Although the OIL project management wanted to ensure that the members of their team learned as much as they could from the consultants, the traditional hierarchical structure within the oil production company limited the prospects of transfer. Hari indicated that the PHOENIX Project organization structure was based on the assumption that there would be very little hierarchy within the team. This meant that team members were both responsible and accountable for results. This was very different from the management structure within OIL, where there was a marked separation between those who performed work as distinct from those who supervised. There were three or four managers and supervisors to every work group resulting in, from a non Indonesian perspective, what might be seen as redundant management supervision. Hari alluded to the many layers of management between workers and senior management:

Hari ... I see (in this project) that we can break that hierarchy.

Mal What's the meaning of that?

Hari We can feel free to express what we want and we can decide what we think is good.

Mal Right.

Hari What we think and without waiting for higher approval.

Mal Right.

Hari I think all of us have confidence in expressing ourselves and in making that decision, without asking higher people, but I do think we need to validate what we have decided. But that's from the context of a project, not from an individual position. 180

However the traditional structure of OIL prevented the realisation of this possibility.

Hari In making this decision, the team can express its ideas and decide if one is good or is not good.

Mal Hmm

Hari In the administration? Well, in the administration side for example if I want to send a memo ah, to an operating department, I cannot, I cannot sign it under my name, it is signed by a project manager’s name. (Note: Hari is referring to Hendri) 181

Hari recognised that hierarchical structures could only be eliminated to a degree. To me it seemed overly bureaucratic for example, that a memo had to be signed by Hendri if he had not written the document. However, Hari believed this was a major step forward. I had difficulty imagining what the bureaucratic constraints must have been before PHOENIX. Ray and Darsono also observed these constraints:

180 Gathered from page 25 of Hari1.doc
181 Gathered from page 25 of Hari1.doc
Darsono  ... Everybody listens to Hendri and everything requires his authorisation, to send a fax or
to send a document requires Hendri's signature.

On the other hand Ray experienced this interaction with the client organization in a
different way:

Ray  I think there's an undercurrent at the Petrus and Hendri level. There's an undercurrent of
something that we don't understand yet. I can't put it in any better terms. Maybe it's
because I think they want to be in control and they're trying to exert some control. I'm
not quite sure how to put a handle on it, but it's something like, we want to be in control,
but we don't know how. And there's some point where they let you go and there's some
point where they try to restrain you.

Ray's main concern was that the traditional hierarchical structure within OIL meant
that the PHOENIX project team were not used to performing roles entailing both
accountability and responsibility. Ray was concerned that the OIL culture effectively
supported the separation of accountability and responsibility and would prevail over a
flatter management structure, and hence greater accountability, within the PHOENIX
project:

Ray  ... from what I've seen, this is a bit of an unfounded comment, but they're very much
driven by the rules of the system, so there's a lack of understanding, the rules tell me how
I do my job, so I read the rule book. I don't have to understand why, because my
responsibility is so narrow it doesn't matter, I've just got to follow the rules. If I follow
the rules I'll never get into trouble. So there's not an enquiring mind amongst them in a
sense. When you try to pull somebody out of that environment and you say, you're going
to help me on the project, they're typically task oriented and you really don't want task
oriented people on a project. If they're there to be a "go-for", then that's fine, do this, do
that, do the next thing, but if you want to try and assign responsibility to get the end
result, task orientation doesn't help you, because you can't afford to spend the time to
manage everybody on the team minute by minute.

While Ray was grappling with problems affecting program management, Hari faced
particular challenges arising from the mixture of "new" and "old" rules:

Hari  Well for example Mr Anwar, (the most senior manager within the accounting function
and Hari's boss) in accounting he is the assistant comptroller and he is my direct boss.
Sometimes I by-pass him in making a decision. When we are in accounting I cannot do
that. But here, well the atmosphere has changed, and sometimes I am encouraged to by-
pass him.

Mal  Hmm

Hari  Well yes we have a special mission, and I cannot wait for his decision, so I bypass him.

Mal  Right and you feel that's because, ah, that you have a special mission?

Hari  Yes. And we are encouraged to by-pass the hierarchy. Yes, if it is important we are
encouraged to by-pass our supervisor.

Mal  Right.
Hari: If it is for the success of the project, I am not afraid to do that if necessary.

Mal: And so what happens?  

Hari: Well he was upset.

Mal: What actually happened?

Hari: Well sometimes he is upset and he said why do you do this, why did you not inform me first. I said well I think the situation doesn't allow me to discuss it with you, so that's why I pass you. Actually he understands the situation quite well, but old people sometimes they feel they need respect. Even he knows that when I discuss it with him he will approve it. ..... But well,

Mal: Oh right. You said old people need respect, yet you told me that from time to time you need respect.

Hari: Okay, yes, yes, because of my previous position.

Mal: So you mean that, from time to time you struggle with the emotion of looking for the respect that your previous job brought with it but in this environment you try to push it down.

Hari: Right because of that previous position.

Darsono also observed this internal struggle within the PHOENIX project team.

Mal: So they're (PHOENIX project team members) interested in advancement and some of that advancement is knowledge and some of that advancement is, in terms of levels.

Darsono: Yes that's true. They see a future in PHOENIX. Even today they have got all of the facilities (benefits) that come with that position. For example, they have cars without the yellow colour and the number. They want to be seen as something high. I mean to be seen by their colleagues as something high. If they drive a car without the yellow colour and the number. That means that they can go outside, that they can go off the compound.

Mal: You've got to stay in the compound if you've got a yellow car and a number?

Darsono: That's right.

**Constraints and Quality**

Before I left Australia I knew that status in Indonesian culture crucially affected organization structures. Companies conferred seniority upon longstanding employees. Petrus, (a retired senior comptroller) exemplified this principle. OIL arranged for him to return as a senior member of the project team.

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185 Gathered from page 26 of Hari1.doc
186 Gathered from page 28 of Hari1.doc
187 Company owned vehicles were painted yellow and were identified by a number which was painted on the vehicle. These vehicles were not allowed out of the company compound.
188 Gathered from page 21 of Darsono1.doc
This posed various difficulties for the team. For example, although I was regarded as a competent business process re-engineering professional, it was inappropriate for me to talk with Petrus in his office, since I did not have Project Manager status. This meant either Ray or Greg Wong had to handle those discussions, despite lacking the requisite technical knowledge.

Ray We have to recognise the constraints that have been put on us, and in terms of the way that we work, I think the key constraint, oh, well a couple of them really, is how OIL operates and the culture of OIL and the conditions of the contract. So, if you look at the conditions of the contract, it is as I said to you before, it's like we can't do anything off site, so if we wanted to be paid we had to do everything here so there was no time, no time and no incentive to do any work before we got here. Whatever we did was not paid for. ...So there's a lot of uncertainty in trying to do the planning, so we came here with the object of spending the first few days just trying to set the plan up, and then we get this conflict because, for example, I came here with the understanding that I was going to spend fifteen days on cost allocation, and all of a sudden, Petrus said that we've decided that we're going to do that ourselves. Well that's okay, but in the next breath he says that we've also decided that we're going to do training on Finpak (software), so now we've got a big slab of time in the middle of the project, as it was structured, and as it was agreed at the end of last year. And then, now I've got to reconsider how I can remove fifteen days in one block, because I have to try and take out fifteen days as a block for the cost allocation. So what that means is that suddenly I'm busily trying to shift the starting point before we can actually get on and do what we originally want to do, wanted to do when we got here, so it's taken two days and we still haven't got decisions on exactly what it means because while Petrus is making those decisions, he's only half making them, because we're all saying, well okay we've got to wait until Hendri gets back on Friday so that we can firm it up (with him). So that puts me in a position where I am trying to figure out what all this means and then to move on from there.

Mal So the culture of the client is directly affecting the culture (performance) of the team. 189

Ray believed that completing consulting engagements within agreed deadlines was paramount:

Ray You've got to deliver on time and if you don't deliver you know there's no question if you don't deliver on time, we've got to deliver on time and it's whatever it takes. 190

Although Ray was "new" to CGL he was not "new" to consulting as he had many years consulting experience with two large international consulting firms. He emphasised that a consultant sells their time and must commit to project deadlines.

Ray also expressed concern about scheduling difficulties within the work environment. He noted that Petrus had made two variations from the schedule agreed to in December 1993. Firstly, Petrus had decided to take 15 days of work out of the schedule which had previously been allocated to "cost allocation" work. Secondly, he had scheduled three weeks of Finpak education for all PHOENIX team members to commence on February 7th, 1994, three weeks after Ray and I had arrived in Pelembang to commence the BPR project. As explained in Part 1, the BPR team was given the task of "re engineering" the accounts payable process prior to installation of the Finpak Accounts Payable module. The significance of this decision was that

189 Gathered from page 1 of Ray1.doc
190 Gathered from page 16 of Ray1.doc
PHOENIX team members assigned to work on the BPR project with us had been arbitrarily reassigned by Petrus to Finpak education. This meant the BPR project team would not have client team members until March 1st, 1994. Ray had expected to start work on the BPR project on January 18th; however, Petrus informed him that he had a new starting date on March 1st.

It seemed to me that Ray's approach to consulting reflected his professional training. Accordingly, Ray had to digest the implications of the decisions Petrus and Hendri had made, assess the impact on his work schedule for the BPR project, and reschedule the BPR work plan. Essentially this meant that, for a period of three weeks, the BPR team would not be available due to their attendance at Finpak training classes.

Ray reacted with dismay at the prospect of having to rewrite the planned work schedule. He was faced with having to take 15 days out of the work schedule for time he was going to spend on the "cost allocation" task. Secondly, he had to resolve what to do with the CGL team members for the three weeks in February when the PHOENIX/OIL employees assigned to the BPR team would be attending Finpak education. This was not as simple as it first appeared. The BPR team was scheduled to attend only the Accounts Payable Finpak education. Personnel from Finpak Software Systems in the USA were scheduled to arrive in Pelembang in February to deliver education associated with each of the four Finpak modules purchased by OIL.

The entire BPR team, which included CGL consultants and OIL employees assigned to the BPR project, was scheduled to attend only the Accounts Payable component of the Finpak training. Petrus had arbitrarily decided to send the PHOENIX/OIL employees assigned to the BPR project to all of the Finpak training. He also refused to allow the CGL consultants to charge OIL for their training time. Petrus believed that OIL should not have to pay to train the consultants.

Firstly, Ray expressed concern about the terms for the consultants which prevented the CGL team members from working off site. Under the terms and conditions of the contract, if CGL consultants did any BPR work in Australia prior to arrival in Pelembang they were not allowed to invoice OIL for the work. However, as our first day in Pelembang demonstrated, it would have been foolish to not involve PHOENIX team members in work planning, scheduling and resourcing.

**When is a Contract not a Contract**

This Western approach contrasted with the approach adopted by Hendri and Petrus. My perception was that time was immaterial in relation to disruptions to the BPR consulting project. We believed we had an agreement that we would commence work in Sumatra on January 18th, 1994; this no longer seemed workable.

Although Greg Wong viewed these constant changes as disruptive he was more sympathetic to the client's situation than Ray. Greg Wong was relatively new to the consulting profession and perhaps this attitude reflected his marketing background:

Greg Wong  So if you look at what's happened in the past three weeks it's chaotic, you know it's like "don't move the house, we've come here to do work", and they've moved, you know, they've introduced a disruption, they've introduced (Finpak) education and they make it
mandatory for their people to attend this education. In the meantime they've paid all our
airfares and when you look at these things you must say this must be the most chaotic
project I have ever seen in my whole life, why didn't we come, say, three weeks later,
why didn't we get some information before we started, why didn't we discuss this on the
phone, why didn't they think, what the West would normally do, pick up the phone and
have a conference call, this is what people in the West would think is the most normal
ting, what one would expect. But then we all show up in large numbers and all this
unfolds, but I see a system here. I see though even in this chaotic arrangement we
continue to make progress with the project and continue to build the relationships and the
dialogue ...... This is how they want to work and they want us to be more adaptive too.
For example, when they say something to us, they don't expect us to just say yes or no,
but to discuss that with them, what would be the best and what do we think and they will
listen. We don't have to worry if every time they give us a new alternative..... It's their
way of expressing their system. Their system is very simple in some ways but in other
ways it may not be so simple. ...... They look at us as okay, I may not want your
manner, I may not want your value system in some way, but I want the kind of things
that I consider that you are doing better than we do. So by coming here, and spending
three weeks, to them is not a total loss, but to us it's a waste of time you know, we think
why can't we do it differently, why can't we do it more efficiently. However, they are
still not satisfied. They need (work) examples, they want us to work with them, they
want us to plan with them, so they can see how we plan, how we get the planning system
in place to start work again, if we did not do this, they feel we are not satisfying our
obligation (to skill transfer). If we go to the corner, do the planning, and come back and
show them they feel they are not getting value from the work.

Greg Wong and Ray had already decided to send the CGL consulting team members
back home for the duration of the Finpak training, scheduled for the last three weeks
in February. He observed that, what might be considered to be a waste of time, could
be of value to the client. He believed this provided the opportunity for skills transfer.
Greg Wong saw merit in this decision despite Ray's outrage at the agreed work
schedule being compromised by changes. Greg Wong appeared to make considerable
effort to reconcile our preferred way of doing business with that of the client, by
attempting to accommodate the client's wishes.

**Time is Money**

Ray and I discussed why Petrus and Hendri were concerned about time and cost. It
appeared unlikely that there were budget concerns at this early stage of the project.
Various explanations were canvassed during the course of this discussion. We
concluded that Hendri and Petrus had underestimated the cost of the consulting
component of the PHOENIX project. Given that we were approximately three
months into a twenty-four month project, perhaps their management reports revealed
that consulting had already consumed, say, six to nine months of the PHOENIX
project budget.

**Impact on the BPR Team**

A recommendation of the 1993 consulting project was that as from mid January 1994
the PHOENIX project would include a BPR sub-team, to develop new ways of
interacting with OIL suppliers. It was intended that this sub-project team would work
with the Accounts Payable (AP) Finpak implementation team, to exploit the potential

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191 Gathered from page 8 of Greg Wong1.doc
of the Finpak AP software. The BPR team would develop innovative ways of paying vendors, which the Finpak AP team would include in their implementation plans. The BPR team was to commence on January 18th, and present its recommendations to the PHOENIX Steering Committee at the end of March 1994. The Finpak AP team was expected to take until January 1996 to implement these recommendations.

The BPR team included five employees from OIL and four consultants from CGL. The OIL employees assigned to the BPR project were Tim, Peg, Netty, Hari and Robert. The CGL consultants were Malcolm, Ray, Johan and Janet. The BPR team was scheduled to commence work on the AP reengineering project on January 24th, 1994. Ray and I were aware that Janet would not arrive until January 26th. Hendri informed Ray the OIL team members would not be available until January 31st. Hendri had not yet identified an employee with purchasing experience. In the following two weeks Hendri negotiated the services of Robert, who was working in the purchasing department in the Jakarta office. He was expected to join the BPR team on January 31st to assist with the reengineering of the Accounts Payable process.

On January 19th, Ray and I were informed by Hendri and Petrus that the CGL consulting budget was too expensive. The CGL consulting budget included separate funding for the BPR project, and the four Finpak implementation teams. Ray and Greg Wong were responsible for the BPR project and Finpak implementation teams respectively. The BPR project was a full time commitment for the thirteen weeks of its planned duration and all consultants, including Ray, were expected to live in Pelembang over that period. In contrast, Greg Wong was located in Tokyo and was scheduled to fly in and out of Sumatra, subject to Hendri's direction. In return Greg Wong would endeavour to locate and provide whatever Hendri required. In addition, as Greg Wong was the most senior CGL Manager, he was also expected to be present at the PHOENIX Steering Committee review meetings.

Greg Wong was also in Pelembang during this "start up" period. He was involved in discussions with Hendri concerning the resourcing requirements of the PHOENIX projects. Therefore he was negotiating with Hendri and Petrus to endeavour to reduce the cost of the PHOENIX project plan. He tried to persuade Ray to reduce the number of billable days of consulting required by the BPR project. Ray believed he could reduce CGL consulting time by over thirty days. He was able to achieve this by eliminating fifteen days which had been scheduled for the "cost allocation" task, and another sixteen days which had been taken out of the planned schedule because Petrus had decided that CGL consultants attending Finpak AP education should not charge OIL for that time.

Nevertheless, there was still considerable pressure to reduce further the number of CGL consulting days. During meetings with Hendri and Petrus, Ray and Greg Wong were constantly challenged as to why they had so many CGL consultants. It was suggested that this work could be done by OIL employees:

Ray They're pressuring us on the number of days, they want to control the number of days we're working and there's some problems with an overrun of the number of days that we've got teed up. What we have planned for the future, will put us over budget, we're
not currently over budget, but it will, so Greg Wong was looking to try and squeeze some
days out.

At this point in the project Ray considered a desperate move to cut more days out of
the planned billable time, by delaying Janet's arrival until after the Finpak education:

Ray ... so I had this idea in the back of my mind which was, okay if she's (Janet) only coming
for ten days before she's got to go for a three week break, then maybe if I don't get her to
come for the ten days, then we can save ten days on the project, so that's another ten days
we don't have to worry about. I have to assess what's the value she's going to be able to
contribute in that ten days, and it's probably next to none, particularly because she wasn't
here for the project last year. So that's, that's the sort of thing that was going through my
mind.

In planning the consulting resource required for this project Ray was cognizant of the
nature of time in Indonesian culture. Consequently, in developing the plan for this
project, he was generous with his time allocation. However, we had arrived to do a
piece of work and there was pressure to "get on with it":

Ray When I was planning for this phase, I tried to be generous with the time, because time is
not an issue here for the locals, they just drift along and time isn't a big issue, however, I
didn't get as much fat in there as I would have liked, because it was unsaleable.
However, I still get concerned about the delays that are coming about, because the delays
I expected in this week now seem to be floating into next week. .... We haven't got
enough team members and they're not going to be available until the week after next.
One of the team members hasn't been identified. The purchasing guy, despite the fact
that we asked for him months ago, the PHOENIX team hasn't got around to that yet. So
it's starting to drift and I'm concerned that we're not going to be able to do what we want
to do.

Petrus's made some specific comments about, you know, we've really got to involve the
OIL people this time and make sure that they're really in tune. Well, we can't afford to
wait, I mean, when the project's got to go on, if these people aren't around, well they're
just going to have to catch up. We can't wait until everybody's on board. We're just
going to lose another week if we do that, and we just can't afford it. We have to move
on. So, in trying to do the right thing by the client, and focusing on the end point, given
that we've got a job to do, I've decided that Janet can come as scheduled next week and
she's just going to have to catch up as best she can. We can't afford to wait for the ideal
situation.

Ray began to resist demands from Greg Wong and Hendri to take even more
consultant days out of the BPR schedule:

Ray ...I went back and used the original proposal and the number of days that was set in there
and the number of days that are now planned for and basically dumped it on Greg Wong
and said, no more. No, I'm well under and you're going to have to figure out where you
get the days from. They're going to have to come from somewhere else.... I decided that
I wasn't going to give up any more days and that if we're overrunning it's going to be on

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192 Gathered from page 7 of Ray1.doc
193 Gathered from page 7 of Ray1.doc
194 Gathered from page 6 of Ray1.doc
the IT side, that is Greg Wong's side, and those guys can worry about it, I'm not going to. 
..... I'm concerned that we're just going to cut ourselves too short.

**Project Management**

Darsono, the CGL project manager assigned to the PHOENIX project, exemplified the "Indonesian" approach to settling differences. He made frequent visits to Hendri's house and played golf with him. He reflected on the direct style of Greg Wong and Ray:

Darsono This is very difficult to manage. How do I manage all these kinds of differences.

Mal Like East meets West.

Darsono That's right, because in the Indonesian culture sometimes this can be interpreted as rude.

It was evident that he endeavoured to placate all sides, despite the cultural differences in style and approach to resolving issues.

Darsono In the West it might be normal but sometime I am feeling it is rude but because it's in the working team I try to forget it. I am trying to adjust to the Western culture, I am trying my best to adopt what is best for the project.

Darsono But I believe that the client still does not understand. That's why I'm now trying to go deep to the heart of the client and I am trying to approach them in a different way, not just a working way.

Darsono Sometimes I go to their houses.

Darsono It may be that we can't solve the problem in the office.

Darsono Here in Indonesia we try to get everybody with us, not just working at their work stations (alone), but to get them with us in a social life.

Darsono So that may make our job easier.

Greg Wong advised Darsono he should try and persuade PHOENIX project managers, rather than simply advocate for them:

Greg Wong ... remember one of our project managers is an Indonesian (Darsono) and at one point I spoke to him and I said, you have to understand our culture, we're coming from the West to Indonesia, we are not just going to learn your culture, you have to learn our culture, so we can work together.

With respect to the role that Darsono should have played in these negotiation issues, Ray remarked:

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195 Gathered from page 7 of Ray1.doc
196 Gathered from page 3 of Darsono1.doc
197 Gathered from page 4 of Darsono1.doc
198 Gathered from page 3 of GregWong1.doc

83
Ray I think where there's conflict and maybe it's a cultural thing, one of the underlying problems with Darsono (in the way he approaches the issue) is that it is a non-confrontational approach. ...

Ray saw the issue in very simple terms. He believed that Darsono was not doing his job:

Ray He (Darsono) doesn't address the client issues, because the client doesn't understand that Darsono, the project manager, doesn't understand (what we're doing). Even though they're both talking the same language, they can't solve any problems, so what happens is that the only place they've got to go to try and resolve the problems is either me or Greg Wong. ..... As a result Darsono isn't making any decisions that a project manager should make and he's not addressing the client's concerns. He's a mail-box: the client tells him there's an issue, he tells us, and he expects us to resolve it. Now Greg Wong's very much in the mode of resolving it, and I'm very much in the mode of saying no, bugger you, it's your job, you fix it.

There were discernible differences in management styles amongst Darsono, Greg Wong and Ray. Although Greg Wong appeared to compromise and negotiate differences, he nevertheless adopted a 'Western' attitude. This could be seen in his approach to Darsono, where he observed that "you have to learn our culture". On the other hand, Ray simply evaluated the outcomes of various actions as being effective or ineffective. He did not consider Darsono to be very effective as a project manager and held him accountable for not resolving issues. Ray was not afraid to be both responsible and accountable for resolving business issues.

**Ray Pulls the Team Out**

Ray believed he had no other choice since consulting time was never "free" other than to send the team home for three weeks.

Ray My reaction was "bugger it, I'm going home". I'm not going to burn up free consulting time, if you remember when we were here last year we did a three day overview course and we were talking to ourselves and I'm not going to do that for two or three weeks. We could do all that nice touchy feely stuff, you know, more thinking, more preparation, all that kind of stuff, but if we're not going to work with them as a team we're not going to achieve anything.

Ray advised the client of his decision during the first meeting with Hendri and Petrus on 19th January:

Ray I think I'm good, yeah, I mean, I think I'm good at this sort of thing, I had the confidence that I'll get there in the end, and sometimes it's harder than others, and sometimes I do sweat over it. Sometimes frustration gets to you, I mean, it gets to all of us some of the time and you sweat over it, but I typically don't sweat over the decisions. I mean I don't stew over making a decision right or wrong, I'm going to make a decision and get on with
it and if it's the wrong decision well something will happen, I'll either make another decision or somebody will make a decision for me.
Chapter 11 - Commitment

Restarting the Project
The Business Process Re-Engineering (BPR) team reassembled in Pelembang on 1 March 1994, after a three week interval.

Ray, Greg Wong and Hendri continued to communicate by e-mail, facsimile and telephone, regarding the terms and conditions of the contract during this three week period. Ray briefed the members of the team as follows:

Ray During the time that we were away OIL raised the issue of why we had so many consultants, and why we could not do the job with less people than we had agreed on. This was the umpteenth time that the issue of resourcing had been raised, and we were asked once again to develop a plan which put together the tasks, who was going to perform them, and the roles of each of the individuals on the team.

In the intervening three weeks I went as far as I could in trying to identify a list of activities, the duration of each of those activities, the persons involved in those activities, and how much time each person would spend on it. I documented this and sent it off to Tokyo to Greg Wong and to Hendri in Pelembang.

Ray explained to the team that he was perplexed as to why Hendri was continuing to question the resources required on the project:

Ray ... We have had lots of discussion about why there are so many people (on the project), but to this day I still don't understand why the discussion took place. I don't know whether they (OIL) want to reduce the number of people or they want to reduce the cost, or what the issue might be, whether they are unhappy with individual people and so they want to remove team members. I really just don't know and we have never got to the bottom of that problem.

On that Wednesday of 2 March 1994 Ray explained to members of the CGL and PHOENIX teams that another option was being considered:

Ray ... There was another option which I suggested, which was not to come back at all, and to disband the team.

Mal Who did you suggest this to?

Ray To Greg Wong.

Mal Right.

Ray That we disband the team, hmm, and we not come back at all until all of these issues are resolved once and for all.

Mal Right.

Ray My best judgement is that, this was probably the best, this was probably the right thing to do, but I was overruled by Greg Wong. So I said okay I'd come back, but I was not
going to spend a lot of time doing planning and touchy feelies and all of that other stuff, I was going to basically get on with it and the compromise was that we would spend today (the first day back in Pelembang) on getting the team to feel comfortable with where we are at and so that's where we've got to.

Mal And that must have been agreed?

Ray Well Greg Wong would have agreed that with Hendri ...

Ray had agreed with the PHOENIX project management and Greg Wong that upon returning to Pelembang, the BPR team would run a planning session to resolve its internal differences. This was despite the fact that Ray was convinced that disbanding the team or renegotiating the contract was a preferable option:

Ray ... My feeling was that if we had done that (disband the team and re negotiate the contract) Hendri would have rolled over instantly because I don't believe that he has enough justification to go back to the Steering Committee and say, ah, CGL have pulled out because they were ripping us off or they were cheating us or .... and we caught them. I believe he would have come unstuck if we pulled out because we would have been pulling out on the basis of, that we can't do our job because of the harassments, the changes, the difficulties, and the problems that are there and all we want to do is work in accordance with the contract.

Mal So you were prepared to take this one to the wire?

Ray Yeah, that's right. And what's more, I think had we done that we would have resolved the problem because you know, all of the bullshit would have gone away. We would have got back to, do you want us to perform according to the contract or don't you. And if this contract isn't working, well let's start another contract, let's come to a new agreement. And then one way or the other, we would have nailed it.

Renegotiating the Contract

However, Greg Wong overruled the withdrawal option. It was instead decided that the BPR team would discuss the work schedule and resourcing in detail, and resolve any internal conflict. As a result the team spent three or four hours discussing the schedule in detail and the nature of the tasks to be completed over the following thirteen weeks. Ray facilitated the discussion and answered questions from the PHOENIX project team members. I was assigned the task of recording people’s comments and taking minutes.

Ray hoped that by thus dispelling any conflict, Hendri and Petrus would be apprised of the true situation within the BPR team:

Ray I think today would have made some difference to the team, but I don't believe the team is the problem. I believe the problem is Sukino, Petrus, and all the guys that don't have a real job, and have time to sit back and shoot, shoot from the grandstand. ...

Mal Yeah

205 Gathered from page 4 of Ray2.doc

206 Gathered from page 6 of Ray2.doc
Ray I think this probably gave them (the PHOENIX members of the BPR team) some insight that they didn't have before, and that can only be good. What we really need now, is for them (PHOENIX project team members on the BPR team) to take (the argument) into the corridors and basically fight the battles out in the corridors for us. When somebody says 'I don't think those guys know what they're doing', they can say 'Oh, yes they do because a, b, c and d. And you don't really understand because what you're doing is different.'

Despite having reached agreement within the BPR team Ray still had serious doubts whether this would forestall disruptive demands from OIL senior management:

Ray I think there's still risk, I think there's still risk that this will rear its ugly head again, and the question of whether we pull out remains. If having done all of this, (that is the planning session with the PHOENIX members of the BPR team) having got the team agreement, having minuted the thing in quite a lot of detail today, and having had the team review it, having, give their, you know, signature in blood on the bottom of it, if then the whole question rises to the surface again, then we've got to get to the root cause and I don't think we can get to the root cause while we're still trying to do the work.

The deliberations of the first day were documented and submitted to Hendri with a covering letter noting that all resourcing issues were finalised, and that each Friday a member of the BPR project team would attend the PHOENIX project meeting to report the outcome of that week's work. The letter to Hendri included a simple schedule which showed the work milestones for each of the remaining thirteen weeks of the BPR project. Ray further noted that each Friday someone from the BPR team would report progress in relation to the schedule. The question of reviewing progress beyond this was specifically excluded. This strategy proved to be successful.

**Project Management**

However some aspects of PHOENIX project management had not changed since January. Concerns about the quality of Darsono's project management role continued to plague the BPR team. A week before the team returned to Pelembang, Ray had sent Darsono an e-mail note requesting a dedicated work room for the BPR project team:

Mal Do you reckon we'll get the resources we need, we'll get the room we need, we've been living out of boxes now for four weeks?

Ray A week before we came back, I sent a note (e-mail note) to Darsono where I said, there are a few things that you've got to fix and one was we can't work in the room we've been given, we need a work room. And Darsono, you're the project manager, I see it as your responsibility to fix it. And when I came in yesterday, Hendri called me in and said, we haven't got a room for you yet, but we're working on it.

It was generally felt that Darsono would fail to do any simple administration task requested of him. Concerns about his performance were shared by senior members of
the PHOENIX project team, including the American expatriates. Ray commented as follows:

Ray Yeah .. I think the harsh reality is that his (Darsono) lack of project management skills have been found out. ... He's not close enough to any of the five projects to know what's going on. ... Consequently his role is one of administrator, fire-fighter, whatever else, he's not managing. He's just too far removed from the action and I think that those people who have had the opportunities to sit back and shoot from the grandstand, can see it.

Mal Yeah.

Timbul pointed out that even Petrus could see this and had identified the lack of skills amongst the CGL consultants:

Timbul Petrus pointed out that they feel that they can do the work by themselves, that maybe they don't need us anyway.

This situation was compounded by the number of managers in the client project management team. Timbul believed that PHOENIX project management was "top heavy". He believed that there were too many managers with too little to do:

Timbul Also there are too many managers in the PHOENIX team, we have Hendri, we have Sukino and we have Petrus. ... 

Although Timbul was the most junior and most inexperienced of all of the consultants, nevertheless he was beginning to perceive flaws and fracture lines within the project management. He noted the duplication of Project Managers and the infighting and ineffective leadership this created.

Trust

The approach taken by Greg Wong to the installation of the Finpak package was similar to the approach taken to write a software application. This was not surprising as Greg Wong had previously been a software application development manager. The approach taken to the installation of packaged software as opposed to the writing of a software application does not require the technical skills of programmers, systems analysts and data base programmers as the technical work has already been completed. However, Greg Wong insisted on bringing technical specialists such as data base specialists from the US to Pelembang to help the four Finpak implementation teams. This inappropriate approach to packaged software installation was observed by Ray:

Ray Yes, there's a certain lack of technical knowledge .... and there's a lack of acceptance that implementing package software is different from developing software and there's a lack of acceptance on CGL's part that the client clearly sees that there's a difference. And

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210 Gathered from page 8 of davit2.doc
211 Gathered from page 3 of Timbul2.doc
212 Gathered from page 3 of Timbul2.doc
so they're expecting a packaged implementation approach and they're "getting" application development approach. ....

Timbul also observed:

Timbul The application solution practice, don't have a methodology for implementing packages, so we are in trial and error (mode).

The Revolving Door

Quite a number of technical specialists had been in and out of Pelembang, at Greg Wong's request. It seemed that very few people knew why they were coming or what they were supposed to do. Certainly no one on the BPR team was sure why there were so many specialists coming and going. Ray observed:

Ray So you've got a revolving door or people coming through, they're here for a week, here for ten days, here for two weeks, and then gone. I can't remember how many people we've had on this thing now. I'm serious, I'd have to really sit down and think about how many people have gone through the revolving door and I would have absolutely no idea why they were here. Now if I'm confused, you can bet your bottom dollar that the client is confused. ...

I was as confused as other members of the BPR team. Everybody seemed to have a different piece of the story, and nobody really knew the total picture. For example, it was my expectation that Kate was going to be in Pelembang for the duration of the project. But this was not the case, as I discovered during my discussions with Timbul:

Mal I thought Kate was going to be here until the end of the project, but now she's only going to be here for two weeks.

Timbul Yeah

Mal Has that changed, did I understand it correctly?

Timbul Yeah she was planned to be here from February until June.

Mal She was going to be here until June?

Timbul Yes, now the plan has changed. Maybe she has some other project to go to.

Mal Right.

Timbul So she's only here for two weeks.

The practice of bringing people on to the project for a short period of time was unproductive as well as confusing. This was due in part to the remote location of Pelembang and the fact that many of the consultants came from the US and had to

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213 Gathered from page 11 of Ray2.doc
214 Gathered from page 13 of Timbul2.doc
215 Gathered from page 13 of Ray2.doc
216 Gathered from page 7 of Timbul2.doc
travel across multiple time zones. Timbul commented about the ineffectiveness of this policy:

Timbul: People coming in for a short time is not good because these people need some transition (time). This is particularly so if they come from different time zones and the first two days they are here, their mind is not here. After we have spent the first week updating them on what is going on in the second week he is thinking about going home, so he is only productive for about three days. 217

Timbul

The practice of engaging specialist consultants from overseas for a short time was not the only unproductive and ineffective leadership practice. The consultants "on the ground", like Timbul, were unhappy about the way that they were managed. Timbul told me that he had a wife in Jakarta. CGL Indonesia had contracted to fly Timbul home to see his family twice a month. US and Australian consultants had their phone calls paid for as a part of their contract, but Timbul had to pay for his. These aspects of the contract made Timbul disillusioned with the role that he was playing in Pelembang:

Mal: So you miss your family, how do you think that affects the way that you work?

Timbul: I cannot concentrate much on the work. My mind is at home.

Mal: Do you ring home very much?

Timbul: Yeah, but not so much, because it costs a lot. ...

Mal: Yeah.

Timbul: I've asked my manager if there are other jobs in Jakarta, because I would prefer to go and work there. 218

Leadership Issues

During the "start up" period of this part of the project Greg Wong was in Tokyo. This meant that Timbul and Darsono were the only full time representatives from CGL Indonesia on the PHOENIX project. Timbul clearly was not happy about the role that he was required to play, since he thought it was of little real value for the client and that CGL Indonesia treated him with scant consideration. Darsono was also unhappy about his own position. Although Darsono was the more senior, he had little or no experience installing mainframe application packages. He had little commercial experience and hoped to gain this by working on the PHOENIX project.

He expected to acquire skills from the consultants working on the project. However, due to the many specialist consultants being used for only short periods, this provided few learning opportunities.

Darsono undoubtedly felt somewhat anxious about his ability to provide adequate project management support under these circumstances:

217 Gathered from page 20 of Timbul2.doc
218 Gathered from page 6 of Timbul2.doc
Mal  So how is Darsono coping with all this?

Timbul  Darsono is frustrated. Because actually, when he accepted the job he wanted to learn from the consultants, and now there are no consultants here.

Mal  So Darsono was expecting to learn from and get some leadership from these people (specialist consultants) who either don't exist or are here for a short period of time. People like Kate who was going to be here until June but is only here for two weeks now, and Satch who is coming for only three weeks, who was going to be here until June and Bob who is here for only two weeks. Is Greg Wong coming back next week?

Timbul  I don't know.

Mal  He's not coming back!

Timbul  I don't think that he will come back next week.

Mal  You don't think so?

Timbul  Petrus is a very conservative person, typically finance people are (conservative) so because it's time and materials, if a consultant is coming he wants to know the value to him. If it's not any value it's better for the consultant not to come. 219

Greg Wong

Timbul observed that the management and leadership provided by Darsono and Greg Wong created problems for the project. It was clear from the above discussion that Petrus was questioning the value of paying for Greg Wong to come to Pelembang. Consequently it appeared he was reluctant to pay for any of Greg Wong's expenses associated with flying him in from Tokyo on a regular basis.

In discussions that I had with Ray, it appeared that Hendri was also having similar concerns:

Ray  ...  I don't know if it's true, but Greg Wong was going to fly in for a couple of days and do whatever and fly out again, and I think that Hendri is looking at that and saying this doesn't add much value so I'm not going to do it anymore.  I mean that's my perception.

Mal  Because it's another person through the revolving door?

Ray  Yeah, Greg Wong's going through the revolving door as much as anybody, ...  In this sort of environment if there was a full time project manager looking after the piece of work that Greg Wong's looking after, that Greg Wong's trying to look after remotely, then Greg Wong could do his fly in and fly out for a few days here and there because he'd be more overseeing, more stroking, just to make sure that it's working. But I think that Hendri is looking for a big slab of work. 220

Schedule Changes

Ray explained that the original proposal developed with Petrus in Jakarta recommended a project management structure which included an OIL accountant, a CGL systems analyst and a Finpak product expert on each of the four Finpak product...

219 Gathered from page 14 of Timbul2.doc
220 Gathered from page 15 of Ray2.doc
implementation teams. However none of these recommendations had been implemented.

Ray  Yes. So that's the skill set that I believe you need in each of those application areas. We've fallen down because we haven't provided an intellectual accounting expert and we have made a mess of how we link with Finpak.  

Ray believed that this and other leadership issues referred to previously were creating an untenable environment:

Ray  ... One of the things that we raised today in the meeting is significant and that is, we're incommunicado, the food's lousy, there's a whole pile of difficulties ... that you have to deal with from an environmental sense, and on top of that there's this culture of mistrust which makes the environment worse for us. From my point of view, I can go to the mess hall and you can eat the rubbish that they serve up there, you don't like it, but ah, what the hell, so I'll buy a new box of cereal and I'll get by. But then if I have to do all that and then I don't enjoy getting up and going to work in the morning, then it becomes unbearable. But I can tolerate the environment if getting up to go to work in the mornings is good. I think the environmental thing and the conditions we live in can be acceptable if you're doing something you enjoy. But with all of this going on, the morale's down, we're distracted, you know at the end of the day we're probably not enjoying it.

Ray leaves - again

Within a week of being back in Pelembang, Ray was once again preparing to leave at short notice on an unscheduled return to Australia. He had expected to spend three of the thirteen weeks working on cost allocation. However, Petrus had informed him that OIL were going to "do it themselves" in an effort to save costs. He therefore had no choice but to advise the BPR team that he was taking fifteen days of his time out of the project to return to Australia, just two weeks after having arrived back in Pelembang. Ray and I discussed the implications of his leaving given the nature of the consulting environment:

Ray  ... My real concern is that it will unravel politically. It will unravel politically because guys like Petrus and Sukino will try and take advantage of my not being here. And you know all of those old issues will come back again. And that's why I'm very keen to try and knock it on the head so that now I can say it's over. ....Yeah. So my concern is that it will unravel politically, and I hope what we did today will stop it.

Once again we were forced to make changes to the project plan. Ray's departure from the team meant that one of the team members would have to take up the leadership.

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221 Gathered from page 16 of Ray2.doc
222 Gathered from page 17 of Ray2.doc
223 Gathered from page 19/20 of Ray2.doc
Chapter 12 – “How It Is”

The Project Grinds On
In Pelembang Darsono felt isolated and unsupported. He felt this geographical isolation even more keenly because the Jakarta CGL office environment was sufficiently well resourced to solve most client problems. In Pelembang none of these traditional methods of problem solving were available to Darsono. He believed that the project required a technical specialist who had experience in installing software application packages, preferably Finpak. In fact, it seemed that Darsono was reflecting Ray’s concerns and was asking for a project manager who could do his job for him.

Group Conflict
In preparation for his departure from Pelembang, Ray delegated formal authority for project management to Janet. In spite of this, I regarded Ray’s three week departure as an opportunity to develop my professional leadership skills. Therefore immediately following Ray’s departure from the project room, I chose to assume a leadership position within the group and immediately set about the project objectives. The immediate task was to conduct a workshop with each of the four project teams within PHOENIX, and three workshops with OIL line managers, culminating in a final workshop with the BPR Steering Committee.

My assumption of a leadership role initiated a conflict over task authority, project direction and general leadership between Janet and myself. Johan was anxious to ensure that there was no open conflict between the CGL consultants. He explained this in reference to the nature of conflict in an Asian culture; in Taiwan and in Indonesia it is considered impolite to show feelings, such as conflict between colleagues. Such open displays would embarrass the Indonesian nationals attending these meetings.

Janet approached me over the issue of team leadership. I recorded this event in my diary:

Malcolm ... Janet and I went for a walk after dinner last night and she spoke to me about not saying I, I, I, I, when it is a ”team effort”. She said ”I am not concerned with placing myself in a position of authority and control and you so clearly are”. She went on to make the observation that this was quite okay with her and she was pleased to support my approach to the project which placed me in a position of leadership on a day to day basis. However, she said if there was anything to be achieved it was preferable that the “team” achieve that recognition or attain that accomplishment. She said she would not compete with me but that did not mean that she would agree to being ”put down” or marginalised by me in any way because I had something that I wanted to achieve professionally and my style of achievement was such that I would do that in a way which devalued her in some manner.

As a result of this intervention Janet and I agreed to resolve our differences in private between ourselves, and place more emphasis on the achievements of the team.

224 Gathered from Malcolm's personal diary, Tuesday 22 March 1994
Cultural Gender and Elder Issues

When discussing the performance of the BPR team, Hari explained the Asian belief that females were valued less than males in Asian families. This helped to illuminate why he and another senior team member, Peg, always appeared to be arguing:

Hari: Well actually in Indonesia we treat females differently from males .... In any event I think that's Asian. This is because the female is slower than the male, and that's why families don't want female children.

Mal: Slower?

Hari: Yes, they want a male children, a boy.

Mal: Because females are slower?

Hari: Well slower or weaker, ... weaker than a male.

Mal: I've noticed that you and Peg don't back off from each other, if there's a point to be debated I don't see Peg backing down. And I don't see you backing down either, but neither does Peg. She does not appear to be weaker (to me).

Hari: Yeah well that's the culture, and the culture is that a male usually finds it difficult to accept female ideas.

Mal: Hmm

Hari: It is easier to accept male ideas rather than female ideas.

Mal: Ah huh

Hari: And we understand that's not the correct way, but because of the culture ...

Hari elucidated other cultural values manifest in Indonesian society, and therefore within OIL and the PHENIX management structures. Family values were paramount; children displayed respect for elders. It was considered impolite for a younger child to speak to their elder siblings directly. Instead, they were expected to show respect by referring to their elders as Mr or Pak (for example Pak Petrus):

Hari: ... If younger people want to get their ideas across to elder people, they cannot address that idea directly to an older person because that's our culture and older people should be appreciated more than the younger ones.

Mal: Hmm

Hari: If we get our ideas across directly we are called impolite. However old people can get their ideas across directly when speaking to younger people.

Mal: Right

Hari: But the younger person cannot do it.

...
Hari: You can call the name of a younger person directly ... but here with older people's names, people cannot be named without some prefix. Mr or you know, Pak.

Mal: Oh really.

Hari: Yeah, that kind of prefix.

Mal: So you'd never say Petrus?

Hari: No, never.

Mal: You'd never say that, you'd say Mr Petrus?

Hari: Yeah, Mr Petrus or Pak Petrus. That's part of our culture. That's the way we appreciate older people. And we teach our children that way. So the youngest one (that I have) cannot call the older brother by his name.

Kate tripped over all of these cultural values in a most spectacular fashion while attempting to run a JAD session with Petrus:

Kate: I originally was sold over here as a JAD facilitator and within the first two weeks that I was here I knew that style was not going to work because of the very hierarchical organization and because their terrible fear of contradicting their boss.

She felt that although JAD would not work, a modified approach to the JAD session would be of some value.

Petrus personally took Kate to task concerning her belief that it would be difficult to coax subordinates to speak in a JAD session. Later in the same meeting, she asked for an accountant to help her run a JAD meeting. It was suggested that Petrus work with her instead. She felt this was inappropriate:

Kate: ... they asked me to do some type of accounting example, ... I said I'd be happy to do it, but I really need someone who could help me with the content, ... . In one of our meetings, they offered Petrus to me to give me the business knowledge that I needed and they wanted to know if we could start right during that meeting. In retrospect I should have deferred the issue rather than confronted the issue.

Kate: Absolutely no place. I doubt there are many females in that old Moslem's life who told them that he was a waste of their time. So, he hasn't like me and he hasn't showed up in any of my meetings since, which has been fine. So I've made an enemy but I don't really care. It's actually done the project team a lot of good, they're much happier because he doesn't show up to meetings anymore to critique everything they do.

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226 Gathered from page 13 of Hari2.doc
227 Gathered from page 2 of Kate2.doc
Kate So the team's happy, I'm happy, Petrus's angry, and I'm gone in a week. So what's the difference, he has to have somebody to hate.

Gender and cultural issues also vexed the PHOENIX project management. The Finpak company appointed a woman, Lois, to manage their Singapore office. In Kate's view she was very experienced at installing financial packages and represented the type of project management so badly required within the PHOENIX project.

Kate So I think she's (Lois) got a lot of the answers to their problems. I'm just concerned that Hendri won't make a decision on it and that he doesn't think the project's really in trouble, so why should he think he needs somebody to fix it, because I don't think he's persuaded that it's in trouble (at this time).

With the benefit of hindsight it may have been simply that Hendri was not going to treat a woman very seriously. In any event, he may have been offended by a younger female approaching him directly with answers to his problems.

Alumni
Meanwhile the revolving door which Greg Wong had set up continued to swing around and around moving people in and out of the project. Kate began to refer to the people who'd been in and out of the project as the PHOENIX Alumni.

Mal And Greg Wong's coming back through the revolving door.
Kate Yeah, it's kind of appropriate, the whole thing.
Mal And then Ray went out through the revolving door?
Kate What a project!
Mal And Julie is coming in this week.
Kate Well Julie and Cynthia actually. Two of them, two more.
Mal Okay.
Kate We'll have two more people showing, ah, three more people showing up this week.
Mal With Greg Wong, as well, that being the third one.
Kate Yes, yes, yes.
Mal Where will Cynthia and Julie stay?
Kate I don't know.
Mal One of the things about the project is the environment, which is reason enough for you not to want to come back, to join the alumni rather than to stay here.

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228 Gathered from page 8 of Kate2.doc
229 Gathered from page 13 of Kate2.doc
Kate  Yes to join the alumni club rather than to come here, we should do that.

Ray Returns
At the end of Ray's three week absence, despite some conflict between Janet and myself, due no doubt to my usurping of the leadership position, we had made progress. We had successfully completed all the workshops including the review by the PHOENIX Steering Committee, and were well placed to complete the project in the remaining five weeks. This work required detailed project plans and a final presentation to the PHOENIX Steering Committee.

230 Gathered from page 19 of Kate2.doc
Chapter 13 – Performance

The Final Presentation - Preparation
Ray arrived on 4th April and the final presentation was scheduled for 28th April. As a rule, the last four weeks of any consulting project are very demanding. After three weeks of leading the team I was at a psychological low point. I recorded this in my diary on the day of Ray's arrival.

Malcolm Ray arrived back yesterday. It is important to record here that by late Friday night I was ready to return home. In my weekly phone conversation with Peg (my partner) on Friday I recall saying I was tired, dispirited and low on energy.\(^{231}\)

Over the following three and a half weeks the team worked from 7.00 in the morning until 10.30 at night including weekends. The BPR team dynamics changed as each person was assigned to write project plans.

Although we were all in the same project room, this task required desk work. Ray assembled the final presentation. My diary notes of Thursday 21 April 1994 captured some of the aspects of this part of the project:

Malcolm We have worked from 7.00am until 10.30pm for the last three days. It is beginning to feel like the end of project. Johan is getting ready to leave and go to his father-in-law's funeral in San Francisco next week and I think he is anxious to be away.\(^{232}\)

The PC Incident
It was PHOENIX project policy that documents created by the professionals or consultants were to be backed up, filed or saved each night to the PHOENIX Server. The purpose of this policy was to provide central security for the work of the PHOENIX Project. An incident concerning this backup policy occurred on Tuesday 5th April 1994 between the BPR team and the Accounts Payable (AP) Finpak Implementation Team.

Late in the evening I borrowed a PC from the AP Implementation Team room. When I had isolated and solved a data problem I returned the PC. In doing so I had inadvertently swapped the PCs. Given the backup policy it should not have mattered and would not have been noticed. However, the AP Team had work documents located on the PC. These were not backed up to the PHOENIX Server.

At some time early on Wednesday 6th April the AP team became aware that their work files were not on the PC located in their room. Believing that someone had “taken” their original PC, they began a search for the original AP Team PC. This first came to our attention late on Thursday 7th April when Darsono approached our team and asked if we knew why work files on the PC in the AP Team room had been

\(^{231}\) Gathered from Malcolm's personal diary 4 April 1994
\(^{232}\) Gathered from Malcolm's personal diary, 6.04am, Thursday April 21, 1994
deleted. I explained what had happened and swapped the PCs, this time relocating the AP PC with its work files in the AP team room.

Ray, Janet and I were perplexed as to why the AP Team had not approached us (and the other Finpak Implementation teams) directly on the morning of Wednesday 6th April when they suspected that their PC had been changed. The reason did not become apparent until we had dinner one evening with Aline, an Indonesian friend of Janet, who explained the misunderstanding in terms of the Indonesian attitude to Americans:

Janet There seems to be this attitude that Westerners are in a relative position of power. There seems to be this feeling of inferiority.

Aline Yes

Janet Why is that?

Aline Probably because most Indonesian people think that Western people are better. That is all that is Western is good. We all see movies from the United States and we get information from the United States ... and ... we think that American is better. Well, it’s like this in Indonesia ... they are afraid of you. If what they think happen (the consultants taking the PC) ... then it does not happen ... it will be their responsibility. And as the head of that group is an American they feel that it is very impolite to asking that (did you take the PC) and to be thinking that. Secondly because you are American we do not have a culture of asking direct. You do not feel comfortable if you are Indonesian asking these things (directly of Americans). If we think that this man (the Western management consultants) had honour and he is good then you cannot ask that sort of thing. The main point of this is it is embarrassing to ask.

As Americans and Australians we were considered to be honourable men and women. If we had denied taking the PC, this would be tantamount to an accusation of stealing. As Aline observed this would be highly embarrassing and would constitute a gross discourtesy. The Australians initially responded to this revelation in an incredulous fashion; the Indonesians’ approach seemed "sneaky":

Ray So they thought it was better to sneak around and check later (in the night after we had left the office) than ask us directly.

Aline Yes indirect

Ray Because they would be concerned it might offend us if they asked.

Aline Yeah

Ray If they asked us, would they think that would offend us?

Aline Yes, yes, offend yes

Ray Because they would be accusing us of doing something

Aline umm umm Yes, you got it.
Ray could see no way out of this dilemma. If it was not possible to approach someone of honour or status directly, there was no way of solving problems:

Ray  Well they should have accused us because we did do something
Aline  You did
Ray  Yes we did. So how do you get around that
Aline  Well it is very difficult in these kind of conditions. You know it is also a problem in the office between Indonesians.
Mal  Even between Indonesians
Aline  Yeah
Mal  They were not singling us out for any special treatment? ... Just because we are Americans.
Aline  So in Indonesian terms ... because you are the ones who are responsible then ... the responsibility comes from you first to return it (the PC). 235

Janet found a parallel between the Indonesian indirect approach and persecution and guilt as inculcated by the Christian religion. She equated guilt and persecution with lack of trust:

Janet  It just sounds like a Roman Catholic. They expect you to feel guilty.
Mal  It sounds like a persecution complex
Ray  Step back and think about what you said, it seems like they have a persecution complex
Janet  That’s from our point of view
Ray  Is that understandable
Mal  Perfectly
Ray  Perfectly, exactly, because nobody trusts anybody
Aline  Yeah, yeah that’s right
Janet  Do you think that is true across the country
Aline  Nobody trust anybody
Janet  Yeah, that people are distrustful
Aline  Yes, I think so ... most especially if you deal with business. ... You will not trust other people in this way ... you will not trust anybody.
Janet  What about within a family
Aline  Oh no it is very different
Janet  People are trusting of other family members

235 Gathered from page 3 Aline1.doc
Aline People are not trusting if you are different ... from different clans

Ray So if you are from Java instead of Sumatra then they don’t trust them

Ray linked this approach to relationships manifest in the OIL organization structure:

Ray And there are lots of people in the organization (OIL) responsible for checking somebody else

Aline Yeah

Ray Just the way the whole business environment is structured and the work people do

Aline Yeah

Ray The work is based around checking what somebody else has done and not trusting that they’ve done the right thing, but checking it. So Janet did some work, then Malcolm would check Janet’s work, then you would check that Malcolm had checked Janet’s work and I would check all of you. So everybody is checking everybody else.

This illuminated the hierarchical structure that we were attempting to "reengineer" or reorganise. Aline elaborated upon her own observation that humility had its genesis within the family:

Aline ... You know when you help your mum, your mum will not ever say thank you. We don’t have habits of saying thank you. We are very very shy to say thank you. You know if someone says “you look so nice and so beautiful” I will not say thank you and I feel so sad. ... I am just being quiet. Oh no it’s not good, it’s bad.

Ray So it is inbred, it’s a thing that you grow up with from when you’re very small

Aline Right

Ray I mean, it’s really ingrained, into the social environment. ... So you don’t say nice things

Aline In this culture you will not tell. If the food is good, I would like to say “thank you” for the food ...

Janet Did you think it was good

Aline Very good. We will not say “thank you very much” if you like somebody and you have a nice dinner you know you will not tell. (If) all this is good food and you will not say that, you will just eat it and you will never say “thank you”. ... It is too selfish to be telling ...

Janet It is selfish to be telling people

Aline Yeah, yeah

Janet Why, I don't understand that?

Aline Because it is not in our culture

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236 Gathered from page 5 Aline1.doc
237 Gathered from page 6 Aline1.doc
Janet

Does it suggest that person did too much for you personally for you to thank them.

Aline

You do not do it ... from deep in your heart ... if I help my mum and I need thanks from my mum ... that just means that I am just doing it for the thanks.

Janet

... Oh, so that would suggest that the person is selfish. Not the person doing the thanking but the person doing the doing. ... I have to thank you because you wouldn’t even bother otherwise.

Ray

... you are only doing it to get some thanks

Janet

So it can be insulting if we thank (people) all the time

Mal

Have a biscuit

Ray

Have ten or twelve biscuits!

Ray and Hari Disagree

Nevertheless it seemed that the project team, despite its difficulties, worked more productively and effectively over the last four weeks of the project period. Hari supported this view when I spoke to him about a disagreement that he had with Ray:

Mal

I'd like to talk about an incident which happened today. There was a clear disagreement between you and Ray. You were showing some considerable concern about the quality (accuracy) of the resource estimates (in the project plans). You were disagreeing not only with your fellow colleagues, but with Ray ... who is our leader.

Hari

Ah, yeah, actually there is a reason why I'm concerned about the quality of our work.

Mal

Yes

Hari

Because after we finished the project the consultants will be gone.

Mal

Yes

Hari

But I will be here and our management will blame me if there is anything improper (that is poor quality) in the project.

Mal

Yeah

Hari

So that's why I have a concern ...

The interesting aspect of this disagreement was the way that it was resolved. This is because Ray did not dismiss the veracity of Hari's concern about the accuracy of the project cost and benefit estimates. They agreed the strategic duration which the projects provided was correct. I explained to Hari that I had raised the issue with Ray over lunch.

Mal

I talked about that over lunch with Ray, and he said the problem that Hari (brought up) is right; he is right. But the problem is that we don't have the time to go back and do it in detail (that is with sufficient quality).

238 Gathered from page 13, 14 and 15 Aline1.doc

239 Gathered from page 1 of Hari3.doc
Hari That's right. I realise that. ... I actually agree with Ray and I realise that we don't have enough time to fix it. I think that all we can do is explain this to them (OIL management) that these are our best estimates in this situation and that we will have to review it again, I agree with Ray that it is better to focus on the right direction than rather on the precise thing.

Mal Yeah

Hari I think it's better if we are effective rather than efficient because effective means that we are in the right direction but efficient means doing the right thing in the right way. But if it is in the wrong direction, it will, ah, ... amount to nothing.

Mal Yeah, you win the battle and lose the war.

Hari Right.

Feedback
The belief we were doing a good job working well together as a team was a view shared outside of the BPR project team. Hari referred to this when talking about feedback he was given from the PHOENIX project managers:

Hari ... I have got good commendations about our team from outside, from Hendri, from Anwar (the financial controller), from Sukino, ... and it looks like that from outside we work as a cohesive team and we are moving onto the target at the right time. Yes, I am glad.

Mal You were saying that this team seems to be working well, and you said last time I spoke to you that if you had to compare this team to an animal you would say this team is like a rhino, a rhinoceros.

Hari Yes a rhino.

Mal Why a rhino, why a rhino?

Hari Well we're in front of the other (other project teams) and we are moving directly towards the target and we are strong. Yes, that's why I think we are a rhino. Strong, skin is very thick, a thickness such that we can accept any challenge from outside, closing our eyes and our ears. As long as our target is achieved.

Mal Oh that's interesting. ... Strong.

Hari Yes strong because our management believe in us, in this team.
Cross-Cultural Understanding

Towards the end of the project I discussed with Hari how it was possible to work together despite cultural differences. I suggested that not only did we have to try and understand his culture, but he had to try and understand ours:

Mal I was wondering, when do we stop trying to do it your way (that is the Indonesian way) and you start trying to do it our way (that is a Western way). Because I cannot change into an Indonesian.

Hari Right. But in a short period of time that is difficult, but in a long time, at least you will have been influenced.242

Hari explained he now had a better understanding of the consultants and was therefore more comfortable with a direct approach:

Hari I have a better feeling (now) than at the beginning (of the project). Not only because we have a common understanding about the work but also because we know each other, we know each other's habits and we know each other's temperament.

Mal Yeah

Hari I understand your temperament, Ray's temperament and Janet's temperament.

Mal Yeah

Hari And I can easily accept if something is different in daily situation.

Mal Can you give me an example.

Hari Well for example Ray, he is always forceful in the way that he talks, sometimes it looks that he is forcing what he wants on us. But actually this is not really like that because we can argue and he will back off. And I think that I have become comfortable with that situation.

Mal Comfortable?

Hari Yeah comfortable. You like to, yes, for example, yes and another thing, for example you like to discuss first and then try to resolve together, and Janet she tries to force, but she accepts other people's arguments.

Mal That's a very different way of working isn't it? I understand it is cultural norm in Indonesia to at all times agree and not to force.

Hari Yeah, right. .... That's right, being direct is not the culture of Asia, I think.243

242 Gathered from page 7 of Hari3.doc
243 Gathered from page 6 of Hari3.doc
Chapter 14 - Completion

The Final Presentation
The final presentation to the Steering Committee went well. The only reservation noted in my diary was the restrained contribution from the Indonesian nationals within our BPR project team. Given Hari's observations about deference within Indonesian culture, this was predictable as the PHOENIX Steering Committee members were all senior, older and male:

Malcolm The presentation to the Steering Committee went well and the team performed fine. I was surprised however to see the Indonesians (on my team) very reticent to say something even when invited to do so. Hari and Netty said scarcely anything and Tim nothing at all.\textsuperscript{244}

Dinner Time Conversation
Greg Wong had come from Tokyo and after the presentation we all agreed to meet at one of the camp houses for dinner. After the stress of the last four weeks the post dinner conversation was particularly interesting. Despite our own problems and concerns it appeared as though we had achieved some degree of cohesion within the project team. However, the CGL consultants were still carrying a few concerns and they took this opportunity to discuss them with Greg Wong. I began by referring to Darsono's performance:

Mal It's no secret, you know, Darsono is not cutting it and the client knows it. Every professional on the job knows that we could be better off with a better project manager in place of Darsono. It's not Darsono's fault. Darsono doesn't have the skill set. Somebody selected Darsono and they should have selected someone with the right skill set.

Marg Do you think we got flak because of Darsono?

Ray Darsono, and the way the whole project was managed.

Marg Yes with people floating in and out (the revolving door).

Ray Not just Darsono, but Darsono and Hendri and Petrus and Sukino and everybody else who's trying to be a project manager in this place.

Greg Wong That is a complicated issue.\textsuperscript{245}

Greg Wong did not have much to offer in his defence and so we moved on to the "CGL management review" of Darsono's performance. Darsono was given a "good report card" when he went to Jakarta for his project management performance review by CGL senior management. Ray, Janet and I were not impressed with this outcome:

Mal Darsono was telling us what a good review he got during the week.

Ray Oh yeah; can you believe that.

\textsuperscript{244} Gathered from Malcolm's personal diary Tuesday 29 April 1994

\textsuperscript{245} Gathered from page 9 of Group1.doc
Greg Wong  Ah, the review just looked at the contractual issues between CGL and Gulfex.

Marg  If they thought it was a good contract they must have talked to the wrong people.

Greg Wong  Because it's a time and material contract you just buy the resource (that you require).

Marg  Yes but the people who are providing the resource take all the risk. ... The people they are using aren't taken care of.

Mal  We're the ones who carry all the risk, we're the ones who couldn't get a weekend off, we're the ones who don't get any holidays, Indonesian holidays or Australian holidays. We're the ones who fill out timesheets that we work eight hours a day even if we work twelve or twenty four hours a day and on top of that the environment stinks.

Ray  Yes we've already done next week’s work (given the overtime we've worked).

Mal  CGL probably thinks it's a really good deal.

Ray  Yes, they've got all the profit, none of the accountability, and none of the risk. 246

Greg Wong  They did an audit on the relationship between CGL and Gulfex and based on the contract it looked good because from a risk point of view there is no risk. So from an audit point of view, so the audit committee looked to see if there was any exposure and on that basis he came off very well. 247

Mal  So the reason Darsono got a good review was because the terms and conditions of the contract are so much in favour of CGL, that even Darsono could do it.

Marg  Yes .... they're obviously working on the wrong thing and they're not looking at the business (that is the project). What they should be looking at is if we will get any more follow on business from this. 248

**Someone “Steals Our Lunch”**

The PHOENIX project management advised us that "follow on business" had been let to another consulting firm. I discussed this with Timbul the following week after Greg Wong had left:

Mal  Do you feel a bit isolated?

Timbul  Yes I feel abandoned by Greg Wong, he put me on this project and then he left me behind.

Mal  Well Greg Wong flew in last Wednesday and flew out on Friday (for the presentation on Thursday). He was here for a little while and now he's gone.

Timbul  That was for the BPR presentation.

Mal  Yeah. So you were abandoned by Greg Wong as well. We also felt abandoned by Greg Wong. It got to the point where Greg Wong came down (from Tokyo) to give us his advice and ah, we didn't need it. He didn't know what was going on! That's the problem.

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246 Gathered from page 5 of Group1.doc
247 Gathered from page 9 of Group1.doc
248 Gathered from page 8 of Group1.doc
with staying away for so long, you lose touch. He is supposed to sell the follow on job, but I've learnt today that the procurement re-engineering contract has been let to C C Consulting.  

Mal ... It's a disgrace that C C Consulting got that contract. We're not only the incumbent consulting group but we're the incumbent consultants on this very project and they took it away from underneath us, it's like taking the bread off our table! It is disgraceful. If I was practice leader I would get a dreadful appraisal, there's no accountability at practice leader level. So I'm not very pleased, it's reprehensible.

Contract Accountability

During the after dinner discussion with Greg Wong, Janet and Ray queried why standard consulting industry conditions were not included in the contract:

Mal ... Greg Wong doesn't know what are even standard industry conditions for consulting. (Therefore) he left them out of the contract. He admitted he doesn't know what standard industry norms are for contractual conditions in this part of the world or any part of the world for that matter, for consultants and so they've been left out. We don't have any health cover and we don't have any (paid) time for travel. We've got to pay for that ourselves. We don't have the standard terms and conditions for expats or anything approaching it. I mean, it's just not good enough. .... When they (OIL) signed the (consulting) contract with C C Consulting, they'll sign a completely different contract (to the one they signed with us). I mean they must have seen us coming, come in spinner, come in sucker. ....

Ray It took all of that first week and literally the whole of the second week to try and figure out where we were going.

Marg But you could have called on that Friday and said, hey look this is what's happened ... and we could have re-negotiated.

Ray Yeah, I think that we could have probably called on the weekend sometime and maybe talked to you.

Marg And said, "do you think it's still worth coming?"

Ray Yes, we could have probably done that, that's true.

... Greg Wong ... So why do you spend twenty five minutes complaining to me about what a bad planning job (I did)?

Marg That's not what I said. I didn't say you did a bad planning job, I said you did not negotiate in good faith. I said you were manipulative.

Greg Wong You have to know we were negotiating.

Marg I said you were manipulative.

Greg Wong Why?
Marg  Because you had information that you wilfully withheld because you thought it suited your purposes better.

Greg Wong  We still wanted you to come.

Marg  Yes and you decided that I might not come, and so you decided not to tell me anything. You withheld information that could affect my decision and that had to do with the situation; that's a manipulative situation.

...  

Greg Wong  I can see what you had to go through but the client is very difficult.

Ray  Yes, in the years I've been doing this work, this has been probably one of the most difficult clients I've ever worked with.

Cross cultural experiences lend themselves to various interpretations. It may be observed that one person's notion of negotiation can be experienced as manipulation.

Marg  That's one of the things you need to tell people about (coming here). Things that we sort of take for granted, like a telephone that you can pick up and dial.

Greg Wong  So I should prepare a list of 2,000 items and ask you first if you like the job, okay fine, let me tell you why you shouldn't take the job, here's a list of 2,000 items.

Marg  No, no, no, no, no. No just explain things that they need to bring with them, it's not 2,000 items, it's only ten, it's only ten things.

Ray  It's the remote location kit bag.

Marg  Yeah, exactly.

Ray  Like when you're off to anywhere in South East Asia basically pick up the bag (remote location kit bag). The bag has a phone, a fax, a satellite disk, food, spaghettio's ...

Greg Wong  A lot of aspirin.

Ray  Malaria tablets.

Marg  Yes that's one of the things you didn't send us ... you didn't send us any medical information.

Greg Wong  I didn't know what medical information you needed.

Marg  What ...

Mal  OIL give the expats, that is the Gulfex people, a package which includes all the sorts of shots that you should get (before you get here).

Marg  It probably has information about mailing and stuff like that.  

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252 Gathered from page 39 of Group1.doc
253 Gathered from page 26 of Group1.doc
The Team Goes Home
After discussing various other administrative difficulties, with respect to living in this particular remote location, team members made their various ways back to Singapore, Tokyo, Taiwan, USA and Australia.
Part 3: Integration of Theory and Data

In Part 1 we identified the importance of culture in defining who people are: the way they perceive, think and act. We made apparent the potential difficulties in cross-cultural consulting. We validated the use of narrative as the medium to convey this research journey to the reader. In Part 2 the reader was provided with the narrative research data. In this, Part 3 we draw from the narrative in Part 2 and the learnings in Part 1 to create new learnings. Whereas the narrative was written shortly after the project ended and can be seen as learning in process, this final part provides us with the opportunity to establish new learnings derived from the intertwining of the narrative in Part 2 and the findings from the cross-cultural theorists discussed in Part 1.

Now we stand back from the theory and the empirical data and informed by both we present the results in order to meet the research endeavour of showing how cross-cultural characteristics shape consulting roles, the consulting process and consulting outcomes. The point of entry to the analysis is via a review of two incidents and I have chosen to analyse these two incidents in order to illustrate how national cultural characteristics are central to the shaping of consulting roles, processes and outcomes. Chapter 15 deals with the first of these incidents, the JAD (Joint Application Design) incident and provides an opportunity to examine the deployment of a US developed management tool into another culture. Chapter 16 tackles the PC incident and provides insight into Eastern and Western cultural characteristics regarding conflict resolution. Chapter 17 reflects on some of the people in terms of their impact on the project. (Each discussion demonstrates how culture authorizes the resolution of issues.)

To set the stage I review the context of each incident before analysing the roles played by the characters in that incident. With respect to the characters I review the background, role, and dominant dispositions of each before proceeding to an analysis of the incident.

The reader is encouraged to constantly refer to the PHOENIX Project Organization chart (Figure 5 on page 96 and reproduced as Appendix A page 272) in order to clarify the formal positions and roles of the characters. Furthermore the reader is also encouraged to refer to the cultural parameters clustered under the columns East and West in Table 2, on page 39. This will provide the reader with a vehicle for cross-cultural comparison. For ease of reference this Table is reproduced as Appendix B page 273.

The Project Organization Structure

The reader is reminded of the principles underpinning the project structure shown in Figure 5 on page 96 in Part 2. The reader will note that there are two CGL management positions shown in this diagram. These are the CGL Practice Leader and the Assignment Manager positions. These management positions are roles rather than full time jobs. As noted in Part 2, in a consulting business, management and administrative work is assigned to the most experienced consultants. They are expected to do the administrative work of management as well as provide leadership
to the consulting team. The principal value underpinning this design is to keep overheads to a minimum and thereby maximise the time available for client work.

As the chart shows the Practice Leader role was held by Greg Wong and the Assignment Manager role was held by Ray. These management roles are powerful positions in a consulting organization. In the study the incumbents in these two roles determined who worked on the project, who was assigned to do the work, who was interviewed, how the analysis was presented and when the work was completed. The junior consultants influenced how these decisions were made but did not have the power to make those decisions.

I begin this analysis by reviewing the context of the JAD incident before proceeding to an analysis of the characters involved. Finally I review the implications of using management tools developed in the West and then used in the East without modification to accommodate cross-cultural differences.
Chapter 15 – The JAD Incident

Context
The JAD incident provides an opportunity to show how culture underpins solutions to issues. As noted in Part 1 Trompenaars argues that issues fall into categories. He notes that these categories are common across cultures and that different cultures devise different solutions to the same type of issue. As noted in Part 2 on page 115 the Joint Application Design management tool (commonly referred to as JAD) was developed in North America to address two concerns relevant to the development of computer systems. These two concerns are timeliness and efficiency. Concerns for timely and efficient development of computer systems are consistent with Western values of efficiency and effectiveness.

Trompenaars’ research supports the view that Western cultures seek to control nature and exploit time. It is not surprising therefore that two Western nations, the US and Canada, developed the JAD workshop to achieve the timely and efficient development of a computer system. In order to provide insight into the cultural values implicit in the US and Canadian developed JAD management tool I shall briefly review the roles and responsibilities of the characters assigned to the JAD workshop. In addition I shall also review the steps in the development of a computer system.

\[254\] Part 1, Chapter 1, p. 19.
JAD - Roles and Responsibilities

Consultants with different levels of experience are assigned to work on various consulting projects. As noted in Part 1 the senior roles of business and project management are assigned to the more experienced consultants. A key principle of Western management consultancies is that all consultants, regardless of seniority, are encouraged to contribute to the resolution of the client problem. Therefore all consultants, regardless of level, are expected to contribute to the conduct of the project. This principle is consistent with the Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck’s research findings, which value the primacy of the individual in Western cultures. In contrast, Eastern cultures value collective affiliations over individual goals. Therefore, we can now contrast the organization of Western management consultancies with Eastern values. This organizing principle, the primacy of the individual, blatantly ignores the Eastern cultural values of status, history, relationships and respect for authority. I shall now briefly review the consultants assigned to work on the JAD incident.

The principal players in the JAD incident are Greg Wong (CGL Practice Leader), Kate (CGL consultant and JAD facilitator), Fa Leung (CGL consultant) and Petrus (OIL Project Manager). It is notable that Greg Wong had a background in application development and had first proposed the use of a JAD workshop to facilitate the efficient and timely development of the computer system for OIL. Greg Wong was familiar with the workshop and had used it in his previous career. As noted in the

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255 The JAD incident can be found on p. 123 in the narrative in Part 2.
narrative, Greg Wong was the manager responsible for finding and assigning consultants to the PHOENIX Project. He recruited a female consultant with skill and experience to facilitate the JAD workshops. The consultant, Kate, from Kansas, had successfully facilitated workshops in the US. Greg Wong also recruited Fa Leung, from Singapore, to help with the conduct of the workshop.

**JAD - The Tool**

The systems development lifecycle traditionally begins with the identification of a business need and initiation of a project to develop a computer system to address that need. The first step requires the gathering of user requirements for a computer system. This step requires the extensive interviewing of many potential users across the organization. Senior management are interviewed to develop the business case, which underpins the economic need for the system. Different department representatives are interviewed to identify the business processes to be supported and system functionality required. The project leader pursues a series of separate meetings with the people who will use the system. The project leader continues these meetings over a period of time. Eventually, having documented everything possible, the leader translates interview notes into technical terminology and documents.

Prior to the development of the JAD workshop the project leader discovered that additional people had to be consulted because they also required something of the system or because different user requirements conflicted with each other. In the end, because the communication process had been disjointed and protracted, business managers and users are reluctant to approve the specifications. Slow communication and long feedback cycles are primary reasons this traditional method was unsatisfactory. The JAD workshop was developed to improve the quality of communication and shorten the time required to obtain user requirements.

**JAD and Culture**

With respect to bringing into focus the values implicit in the JAD tool we shall refer to the research of Trompenaars. The Trompenaars research supports the finding that efficient use of time is a primary Western value and the desire to efficiently develop computer systems is consistent with the value. The JAD workshop was designed to minimize the time taken to develop computer systems. Instead of many meetings, only one meeting, a JAD workshop is held. In the JAD workshop all users are invited to participate in the definition of the computer system. Because all users are present there is no delay between question and answer, no delays caused by “telephone tag” or by written requests for requirements. The use of a JAD workshop to gather requirements brings certain characteristics to the system design process. The workshop process develops a shared understanding and the physical and social setting and encourages participation and sharing of information. The Western cultural values of participation and open communication are a design feature implicit in the design of the workshop. Communication is enhanced through the structure of the workshop, which relies on direct communication between participants.

All computer system users are invited to participate and their active involvement is central to the success of the workshop. Participant involvement is central to the process. Participants bring knowledge to the workshop which informs the
development of the computer system. All participants including the business sponsors understand the objective established for the workshop. The process to be followed is defined by the workshop agenda. In this way the JAD workshop provides an efficient means for gathering user requirements.

**JAD - The Incident**

The participants at the first JAD workshop included OIL employees from all levels in the finance organization. These attendees included junior female accounting staff, accounting supervisors, department managers and senior managers and representatives from the PHOENIX Project. The representatives from the PHOENIX Project included Petrus (the most senior client manager on the PHOENIX Project team). Greg Wong had recruited Kate (an experienced female JAD facilitator, in her early thirties) from Kansas in the USA to run the workshop.

Kate believed that the success of the workshop depended on open and frank discussion from all attendees. She was also aware that open and frank discussion might not be possible due to junior staff being unwilling to participate in the presence of their managers. Although she had discussed this possibility with her colleagues they had decided not to change the workshop agenda.

As expected the JAD workshop immediately ran into problems in the first few minutes. Try as she did Kate could not elicit the information she required from the junior female attendees. Kate described this frustration when she observed “I had not heard a single woman make a single statement in a meeting though, they had all been dead silent. Even when I went up and when in a session that I was actually teaching and prompted the women to speak, they couldn't do it. I mean, they would get out a word or so and then they'd back off. These women are obviously there because someone thinks that they have subject matter expertise, and they need to speak. And in the States, you're always going to have what I like to call the quiet giant people, who don't speak as much as some of the others, but you can usually get some words out. With these women, even if I went right up to them, right in front of them and encouraged them to talk, they were very reticent about it. It made them obviously uncomfortable.”

Kate was frustrated that the workshop agenda was not producing the outcomes she anticipated. At this point in the workshop cross-cultural issues had created an impasse. In an attempt to resolve this impasse the junior female accounting staff made a suggestion to Kate.

They suggested she work with Petrus to develop an alternative approach to gathering user requirements. Her response to this suggestion was direct and is best stated in her own words. Reflecting on the incident Kate said, “So that's when I told him (Petrus) that he would be wasting my time if I had to work with him, that I was wasting my time and they didn't want to send all their money down the tubes because I could get nowhere with Petrus. I doubt there are many females in that old Moslem's life who told him that he was a waste of their time. So, he doesn’t like me and he hasn't

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256 Gathered from page 6 of Kate1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 123.
showed up in any of my meetings since, which has been fine. So I've made an enemy but I don't really care.”

As her attempts to run the JAD workshop were unsuccessful Kate left the project shortly after this meeting and returned to the US. Greg Wong did not endeavour to modify the JAD workshop agenda and abandoned this technique as a means of gathering user requirements. The description above summarizes the JAD incident.

The Characters
The characters involved in the JAD incident focussed on here were: Kate, Greg Wong, Petrus, Fa Leung, and junior OIL employees (female accounting staff).

CGL Facilitator - Kate
Kate was a female consultant in her early thirties from Kansas. She was employed by CGL and was an experienced JAD facilitator. Because of this skill she had been recruited by Greg Wong to work on the PHOENIX Project.

In the US Kate was perceived as a talented and independent professional, who was valued for her skills and knowledge. If this workshop had occurred in the US she would have distinguished herself by her strength of character and commitment to the task. In Indonesia her actions were perceived as disrespectful and rude.

Hofstede’s research identified that Eastern cultures prefer a low risk approach to issues. The suggestion that Kate work with Petrus sought to avoid the further embarrassment of junior employees being confronted in the JAD meeting. The suggestion was a low risk approach to the resolution of the matter. If Kate had followed this suggestion it would have saved face by avoiding further confrontation. However this cautious and circumspect approach, characteristically Eastern, was too subtle and indirect to be understood by Kate. Hofstede notes that Western cultures value the individual and direct action. This bias for direct and independent action prompted Kate to observe that working with Petrus would be a “waste of her time and their money”. In making this decision she failed to appreciate the cross-cultural implications. Firstly she did not understand her questions were confronting and embarrassing to the junior Indonesians who made the suggestion. Secondly she did not understand the implication that the workshop format (direct questions of junior and senior employees together) was cross-culturally unsound. Thirdly she did not understand the implication that continuing with the workshop format was not acceptable to the Indonesians.

Kate’s observation that working with Petrus would be a waste of her time and the client’s money crosses a number of cultural parameters. Specifically it crosses Trompenaars’ concept of public and private space. Trompenaars’ notes that “degree of involvement” separates Western from Eastern thinking and behaving. Western cultures separate business issues from personal issues and Eastern cultures consider they are related. Involvement is therefore specific in the West and not general. In part, this explains the source of embarrassment to the Indonesians. Kate meant that the business issue could not be resolved because Petrus did not have the knowledge

257 Gathered from page 8 of Kate2.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 166.
she needed. The Indonesians understood this to mean that a relationship with Petrus was a waste of time. However, this is only a partial explanation for the embarrassment.

Trompenaars notes that Eastern cultures assume relationships are more complex and therefore require a more general relationship whereas Western cultures assume specific involvement and require a task centred relationship. However, as noted above, both Western and Eastern cultures assume a clear separation between private and public. To complicate matters, Western cultures would assume a large degree of involvement is public whereas Eastern cultures assume a small degree of involvement is public. Embarrassment arises when what is private in one culture is treated as public in another. Therefore, the potential exists for conflict around the issue of involvement and the associated issue of private and public space.

Kate considered her role to be the JAD facilitator and she did not consider another role outside this narrow definition. However, because Petrus was a senior manager the suggestion that she work with him required a more general level of involvement. It was assumed that a Western management consultant would have these skills and this broad perspective. The embarrassment occurred when Kate observed that her role did not extend to consulting more broadly with Petrus. She did not value any time with Petrus because he could not tell her what she wanted to know. As her role was specifically defined she did not consider a more general involvement with Petrus as useful. The embarrassment occurred when she suggested that a relationship with Petrus was a waste of time. In this case she meant a specific relationship with respect to the JAD workshop issue would be a waste of time. However the Indonesians interpreted her comments that a general relationship with Petrus was a waste of time. The Indonesians would not have understood that she meant he did not have the information she required. On the other hand she did not understand that the Indonesians meant that developing a relationship with Petrus was the key to resolving the more general issue of what the workshop was meant to accomplish. The Indonesians meant that the specifics were not the problem but the approach (the workshop agenda) was the problem. They indirectly suggested the approach needed to be changed and therefore Kate should work with Petrus to resolve how to accomplish what the JAD workshop had failed to accomplish.

Hofstede’s research on high and low power distance as well as masculinity and femininity is also relevant in the incident. The request that Kate work with Petrus suggested, quite directly, (for an Indonesian) it would be appropriate that she consult with the senior managers. The implication was that it was only Petrus and the senior managers who had the authority to preside over such matters. Kate’s questions were directed to junior women who occupied positions of little power and influence. Her questions were inappropriate for junior females and were therefore referred, by the women, to the most senior male member of the project.

Kate’s response, which valued time with money, contrasted with the concerns of the Indonesians. Kate did not understand the subtle contextual messages, conveyed by the Indonesians. The tone of her response would have surprised the Indonesians and been labelled as stereotypically Western. In this incident we witness the clash of Eastern and Western cultures, which resulted in casualties for both teams. The client team was insulted and the consulting team’s credibility was compromised.
I shall now consider the role played by Greg Wong. Greg Wong’s relationship to Petrus is shown as subordinate on the organization chart. However he exercised power to hire and fire consultants and had considerable influence on the direction of the project.

CGL Practice Leader - Greg Wong

Greg Wong was Hong Kong Chinese who had moved to Great Britain for his high school education. His first job was in Britain and he had moved to the US with CGL where he had been granted US citizenship. He had 20 years’ experience living and working in Western countries. He was an experienced manager within CGL and responsibility for the operational success of the project rested with him. Due to the nature of the consulting business he was expected to consult as well as be responsible for his consulting team’s profitability. However, he was not responsible for the profitability of the PHOENIX Project.

Many of the difficulties and the complexity of cross-cultural consulting were realised through the Practice Leader and Assignment Manager roles. As a result the decisions taken by Greg Wong (and the BPR Assignment Manager, Ray) had serious consequences for the project.

Greg Wong’s primary role as Practice Leader was leader and manager of the consulting team and consulting business. In this dual capacity he assumed the role of Assignment Manager for the Software Implementation Team as well as being Practice Leader responsible for the consulting teams business performance. Greg Wong had the power to assign consultants to the project and control the project work effort. He could make these decisions without input from others. In this manner he exercised substantial control over the project, project work, work effort and project outcomes. In addition because of his Hong Kong Chinese background, cross-cultural cultural work and education experience and bilingual skills Greg Wong had the skills and background to be cross-culturally capable. However, in this incident he did not demonstrate a disposition to effectively work cross-culturally. This was due to the emphasis he placed on his business role as Practice Leader rather than his consulting role as Assignment Manager.

Greg Wong focused exclusively on the profitability of the CGL consulting practice. To achieve this he exercised authority to assign as many consultants as possible to the PHOENIX Project. He did not care what happened to the consultants once he had recruited them to work on the project. Once they had accepted his invitation to work on the PHOENIX Project he ignored them.

As a result the consultants were not met at the airport, not briefed on arrival and not introduced to their assignment manager and to the PHOENIX Project managers. This lack of concern for his consultants’ accounted for the high number who flew in and found the conditions unfriendly and then returned home. Greg Wong’s concern for the quality of the work of the assignees was secondary to his desire to increase the number of consultants he could recruit and thereby maximize the revenue flow to his consulting practice.
The JAD incident is an example of this disposition. Greg Wong did not listen to the advice of either Fa Leung or Kate. Both expressed concerns about the suitability of the workshop agenda and its suitability for an Indonesian audience. Greg Wong expressed no interest in changing the JAD workshop to accommodate cultural differences. As noted above once he had successfully recruited a consultant he lost professional interest in them and in their work because he could see no direct business benefit to his consulting practice.

Greg Wong used the term “systems” to refer to the cultural differences between Eastern and Western cultures. He understood there were cross-cultural differences between the two “systems”. This was demonstrated by his tolerance towards the client that Ray, the BPR Assignment Manager was incapable of. For example, when the client scheduled a software training session, which clashed with the work of the consultants Ray’s reaction was to send the entire consulting team back their respective countries for the three weeks of the training. Greg Wong’s reaction demonstrated more tolerance and understanding. He used words like “adaptive” and phrases such as “they want us to work with them” thereby demonstrating an empathy for the client’s “system”. Greg Wong expected the consultants to put aside concerns of perceived inefficiency and chaotic planning and engage with the client more broadly. He observed that the client process appeared to be not as efficient as we would like. However he noted that Petrus and Hendri selected from the CGL methodologies, planning tools and consulting techniques and adapted these to suit the Indonesian approach. In this manner he demonstrated cross-cultural empathy and understanding of the Eastern value of synchronous time (where memories of past, present and future shape actions in the present) referred to by Trompenaars.

However although he demonstrated cross-cultural understanding his decisions did not reflect this. His decisions reflected that he equated time with money and this is evident in his decisions to bring in many consultants in order to increase his revenue. It is also evident in his lack of concern for the assimilation of the consultants into the general social environment and into the work environment. This is particularly evident in his decision to not modify the JAD workshop format to accommodate Eastern values.

I shall now consider the role played by Petrus the most senior OIL Project Manager. Petrus is shown on the project organization chart as subordinate only to the PHOENIX Project Director. He had considerable power and influence within the project team.

**OIL Project Manager - Petrus**

Petrus had worked for the Accounting Department of OIL as a senior manager for many years and was a trusted and respected member of the management team. He had retired from OIL but was requested by his former colleagues to make an

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258 The reader is referred to a detailed analysis of Ray’s role as the BPR Assignment Manager. This is discussed in Chapter 17 on p. 242.
259 Gathered from page 8 of Greg Wong1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 132.
260 Part 1, Chapter 2, p.35.
important contribution to the PHOENIX Project. Accordingly he had agreed to come out of retirement to provide support for the PHOENIX Project.

Petrus’s presence added credibility to the PHOENIX Project. The PHOENIX Project was a significant initiative for the company as it warranted the recall from retirement of a respected elder and former senior member of the OIL finance department management team. Petrus provided the project with status and prestige. Through his network of professional contacts across the OIL organization his presence provided the PHOENIX Project team with access to OIL accounting management and staff. In addition, through his extensive social contacts his presence also provided access to the wider OIL business community including the influential operations management team, the large operations staff, and OIL suppliers such as banks, equipment and services suppliers. Petrus was not assigned to the PHOENIX project for his detailed knowledge of OIL accounting processes and procedures. He was assigned to the PHOENIX project for his understanding of the relationship of OIL to the Indonesian business and the social position he held in the community. In return OIL management expected that the appointment of a distinguished, respected elder such as Petrus would assure the success of the PHOENIX Project.

Western consultants misunderstood Petrus’s role. Kate (a junior consultant reporting to Greg Wong), Ray (the BPR Team Assignment Manager) and Greg Wong (the CGL Practice Leader and the Software Team Assignment Manager) thought he would provide accounting advice and guidance.

Kate misunderstood the suggestion to work with Petrus. By refusing to take the suggestion seriously Kate demonstrated that she did not know how to work with senior people in an Eastern culture. She wrongly assumed that Petrus was to help her with his accounting knowledge. This was not Petrus’s role.

Hall’s cultural parameters of context as opposed to content have relevance to this incident. As noted earlier (Part 1, page 27) the high context mode of communication is indirect and implicit, whereas low context communication tends to be direct and explicit. In this incident the junior OIL employees, not wishing to be disrespectful, adopted an indirect approach and provided Kate with the opportunity to work with the most senior and respected manager on the project. They had indicated to Kate that only Petrus had the position, power and authority to solve this problem. They expected her to work with Petrus more broadly to resolve the issue. Kate defined her role as a JAD facilitator and did not see herself working in a broader capacity. Trompennaars describes this Western style of behaviour as “specific involvement” and contrasts it with the Eastern bias for “diffuse involvement” which requires a broader range of skills. Although Kate was afforded the respect of an Indonesian elder she did not have the skills to enact this role. The assessment of Kate made by the Indonesian women was that Western consultants should be given the same level of respect afforded to senior Indonesian males. This assessment is understandable because of the status accorded to Western management consultants. However, in this case perception determined by culture created imperfect expectations. Kate did not have the skills of a senior and respected elder which were required to match those of Petrus and to work effectively with him.
I shall now consider the role played by Fa Leung. Fa Leung is shown on the organization chart as a junior consultant reporting to Greg Wong the Practice Leader. Fa Leung is significant as he demonstrated he had the understanding and capability to work cross-culturally.

**CGL Consultant - Fa Leung**

Fa Leung was from Singapore. He spoke English and Mandarin as well as Bahasa Indonesian and had worked for CGL for many years. In addition he had also worked in the US. He was an experienced management consultant and had worked in Indonesia prior to this project.

Fa Leung was assigned to work on the software implementation team with Greg Wong as his Assignment Manager (the reader is reminded that Greg Wong had dual roles as CGL Practice Leader and as Assignment Manager). Fa Leung could advise Greg Wong but he did not have the power to make decisions. Notwithstanding this Fa Leung played a pivotal role mediating between the concerns of the client and the direction taken by his Assignment Manager.

In the start up phase of the project Fa Leung was aware of the need to consider the disposition of the client when planning the work. He suggested modifications to the JAD work plan to accommodate cultural differences. For example Fa Leung and Kate (the JAD facilitator) agreed that the approach to the implementation of the JAD workshop should to be modified to accommodate the cultural needs of the client. In particular, they were concerned that junior OIL employees would not speak in the presence of senior managers like Petrus (PHOENIX Project Manager) and Hendri (PHOENIX Project Director).

Even though Fa Leung was from an Eastern culture his disposition was cross-cultural and he had the ability to understand the characteristics of both Eastern and Western cultures. As can be seen from the PHOENIX Project Organisation Structure, Fa Leung was a junior consultant and therefore he did not have the authority to implement this perspective.

I shall now consider the role played by the junior OIL accounting staff involved in the JAD incident. These female employees played a central role in the JAD incident. They are not shown on the organization chart shown on Figure 5 in Part 2.

**OIL - Female Accounting Staff**

Although we do not know these women by name, and we do not know a great deal about any particular individual they played a significant role in the JAD incident. They were Indonesian women who worked as accounting staff in the finance department reporting to male supervisors. They were invited to the JAD workshop because of their detailed knowledge of accounting department procedures.

They were respectful of their senior male managers and mindful of the presence of Petrus. They were also respectful of Western management consultants regardless of gender.
Although discreet and indirect in Indonesian terms they directed Kate to work with Petrus. Furthermore, their refusal to answer Kate’s questions was also a direct message that she was crossing a cultural boundary. Despite her persistent attempts they consistently deferred the questions to their senior male managers. This behaviour is consistent with the findings of Trompenaars who notes that the private space of Eastern cultures restricts discussion and therefore encourages indirect communication. As a result this communication relies on context as well as the spoken word. Westerners, with their bias for direct action have a tendency to invade the private space of Easterners.

In this instance, the female accounting staff were confronted with a Western woman who embarrassed them in front of their managers by her directness. Furthermore, Kate did not understand their deference to the managers present. She persisted with her direct questions to the female accounting staff. Finally they directed her to work with Petrus. Kate did not understand how to work with Petrus and her response, noted above was insulting towards Petrus. The female accounting staff would have been shocked by this.

Analysis

The analysis above provides insight to the roles, background, and dominant dispositions of the managers and consultants involved in the JAD incident. We discussed how each role affected the workshop from a cross-cultural perspective. The role analysis provides the reader with the background to understand how and why decisions were made.

I shall now analyse the JAD incident from several perspectives. These perspectives include time, hierarchy, authority, context and content. This will provide the reader with the opportunity to further consider the cross-cultural implications for implementation of Western developed management tools and techniques.

JAD and Time

The values implicit in a JAD workshop emphasise timeliness and efficiency. Hall argues that high context cultures value relationships and achieve timely and efficient results through such relationships. However, low context cultures consider time to be a commodity to be measured and valued. Trompenaars’ research also supports this finding.

It is understandable why JAD workshops are successful in low context cultures, such as USA, Canada and Australia. These cultures place a high value on time and efficiency and deploy strategies to exert control over time and nature. Low context cultures ascribe relatively less value to matters such as relationships, history, status, respect for seniority and subjective matters such as feelings and face.

The JAD workshop run by Kate was structured on the assumption that it was time efficient to have one meeting rather than many meetings. This design assumed workshop participants would not have their ability to participate constrained by the mixed presence of senior management with junior staff.
JAD and Participation

The second assumption, which shaped the structure of the JAD workshop, was that of open participation. Open participation required that all parties invited to the JAD workshop would take part unreservedly, openly and enthusiastically. When realised, this assumption results in communication where opinions are valued, and where misunderstandings are surfaced and conflicts resolved in an atmosphere of cooperation and trust. However, this assumption contrasts with high context cultures where it is considered rude to be explicit when discussing sensitive issues. This assumption of open participation bears a heavy cultural load when working cross-culturally.

In contrast, the nature of participation in Eastern cultures is shaped by seniority and context. In these societies often what it not said is more important that what is said. In any event respect for seniority predicates who speaks and dictates the nature and content of that contribution. The Western management consultants ignored this cultural difference and the workshop’s failure was the price paid for being cross-culturally insensitive.

Cross Cultural Advice

Fa Leung’s attitude to matters of a cross-cultural nature was shaped by his experiences as a native of the island nation of Singapore. Singapore is a tiny island with little or no natural resources and relies on exports of high technology products to generate income. Fa Leung had worked across the South East Asian region and had travelled to the US and Europe prior to his role as a management consultant. He was aware of the differences between Eastern and Western management cultures and was skilled in navigating cultural boundaries in the daily course of his work in Singapore. He considered structuring the workshop to suit Indonesian values to be his responsibility. He noted, “I would especially test whether a particular idea could work in this environment, because this organization has its own culture.” In this way Fa Leung demonstrated an ability to bridge the cultural divide between Eastern and Western cultures. Prior to the JAD workshop he predicted that senior OIL managers would be the only participants who would feel free to speak during the conduct of the workshop. He then worked to convince Kate and Greg Wong to change the format of the workshop to accommodate cultural differences.

Fa Leung identified the likely workshop outcomes and also identified why these were likely to be so. He argued that the Indonesian culture would not allow full participation by all of the JAD participants. He felt it was his responsibility to bring this problem to the attention of his managers. Specifically he observed, “the question I had in mind is whether the culture of this organization would make that idea feasible. Because in a JAD session we want people to contribute ideas and opinions very spontaneously and if the people are not used to that and they wait for their superiors to make a decision or the first move then the JAD session may not be an effective way to gather requirements.” It was not a vague notion in Fa Leung’s mind that the JAD session would fail. Fa Leung knew precisely why the session

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would fail. His rationale is also supported by the research of Trompenaars who notes that US and Canadian cultures value the contribution of the individual whereas high context cultures found in Eastern countries value the collective over the individual.\footnote{Part 1, Chapter 2, p. 28.}

Not only did Fa Leung expect failure of the JAD sessions he advised his manager of his thinking. Notwithstanding this advice Greg Wong allowed the sessions to continue without any change to the structure, the agenda, the facilitator or the composition of the attendees thereby failing to recognise the implications of Fa Leung’s advice.

Fa Leung raised concerns about the probability of success of running a JAD workshop in Indonesia. He made his reservations known to Greg Wong prior to the conduct of the workshop and explained that Indonesian people would not be comfortable participating spontaneously in a workshop situation such as that proposed. Fa Leung concluded that the JAD workshop would not work in Indonesia. Specifically he said, “if they (the Indonesians) wait for their superiors to make a decision or the first move then the JAD session may not be an effective way to gather requirements.”\footnote{Gathered from page 20 of Ray1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 116.} (It is interesting to note his choice of words: he used the indirect word “may” rather than the assertion “will”. Even while being “direct” he maintained an “indirect” speech form).
Kate, the JAD workshop facilitator, also had reservations about the suitability of the JAD workshop for this Indonesian client. She noted that the JAD workshop had been structured to facilitate the gathering of user requirements in the USA and Canada. The workshop was a failure and Kate was unhappy about this failure.

Kate expected Indonesian women to be in some respects to be assertive like professional North American women such as herself. She noted that “… these women … need to speak.” It is noteworthy that it is the gender issue which is the focus of Kate’s attention. This is most likely because professional American women such as Kate would be aware of the emerging rights of women due to the strength of the North American women’s movement. Nonetheless, such is the strength of ethnocentric bias that Kate did not consider that it could be different in an Eastern country such as Indonesia.

One is left wondering why Greg Wong did not anticipate that the workshop would not work due to cultural differences. Furthermore, he did not test this assumption by simply asking Hendri (the OIL Project Director) or Petrus (the OIL Project Manager) for their opinions. With the benefit of hindsight the solution was relatively straightforward. However, Greg Wong ignored the reservations of Fa Leung (CGL consultant) and Kate (CGL consultant and JAD facilitator) and allowed the workshop to proceed with no changes to the agenda.

265 Gathered from page 6 of Kate1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 117.
**JAD and Authority**

Trompenaars distinguishes between the different approaches to recognizing hierarchy, authority and status. In high context cultures, such as Indonesia, gender and age define social standing in the community. In low context cultures, such as Australia and the US, achievement and ability contribute to status. In this context Trompenaars notes the inherent difficulties created by the practice of Western managers sending “whiz kids to deal with people 10 – 20 years their senior often insults the ascriptive culture.”

Hari (a OIL employee of Indonesian nationality assigned to the BPR team as a consultant) reinforced this conclusion noting that respect for elders was instilled during an Indonesian childhood. He explained that children were taught to approach their elders in an indirect manner. He said, “That's the way we appreciate older people. And we teach our children that way. So the youngest one cannot call the older brother by his first name.” Trompenaars' research supports this and notes that in countries where ascription is the norm status is ascribed to those who evoke admiration from others. Elder siblings in Indonesia evoke admiration from younger siblings and generally in high context cultures such as Indonesia older people are afforded higher status than younger people.

The decision to have a thirty year old person conduct the JAD workshop was unfortunate because she did not have equal age status with the participants such as Petrus (a respected senior OIL Project Manager). This explains, in part, why the senior male participants, including Petrus, did not actively participate in the workshop.

Hall argues that in high context cultures status is independent of achievement or skill. In ascription cultures, status is afforded to a person because that person has the power to get things done by virtue of their position in that society or organization. Trompenaars also argues that in ascription cultures status simply “is” and requires no formal justification. This was evident in the further observations by Hari who noted that males were treated with more respect than females in Indonesia. He argued that in Indonesian culture females were considered “weaker” and their opinions were also considered less worthy. He said “the culture is that a male usually finds it difficult to accept female ideas. It is easier to accept male ideas rather than female ideas.” Therefore the decision to have a female run the JAD workshop was insensitive to this cultural characteristic which meant that the participants, particularly the senior male finance department managers would not have afforded as much respect to Kate as they would have to a male facilitator. Furthermore they would have afforded more respect to an older male facilitator than to a young female facilitator like Kate.

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266 Part 1, Chapter 2, p. 35.
267 Part 1, Chapter 2, p. 35.
269 Part 1, Chapter 2, p. 35.
Petrus’s appointment was a significant case in point: he had been asked to come out of retirement by senior OIL managers because the project was important to OIL and his presence would therefore add prestige to the project. In contrast, achievement cultures justify status on the basis of achievement and skill. Accordingly Greg Wong was committed to staffing the project with consultants who had the best experience and who he could convince to make the long flight from the US to Indonesia. Greg Wong did not consider that a young female facilitator would compromise the success of the JAD workshop. Trompenaars’ research suggests that the JAD workshop outcome would have been different if a senior male facilitator had been used instead of a junior female facilitator.

Furthermore, CGL did not assign to the PHOENIX Project an executive of equal status to Petrus. Darsono is shown on the organization chart at the same level however he was not the same age nor did he have the same seniority or years of experience as Petrus. As the project progressed the two most senior CGL project managers, Greg Wong (CGL Practice Leader) and Ray (BPR Assignment Manager), were not on the project site on a daily basis. This further weakened the senior ranks of the consulting team. Therefore, the OIL Steering Committee and the PHOENIX Project management may well have thought that CGL was not serious about their project. Added to this was the insult to Petrus by a young female consultant in front of junior staff. This would have convinced the OIL Steering Committee and Hendri that CGL was not committed to the PHOENIX Project.

On the other hand CGL had staffed the project with the best consultants they could find regardless of gender, age or geographic location. As a demonstration of their commitment CGL had flown their consultants from all over the Pacific to work on the PHOENIX Project. Rather than being appreciative the client was sceptical of the worth of each of the consultants. OIL’s relationship with CGL was compromised by CGL’s organization structure and approach to staffing and mutual lack of cross-cultural understanding and experience.

**Ethnocentrism**

Both Kate (CGL consultant and JAD facilitator; female, US national) and Fa Leung (CGL consultant; male Singaporean national) had concerns about the probability of the JAD workshop agenda being successful in Indonesia. They noted the practice of junior and female members deferring to senior males in Indonesia. However, Greg Wong (CGL Practice Leader; male born Hong Kong Chinese, now a US national) did not heed these warnings and did not accept that the Western cultural values underpinning the structure of the JAD workshop were incompatible with Indonesian values. Even though the high probability of failure was brought to his attention he ignored this advice and proceeded, without modifying the JAD workshop.

Greg Wong did not test the reservations expressed by Kate and Fa Leung even though he was in a position to do so. He believed that junior Indonesian women would (or should) contribute in an open meeting with their senior male managers present. He simply assumed that the Indonesians would want to work as time efficiently as he did. It is ironical that Greg Wong, who is Hong Kong Chinese and who had learned how to
work in the West insisted that the Indonesians “… (had) to learn our culture”\textsuperscript{272} in order to work effectively. However, he did not work this way himself even though being of Hong Kong Chinese extraction he had the cultural heritage, background and language skills to work cross-culturally. It should be noted that although Greg Wong did not speak Bahasa Indonesian he did speak a dialect of Cantonese in addition to being fluent in the English language.

From time to time Greg Wong indicated by what he said that he understood cross-cultural issues: he referred to two systems and he verbalised empathy for the clients’ approach. However, in his decision-making he functioned in the Western individualistic mode where his only concern was his own performance. This was demonstrated by his practice of convincing many consultants to travel to Indonesia to work on the project and his treatment of these consultants once they had arrived on the client site. Many stayed only a few weeks and then left because Greg Wong did not invest time in their induction training: to the country, the client, the OIL organization culture or the project. He took no account of cross-cultural, environmental, training, briefing, and induction matters. As a result the consultants did not work effectively and did not stay. Kate’s experience supports this finding.

Greg Wong’s behaviour was ethnocentric as he favoured a Western cultural domain at the expense of an Eastern cultural domain. This disposition to act ethnocentrically, despite evidence that his approach was creating significant problems for the project, took on a negative condition and became destructive as it was used to shut others out and rebuff change.

**JAD Outcomes**

Through this incident we are in a position to observe cross-cultural consulting in progress. A skilled but junior female consultant had flown half way around the world to facilitate an important workshop. The workshop failed partly because the junior workshop attendees did not participate with their managers present. There are several reasons for this. As Trompenaars notes it is common in ascription cultures, such as Indonesia, for achievement to be recognized when children are younger.\textsuperscript{273} However, when children grow up they are taught to consider the wider context rather than simply achieve for one’s own good at the expense of the greater good. The senior managers would have expected to be treated with respect. Being assembled with junior staff and addressed by a young female did not express the respect they expected. Hofstede’s concept of “power-distance” is also relevant to this incident because of the inappropriate combination of junior and senior staff together with the presence of a young female facilitator.

In this incident two junior CGL consultants predicted what would occur and provided a cross-cultural justification of why they expected it to be so. Their advice was ignored and the workshop failed. Accordingly the workshop facilitator was not able to successfully play her role as she would have done had the workshop been run in the US, Canada or Australia. Nor did the participants play the roles expected of them.

\textsuperscript{272} Gathered from page 3 of GregWong1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 138.

\textsuperscript{273} Part 1, Chapter 2, p. 35.
The participants’ roles were conditioned, not by the JAD management tool but by their culture. As predicted the workshop outcome resulted in only senior managers speaking to Kate (CGL consultant, JAD facilitator; female US national). The detailed user requirements for the computer system were impossible to collect from the junior participants in the workshop. The senior managers could only speak in general terms about accounting procedures, as they did not have the detailed procedural knowledge known to the junior female accounting staff. These junior female accounting staff would have provided this information to their managers had the circumstances been different. The consultants also had the opportunity to explore what these circumstances could be but they did not do so.

The proposal that Kate (CGL consultant, JAD facilitator; female US national) work with Petrus (senior respected male Indonesian OIL Project Manager) was a directive. However, Kate misunderstood this directive. She did not understand that in Indonesia it was appropriate to work through the management hierarchy and that this is what she was being told. Working from the top down would have provided her with the access to the detailed accounting procedures possessed by junior female accounting staff. Kate did not understand that working through Petrus was an indirect way of gaining access to the knowledge she required. Instead she interpreted the directive to mean that Petrus had this knowledge. Kate was a skilled facilitator who could only see the workshop through Western eyes and could not interpret cross-culturally.

As noted above the JAD workshop failed for several reasons all stemming from the underlying failure of the workshop to accommodate the values of another culture. The consulting role of facilitator, central to the success of the workshop, could not be enacted. Nor could the culturally defined roles of participants be enacted. The senior managers from the client, including Petrus, were not confident that a junior female consultant could achieve a great deal in two or three hours. The junior female accounting staff knew their role and that their contribution would be peripheral and that their managers would work out the details with the consultants. Hendri, the PHOENIX Project Director and his project managers were sceptical that a junior female consultant could understand their culture, their language and their business in an afternoon. The structure of the workshop indicated to the OIL employees, male, female, junior and senior alike that the management consultants were out of touch with the Indonesian way of working. Hendri and his project managers believed that a young woman who had been in the country for barely 48 hours knew little or nothing about their organization and business and therefore could not possibly make a serious contribution to a discussion of their future. This is consistent with Trompenaars’ research, who found that the Indonesian culture valued the past and the present more than the future. This means that Indonesians acknowledge that the future is shaped by knowledge of the past. Therefore, a detailed knowledge of the rich history of the OIL company business and organization is essential to understand what is possible in the future. The Indonesians considered that knowledge of these matters was required by Kate in order to determine possible futures. This approach contrasts with the US culture where the future is valued more than the past. To a Western culture Kate’s knowledge of the rich history of the OIL company business was not a consideration when contemplating its possible futures. The Western term “facilitator” has value free connotations (which are free of the constraints of the past), which make sense to Western cultures that value impartiality and freedom of expression as a means of defining possible futures. However, the term “facilitator” values freedom of
expression to everyone present over the privilege of expression afforded to significant people who determined who and what we are today. Indonesians regard a “facilitator” who does not know of critical past events, actions and people as inappropriately qualified to contribute to the future. Therefore the OIL accounting management would have felt that the management consultants were lightweight and lacked credibility. They would also have felt that it was impolite and impractical to expect them to meaningfully discuss their business and their company at such short notice and in such a public manner.

As a result the workshop failed to achieve its objectives and seriously undermined the consulting group’s credibility. This very serious failure was an indictment of the credibility of CGL. Because CGL had developed the JAD workshop as proprietary intellectual capital this was all the more the case. It was a management tool, which had been published, in the academic literature by CGL. CGL consultants had written books about JAD. CGL had conceived and developed the technique and yet in this environment it was an expensive and public failure.

The JAD incident provides further insights into CGL. Its failure undermined the credibility of the CGL leadership and in particular demonstrated the inexperience and incompetence of Greg Wong (CGL Practice Leader). Only one of the consultants had significant consulting experience. The rest had a medium level of experience and only one, Fa Leung (CGL consultant; Singaporean national) effectively worked cross-culturally in this project. This lack of consulting knowledge combined with little or no cross-cultural experience made the work extremely difficult for CGL and its assignees. Even their most experienced consultant Ray, the BPR Assignment Manager reflected on this experience when he said, “In the years I’ve been doing this work, this has been one of the most difficult clients I’ve ever worked with.”274 The lack of cross-cultural consulting experience is the primary reason why CGL interventions were so ill conceived, poorly executed and dismally managed.

274 Gathered from page 39 of Group1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 177.
Chapter 16 - The PC Incident

Context
This incident occurred in the closing weeks of the project. At this phase of the project the various teams had worked together for many months. One day a PC\textsuperscript{275} was found to be missing from the offices of one of the OIL software implementation teams. It was suspected that the PC had been swapped with a PC from another team in a nearby room. The reader should be aware that new PC’s were provided to the PHOENIX Project team at the commencement of the project. All the PHOENIX PC’s looked alike. One of the team members had data stored on the PC that was missing. He was extremely anxious to locate the missing PC so he could retrieve his data.

The practice of storing PHOENIX data on a PC was a breach of PHOENIX Project Director’s directive to store all Project information on the PHOENIX Project server: no data was to be stored on individual PC’s because all PHOENIX Project data was to be backed up on a regular basis from one central PC. The Project Director’s reasons concerned integrity and protection of the PHOENIX Project data. Accordingly he directed that all PHOENIX personnel were to store project data on the central PHOENIX Project server.\textsuperscript{276} All PHOENIX Project PC’s were connected to the PHOENIX Project server.

The software implementation team, which had lost the data, is not shown on the organization chart in Appendix A. However the team was structured in a similar manner to the Software Implementation Team shown in Figure 5 on page 96 and reproduced as Appendix A. The Assignment Manager for this team was a manager from the USA and the consultants were OIL assignees of Indonesian nationality. The second team involved in this incident was the Business Process Reengineering (BPR) team. The team structure is shown on the organization chart in Figure 5 on page 96 and reproduced as Appendix A. The reader should note that one of the consultants shown on this project organization chart is Malcolm, the author of this research.

The PC Incident
The software implementation team suspected that the BPR team had taken their PC. They did not know why the BPR team had done this. In addition they were not entirely certain that the BPR team had indeed taken the PC, which contained their data. Unknown to the software implementation team concerned the BPR team had taken the PC in question. They had swapped one of their own PC’s for this PC.

The reasons for doing this were related to the resolution of a PC cabling problem. When the faulty power cable was identified the PC was returned to the software

\textsuperscript{275} A “PC” is an acronym for a desk top computer commonly referred to as a PC. PC is a shortened version of the term Personal Computer hence PC.

\textsuperscript{276} Note that a “server” is simply another name for a large PC. It is called a “server” because it provides backup “service” for all the PC’s connected to it. The PHOENIX Project had a “server” to which all project PC’s were connected. All PHOENIX Project data was to be stored on this PHOENIX Project server. The data on the PHOENIX Project server was backed up every night.
implementation team room. However, in the process this PC, being identical, had been inadvertently swapped with a BPR team PC. The management consultant responsible for this action was a BPR team member. This team member, Malcolm was management consultant reporting to the BPR Assignment Manager Ray. Malcolm, an Australian male was also the researcher and the author of this study.

Speaking in that role the reader should note that I had no idea the software implementation team PC contained data. In any event it was my understanding that all PC’s were backed up to the central PHOENIX server and contained no personal data. Therefore, theoretically at least it should not have mattered which PC was returned.

The software implementation team endeavoured to locate their PC and their data, and suspecting the BPR team had taken it, had searched the BPR team room. This search action had taken place after the BPR team had left work for the day. The software implementation team did not locate their PC or their data and still suspecting the BPR team of taking it had approached the Indonesian CGL Project Manager to resolve the matter. In order to approach him they would have had to firstly approach their Assignment Manager who in turn would have approached the CGL Project Manager. In due course he approached Ray, the leader of the BPR team.

Ray had no knowledge of my actions and on overhearing the conversation between Darsono and Ray, I volunteered that I had taken the PC. I explained that I had used the software implementation team’s PC in a successful effort to resolve a troublesome cable problem. I noted that it was entirely possible that when I had replaced the PC’s I may have inadvertently swapped them.

At this point, I immediately sought a resolution to the situation by swapping the PC’s back again. This action took about five minutes. This being accomplished I immediately forgot about the matter. Later in the week I was advised by Darsono of the clandestine efforts of the software implementation team to locate their PC and retrieve their data. We were intrigued why the software implementation team did not approach us directly to resolve the matter and we considered it strange that they had taken several days to resolve a problem which Westerners would have resolved in minutes. As a result the PC incident then became a subject of much conversation and reflection amongst the Western management consultants.

The Characters
The characters involved in the PC incident and its implications included Ray, the BPR Assignment Manager, Darsono, the CGL Project Manager, several junior OIL employees who were assigned to the Software Implementation Team as consultants, Mal, a consultant assigned to the BPR team who was also the author of this study and Aline, a local female Indonesian national who was acquainted with and a friend of the Western management consultants. I will now review the roles backgrounds, dominant dispositions and cross-cultural characteristics of each of these characters in relation to the PC incident.

CGL Assignment Manager – Ray
The organization chart shows Ray directing the work of the BPR team and reporting to Hendri. He is shown on the PHOENIX Project organization chart on the same level as Greg Wong. However, within the CGL business Ray reported to Greg Wong and was subordinate to him.

Ray was an experienced consultant who had been recruited by CGL. He was of Australian nationality with some experience consulting in Asian countries. He had worked for a large accounting firm in Melbourne as a management consultant for seven years prior to joining CGL. In contrast to Greg Wong (the CGL Practice Leader described in detail below in the PC incident) and Darsono (the CGL Project Manager described in detail in the JAD incident) he had considerable consulting experience. Darsono and Greg Wong regarded themselves as professional managers whereas Ray regarded himself as a consultant first and then as a leader and a manager. In his BPR Assignment Management role he would have controlled the administrative tasks associated with the project and concerning the consultants reporting to him as well as providing the leadership and direction required of a senior and experienced consultant. He was expected for example to decide what work to do, who would do it, when it would be done and who would be interviewed.

Ray had a directive style, which reflected a confidence in his professional consulting skills. On the other hand Greg Wong and Darsono had little or no experience as consultants and a great deal of experience as professional managers: where they worked with junior employees and exercised authority on matters referred to them by junior employees. For example managers frequently have financial authority delegated to them which authorizes them to authorize department expenditure on such items as purchase of travel and sundry expenses.

Ray’s role as Assignment Manager for the BPR team provided him with considerable discretion with respect to the BPR project scope and scale. As a result he determined the project plan and the work schedule for each consultant during the duration of the project. His position provided him with the authority to direct the daily work of the consultants on his project. He considered that the terms of the PHOENIX contract between CGL and OIL provided him with this authority.

Ray enjoyed the freedom of making decisions without collaboration with others. He unilaterally decided who and when to interview consultants for the project. He decided: who would be assigned to the project, data collected from the client, questions asked of the client, when client interviews would be conducted, how the data would be analysed and presented back to the client. He considered these decisions to be the prerogative of the Assignment Manager.

Hofstede’s individualism – collectivism parameter is relevant to Ray’s bias for action, noted above. Typically Western cultures are comfortable with an individual making decisions. However in Eastern societies such as Indonesia the decision making process is not so simple. This results in an increase in complexity, which brings into focus context and therefore a multitude of factors, to be considered in order to resolve matters requiring a decision. The BPR team organization conformed to Western management principles and cultural values. For example Ray’s role as BPR team leader was granted to him on the basis that his consulting experience far exceeded any other consultant. Because he was the most experienced he was not challenged for the
position of BPR Assignment Manager. Therefore he was considered the most appropriate candidate, by Western standards, to hold this position in the BPR team.

In contrast Darsono (the Indonesian CGL male Project Manager) did not hold his position by virtue of experience or knowledge of package implementation. He was offered his position because of his prior management position and stature within the CGL business. The basis for the conferring of management status is different between the two cultures and conforms to Trompenaars’ research findings that Eastern countries afford status on the basis of ascription whereas Western countries confer status on the basis of achievement and experience. This research was reflected in the narrative. Darsono was a manager because he had been a manager previously whereas Ray was a manager because he was the most experienced BPR consultant. I shall now discuss the role played by Darsono with respect to the PC incident.

**CGL Project Manager – Darsono**

Darsono was an employee of CGL Indonesia and was located in their Jakarta office. He, like the Western consultants, was away from his home and isolated from the familiar environment of home, family and local community. He had been an administrative manager within CGL for many years.

Darsono had always worked in head office in an administrative role. We know that Darsono had worked with Western managers because CGL was a US multinational. He would have been required to work with Western managers from the USA because he would have had to report to them about the results of the Indonesian operation of CGL. We know that Darsono had cross-cultural work experience and he could speak English and Bahasa Indonesian. It is worth noting that his experience of working with Western managers had always been with Indonesia being the dominant culture.

Darsono had not worked on a client site as a Project Manager prior to the PHOENIX Project. The PHOENIX Project was his first professional services role. In essence he was reinventing himself professionally and using the PHOENIX Project as a vehicle for re-skilling himself in the role of project manager.

Darsono represented the business interests of the host country of CGL. He occupied an influential role on PHOENIX project and was expected to manage the financial, relationship and business interests of his employer, CGL Indonesia. These interests were at times at odds with the decisions made by other managers. For example, in relative terms Greg Wong (the CGL Practice Leader and the Software Implementation Team Assignment Manager) and Ray (the BPR Assignment Manager) are shown on the project organization chart as subordinate to Darsono. However, Darsono had a less powerful position than Greg Wong and Ray. His role was advisory, as he did not have the power to hire and fire consultants. He could make suggestions and recommendations but he could not decide who was going to work on the project and who was not.

Darsono adopted an indirect approach to the resolution of issues. The three senior managers, all Indonesian, Hendri (PHOENIX Project Director), Petrus (OIL Project Manager) and Sukino (OIL Project Manager) responded to this style of management and respected Darsono for his efforts to control the management consultants. Darsono
fostered a comprehensive relationship with Hendri, Petrus and Sukino (OIL Project Manager). He met with them socially and endeavoured to understand them and the OIL business.

Darsono’s behaviour is consistent with the research of Trompenaars who notes that the Eastern approach to the resolution of problems is deductive. This approach is characterised by a circling around and discussion of general matters before discussion of specific issues. These general matters pertain to who you are, your position in life and your values in life before considering relatively smaller and specific issues such as the terms and conditions of the current contract or deal. As Trompenaars notes this approach is designed to be time efficient as it avoids misunderstandings early in the relationship thereby avoiding for example commitment to a long term relationship which is not going to work because of fundamental differences in approach, values and understanding.

Hall refers to this as high context involvement and Trompenaars defines this as diffuse involvement and distinguishes also between public and private space and noting that Eastern cultures have less public space than Western cultures. In this case Darsono worked in Hendri’s private space in an endeavour to learn how to deal more effectively with Hendri in the commercial domain.

Darsono, in contrast to Ray and Greg Wong, did not occupy an open plan office and share space with one of the many PHOENIX project teams. He isolated himself in an office and was therefore inaccessible to the consultants except on a formal basis. One had to make an appointment in order to interact with him. Therefore, his interaction with the junior consultants was minimal. He only conferred with other managers such as Assignment Managers like Greg Wong and Ray.

As noted in Part 1, and in the introductory comments to Part 3, consulting organizations encourage the participation of all consultants in the resolution of client issues. Therefore, it is common practice that consulting projects favour open plan offices with no walls between desks because this tends to foster open communication. I was party to and aware of many of the issues which crossed Ray’s desk because of the propinquitous location of my desk to his. This meant that I was privileged to many of the conversations in which he was engaged.

Hofstede’s power distance cultural value dimension is relevant to this style of interaction. As Hofstede notes Western countries are low power distance countries characterised by little differentiation between those with the power and those without the power. This contrasts with high power distance countries, such as Indonesia where those who are in positions of power and authority are not readily accessible to those without power. Hofstede has found that in these countries change is slower because of the interests and respect for the status quo.

Despite Darsono’s efforts the PHOENIX Project management was isolated from and professionally threatened by the independent actions of Greg Wong and Ray. Furthermore, they were also isolated from the independent actions taken by the respective teams directed by Greg Wong and Ray. Greg Wong and Ray independently initiated work programs to address the commitments laid out in their
contract with OIL. They did not consider their independent styles would leave the project management isolated, uncomfortable and in a position of ignorance.

Greg Wong and Ray did not consider others when making decisions because their primary focus was their contractual responsibilities and nothing else mattered to them. This behaviour is consistent with Western cultures and with Trompenaars’ research, which found that Western managers work to the letter of the law and Eastern managers’ work according to the circumstances which includes and affects contractual obligations. The Eastern emphasis supports a view that reality is largely outside of one’s control and therefore one has to accommodate the circumstances. This approach contrasts with a Western emphasis on contractual obligations, which are reflected in artefacts such as schedules, plans and objectives. These are regarded as reality and all efforts are made to meet the schedule, achieve the plan and obtain the objectives. The difference is a world which is perceived as either controlled or controlling. Western cultures perceive the world as controlled and manage to this reality. Accordingly contractual obligations, schedules, objectives and legal commitments are regarded as reality and all efforts are made to work as if this was the reality.

Darsono did not directly accuse Ray or anyone on Ray’s team of stealing the PC but rather he approached Ray carefully and politely with respect to the matter of the missing PC. The discussion occurred in the BPR team room after most of the BPR consultants had left work for the day. Ray and I were the only people present when Darsono asked Ray if he knew anything about the missing PC. Ray acknowledged that he did not know anything and because I was standing nearby he referred Darsono to me. It is consistent with the Indonesian cultural convention of avoiding loss of face that Darsono chose to speak to Ray at a time when I was nearby. Darsono may well have known that I had taken the PC and approached Ray with the expectation that I would volunteer the information that it was me who had taken the PC thereby avoiding the embarrassment of approaching me directly on a delicate matter of stealing.

I shall now discuss the role played by the junior OIL employees. These employees played a central role in the PC incident and it is therefore important that the reader understand their role, background and dominant dispositions.

**Junior OIL employees**

As noted in Part 2 the (Figure 5 on page 96) does not show the four software implementation teams. The software implementation team shown on the chart were interviewed for this study, hence their inclusion there. The software implementation team on the chart had four consultants and an Assignment Manager.

There were four other software implementation teams in addition to the team which is shown on the chart. These four additional teams were structured in the same way: each consisted of four consultants and an Assignment Manager. The consultants from one of these teams were involved in the PC incident. These four consultants were OIL employees assigned to the PHOENIX Project. They were relatively junior OIL employees and were Indonesian nationals. Some had worked in the US office of OIL and many were considered to be high potential employees. Their assignment to the
PHOENIX Project was a developmental opportunity designed to further their careers by providing them with exposure to project experience.

We do not know a great deal about this group. However, they were central players in the PC incident. The problem they faced was difficult because on one hand they were in breach of the directive to not keep data on their PC’s and on the other hand they did not want to be disrespectful of the Western management consultants. Either way they had an issue with authority. They tried two strategies to resolve the matter. Firstly, they searched the Western management consultant’s team room for the PC and secondly they approached Darsono to resolve the matter. Darsono was a good choice because he was an CGL employee and an Indonesian national. He would therefore have understood how his Western management consultants worked and how to manage them in this situation.

Their behaviour, typically Eastern, demonstrated the cultural characteristics of status by ascription, indirect behaviour, and high power distance identified in the research of Trompenaars and Hofstede. They did not approach the Western consultants directly and felt that an indirect approach through Darsono was the best course of action. The Western consultants are shown on the organization chart as on the same level as themselves.

Because they were Western the management consultants were ascribed higher status and authority by the relatively junior Indonesian OIL employees. Because of this ascribed status they were considered to be distant and remote by the lower status Indonesians. However the Indonesians felt comfortable to approach Darsono (Indonesian male CGL Project Manager). Although senior to them he was an Indonesian national from CGL and therefore would have the capacity to understand their predicament and be able to approach the Western management consultants to negotiate a resolution of the matter.

**CGL Consultant - Malcolm (the author)**

In this section I shall emphasise my role with respect to the incident. However, for a broader description the reader may wish to refer to “Self in Research” at the end of the Preface. The organization chart shows I was a management consultant in the BPR team reporting to Ray who was the BPR Assignment Manager. Due to my technical background I had some experience resolving computer hardware problems. Because our team had a PC which was not working, I had volunteered to fix it.

By the simple process of substitution of good parts for suspect parts I had identified the faulty component (a power cable). To do this I required access to another machine, which I knew was working. I, therefore, borrowed a PC from a neighbouring room. When I had resolved the problem, through the process of substituting parts I returned the machine I had borrowed. However, I did not realise that I had swapped the main processing unit of the PC with an identical component from our room. When I had been advised of the problem I immediately swapped the components back again. This corrective action took about five minutes.

I had learned that “getting your hands dirty” by “having a go” was a strategy which had served me well in the past. Hofstede and Trompenaars research identify this bias
for action as a characteristic of Western cultures. They describe this parameter as “collectivism – individualism.” In this instance my bias for action compromised another team. My resolution of the problem was also typically Western and direct.

This bias for action is consistent with Trompenaars’ research, which found that developed Western cultures seek to identify universal laws, which are then followed slavishly. Deviations from these laws are then avoided at all costs. In other words attempts are made to establish “standard operating procedures” rather than take account of the context, which requires the exercise of judgement and decision-making skill. Because of my experience I believed I knew the solution to the problem. I knew the answer to the technical problem. I therefore implemented this approach without considering the cultural circumstances.

The universal laws which applied to the resolution of the technical problem worked as planned. However, I was not familiar with the laws which applied to the social and cultural context. The social environment did not sanction my technical solution. In arriving at a quick and successful technical outcome I implemented a disaster for another team which took days to be rectified.

Local Indonesian Student - Aline

Aline was a friend of the BPR Team. Whilst she was not personally involved in the PHOENIX Project in any way she provided useful insights to the incident. Janet, one of the BPR team management consultants (a white female US national) had invited Aline to join the BPR team for a meal, shortly after the PC incident. During the course of the meal the management consultants compared Aline’s interpretation of the PC incident with their Western perspective.

Aline was introduced to the BPR team by one of the OIL employees assigned to the PHOENIX Project. Aline lived with her family in the nearby Indonesian township of Cirabon. She was a young Indonesian woman in her early twenties and at the time of the interview a student attending college in Cirabon. Prior to attending college she had spent a year in Canada as an exchange student and was fluent in both English and Bahasia Indonesian. Her year in Canada had made her sensitive to and aware of differences between Indonesian and North American cultures.

Because of this experience she had the knowledge and language skills to work cross-culturally. The opportunity to speak with Aline provided the consultants and the researcher the opportunity to reflect on their actions and the actions of the client. Although Aline was not directly involved in the PC incident she was involved in discussion of the incident. Aline’s background enabled her to cross-culturally interpret Indonesian and Western perspectives for the BPR management consultants.

Analysis

The PC incident brings focus to the subtle nature of culture and how it shapes attitudes, and actions. Although a relatively minor incident it reminds us of how

277 Part 1, Chapter 2, p. 33.
powerful are the cultural forces which determined the roles of the participants. The analysis shows the tight integration between the problem resolution strategies adopted and culture.

**Context versus Content**
Trompenaars reminds us that Western cultures are often characterised as universalist whereas Eastern cultures are characterised as particularist, where context is more important than content. In this incident these characteristics are like two ocean waves, which swept up the PHOENIX participants and relentlessly crashed one against the other. Both the client and consultants were left wondering what had happened. Both parties were none the wiser and bewildered by what they considered to be simple matters. For the consultants the simple matter of fixing a PC was swamped by the client’s overreaction. The consultants found it difficult to believe that the Indonesians were so inefficient in their efforts to find the PC and the Indonesians found it difficult to believe that the consultants were so insensitive, crass and vindictive that they would by their actions leave the software implementation team exposed to ridicule and embarrassment. This reinforces the findings of Trompenaars who notes that universal Western laws are applied without consideration of social context. Indeed this is the beauty of such laws. Just like “standard operating procedures” they provide a solution which does not require any thinking: they are designed to save time and are therefore efficient within a Western culture.

**Hierarchy**
Aline observed that as a general rule Indonesians have respect for senior Western management consultants and would therefore avoid an embarrassing confrontation with them. Firstly, the Indonesians searched the BPR team room for the missing PC. Secondly, they approached Darsono who in turn approached Ray and then ultimately me, the consultant responsible. To the Indonesians this approach was direct. To Ray and me this approach was indirect. Furthermore, we could not see what all the fuss was about. Seen through Indonesian eyes their direct approach to us indicated significant displeasure at our actions. We missed this signal, because by Western standards, it was too indirect and subtle. We assumed that someone who was upset would say so and that someone who had lost a PC would say so. Aline observed that Western norms are that people are direct and say what they want. However they are not Eastern norms.

In Indonesia, it is important not to embarrass someone through any kind of overt confrontation. For the Indonesians to ask the consultants if they had taken the PC would have been an outright accusation of stealing with untenable ramifications. The Indonesians opted for the only course of action possible and searched the consultant’s workroom after they had left for the day. As the search was unsuccessful they then approached senior management. The Indonesians then indirectly communicated their displeasure, by approaching the BPR team through Darsono.

They expected the recipients of this message, the Western management consultants, to understand that their behaviour was unproductive and therefore wasteful, compromising and therefore mean spirited. However the message received was that the Western management consultants thought the Indonesians were unproductive and
wasteful of their own time. Accordingly it was thought that the Indonesians had wasted time which could otherwise have spent on the project. This miscommunication can be traced to the two different cultural perspectives colouring the message. For the Western management consultants these cultural perspectives related to control over nature, events and time. For the Indonesians these cultural perspectives related to an indirect approach associated with respect for status and the respectful distance associated with the enactment of that status.

Private and Public
Trompenaars distinguishes between the public and private space evident in Western and Eastern cultures. This incident falls into that difficult space where what is public for one culture is private for the other. To make public what is private will embarrass the party whose private space is invaded. In this instance what is public space for the consultants, the act of swapping the PC’s, is private space for the Indonesians, the act of suspecting the consultants of swapping or stealing their PC. It was a difficult decision to invade the private space, their team room, of the Western management consultants.

To not do so would have meant losing the PHOENIX project data. As the reader will recall the Project Director’s directive was that all project data was to be stored on the PHOENIX Project server. Therefore they were in breach of his directive. On the one hand they would have been embarrassed to admit that they had breached the directive and lost PHOENIX project data. On the other hand they would also have been embarrassed to accuse the Western management consultants of stealing their PC and data.

They were caught in a double bind, which was not of their making. They felt compromised by the consultants who had crassly and thoughtlessly put them into this position. They resolved the dilemma by searching inconspicuously for the missing PC and then indirectly approaching Ray through Darsono. By Indonesian standards such an approach should have embarrassed Ray and me. However, the subtlety of the indirect approach was lost due to our Western focus. My immediate response was to resort to direct action and swap the PC’s, again without any collaboration or concern for how it would look to others and how it would affect others. The Indonesian team would again have thought the management consultants were clumsy, insensitive and crass. As a result this incident was not resolved in a satisfactory manner for either team. Instead, both teams were left feeling resentful, invaded, and less trusting of each other.

Degrees of Freedom
Hari (a male Indonesian consultant assigned by OIL to the BPR team) and Fa Leung (a male Singaporean CGL consultant assigned to the Software Implementation Team) had the ability to work cross-culturally. This incident may have been resolved differently if either of these consultants had been involved. Each spoke both English and Bahasia Indonesian and had the ability to understand and effectively mediate between Western and Eastern cultures. This capability provided them with additional cross-cultural degrees of freedom to understand, negotiate and communicate.
However they were not involved and those who were did not understand the cross-cultural implications of their respective actions.
Chapter 17 – Impact of Main Characters

Impact on the Consulting Project
In an endeavour to meet the research question of showing how cultural characteristics and differences shaped consulting roles, the consulting process and consulting outcomes we shall review the roles of the main characters. The objective of this chapter is to provide the reader with a comprehensive analysis of the main players and consider their impact on the project as a whole. I begin with a comprehensive review of Hari, who was an OIL employee assigned to the PHOENIX Project. Hari was not discussed earlier in relation to the JAD or PC incidents. However, Hari had a major impact on the quality of the project and demonstrated the critical contribution of a hybrid consultant who had the capability to work cross culturally.

Lastly, I extend my review of the management roles of Darsono, Ray and Greg Wong. These characters’ backgrounds, roles and dominant dispositions were discussed in relation to their involvement in the JAD and PC incidents. I now extend this analysis and consider their key relationships and impact on the PHOENIX Project. Finally, I conclude by pulling together the threads of the research and the data and in the process tease out the key findings of the research.
OIL Consultant – Hari

Hari was an employee of the client OIL. He was professionally qualified as an accountant and had also worked in this capacity for OIL in their US offices in Dallas Texas. He had held responsible management positions within the OIL accounting department and was highly regarded by his superiors for this contribution and his capability. Because of this Hari’s assignment to the project was an indication of the importance of the project to the OIL organization.

Hari’s role was to represent the interests of OIL within the BPR team. In addition it was expected that participation in the project would be a developmental experience. In the process it was expected that he would learn how to work with consultants and how to do business process reengineering. In a similar manner to Fa Leung he understood two cultures. He demonstrated the ability to work cross-culturally but like Fa Leung was frustrated in this role. For example, his contribution to the planning of the BPR consulting work was not sought after or valued by Ray. Notwithstanding this frustration he managed to make a significant contribution to the quality of the BPR project. In particular his knowledge of the OIL business, and ability to influence the OIL Steering Committee were critically important during the latter phases of the project.

The work in the latter phases of the project required the crafting of project plans and recommendations. These had to be worded in a manner which reflected the practicalities of implementation. Hari played a significant role in ensuring these project plans were acceptable to the client. In addition to the management of his daily contribution to the work of the team he developed a detailed understanding of the consulting tools, techniques and methodologies. He negotiated with Ray notwithstanding Ray’s intimidating direct and blunt style. Because he had developed the ability to work cross-culturally he understood that this intimidating direct and blunt style was culturally determined. The consultants did not intimidate him and he did not use an indirect approach if he considered it ineffective. For example, during the final days of the project he directly challenged the position held by the consulting team.

Hari’s rationale reflected a deep understanding of OIL’s business together with an insightful perspective of the challenges faced by the consultants. During the final presentation of project recommendations to the PHOENIX Steering Committee Hari indicated that the recommendations represented direction and not finely tuned implementation plans. His personal endorsement of this line of questioning by the committee ensured that they understood the strengths of the consulting report and the further work it required if its recommendations were to be carried forward. His contribution to the analysis of the work of the consulting team provided the Steering Committee with the knowledge to adjust their perspective on the report’s recommendations. Where the work reflected excesses and points of disagreement Hari provided the Steering Committee with access to the direction taken by the team thereby providing a credible translation.

I shall now review the role played by Darsono. A glance at the organizational chart shows Darsono reporting to the Project Manager. Darsono is important because he is the most senior Indonesian assigned to the project from CGL.
CGL Project Manager - Darsono

Darsono had a difficult role. He did not have power to direct the work of Greg Wong (the CGL Practice Leader and Software Implementation Team Assignment Manager) and Ray (the BPR Assignment Manager) because he did not have the experience or knowledge to understand how to do the work. Because he was the most senior local manager from CGL he represented the interests of the local company. The local company “CGL Indonesia” wanted to maximise revenue and minimize costs. However, Greg Wong and Ray had the power to determine what was done and at what cost to the project. This was not in Darsono’s interests as he had responsibility for the profitability of the project yet he had no control over the costs of the sub projects managed by Greg Wong and Ray. (The Software Implementation Team was managed by Greg Wong and the BPR Team was managed by Ray). On the other hand Greg Wong and Ray carried no responsibility for the PHOENIX Project profitability. They were responsible for providing the consulting services with little consideration for cost. As a result Greg Wong and Ray made decisions which were not cost effective or in the best financial interests of OIL or CGL Indonesia.

Therefore, relative to his peer group in the project management structure Darsono was in many respects powerless. Greg Wong, Ray and Hendri (OIL senior male employee of Indonesian nationality whose role was as Project Manager) had the authority to assign consultants to the project or take them off the project. Darsono could only question the wisdom of so doing. Darsono found himself in this position because he did not have the line management experience to understand how to manage a project of this size. In addition he did not have the necessary software implementation, BPR experience, knowledge or skills to question the decisions of Greg Wong or Ray.

Greg Wong and Ray considered Darsono’ indirect style to be avoidance of his project management responsibilities. In contrast, Darsono considered Ray’s direct approach as offensive and rude. The Western strategy appeared to the Western consultants to be more effective. However, embarrassing questions and direct action, which resulted in short term gains without thought for others, were remembered when the contract was due for renewal. Greg Wong and Ray made decisions which did not take account of cross-cultural differences. As a result the contract was not renewed.

Darsono was perceived by the Western managers and consultants as not having the conviction and skill to get things done. Because of this Darsono frustrated the Assignment Managers, Greg Wong (Greg Wong had dual roles as CGL Practice Leader and as Software Implementation Team Assignment Manager) and Ray (BPR team Assignment Manager). In their opinion his inability to resolve simple logistical issues, such as finding a room for the team and a house for the female consultants, led to frustration with his leadership and doubts about his capability as

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278 The PHOENIX Project Organisation Structure shows Darsono as PHOENIX Project Manager. Greg Wong and Ray reported to Darsono.
an effective Project Manager. As noted above this perception contrasts different approaches to the task of management, relationships and time.

During the initial stages of the project Greg Wong and Ray (both CGL Assignment Managers) were asked by Hendri (OIL Project Director) and Petrus (OIL Project Manager) to reduce the consulting team headcount and billable days. Their response was to pass the matter onto Darsono (CGL Project Manager, Indonesian male) for resolution. They expected Darsono to negotiate a solution with Hendri and Petrus. However, they did not endeavour to find out why Hendri and Petrus made this request so early in the project. Their actions were consistent with Western managers who are expected to maximize their contribution in the short term. As a result of this attitude Greg Wong and Ray (CGL Assignment Managers) treated Darsono (CGL Project Manager) as a messenger boy who simply relayed their requests to Hendri (OIL Project Director) and Petrus (OIL Project Manager).

Eastern managers would have regarded Darsono, Petrus and Hendri’s requests as demands and not as requests. As Trompenaars has noted, Eastern organizations value the collective and therefore managers would not make decisions which would compromise the project and compromise their senior colleagues. In this situation the Western managers optimised their own performance at the expense of another manager on the same project. Greg Wong did just this when he ignored the repeated requests from Darsono, Petrus and Hendri to reduce his consulting costs by reducing the number of consultants he was bringing onto the project. Instead he did just the opposite and continued to bring in as many consultants to the project as possible in order to increase his consulting revenue targets.

Ray characterised Darsono’ approach to issues as non-confrontational and speculated that this behaviour was a “cultural thing.” Notwithstanding this insight, Ray still expected Darsono to be confronting. Greg Wong also expected this confronting behaviour of Darsono and in an uncompromising moment reminded him “you have to learn our culture.” Both Ray and Greg Wong expected Darsono to adopt a confronting style like theirs. However they did not demonstrate a preference to learn his culture and in the process demonstrated an ethnocentric attitude. Their ethnocentric attitude overshadowed their rationality by denying another equally valid viewpoint. They demonstrated a belief that the Western culture was primary to all explanations of reality. By refusing to approve and work with Darsono’ indirect approach to the management of problems Greg Wong and Ray discriminated against Darsono because it did not correspond with their approach.

Notwithstanding this it is noteworthy that Darsono’ approach to the Western managers (Greg Wong and Ray) was consistently non-confrontational. Like Greg Wong and Ray, Darsono was unable to work within the parameters of the other culture, in spite of his cross-cultural working experience. Unlike Hari and Fa Leung, Darsono did not have highly developed cross-cultural skills. Hari particularly was able to work in both cultural modes. He could be confronting with

279 Gathered from page 11 of Ray1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 138.
280 Gathered from page 3 of GregWong1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 138.
Western managers or discreet and just as effective in his native culture. Because of this Hari was able to have a greater impact on the project than Darsono, even though Hari’s position was subordinate to Darsono. In the Western parameters of achievement over ascription, Hari was afforded a higher status than Darsono by the Western management consultants.

**CGL Assignment Manager - Ray**

With respect to his relationship with others in the project, Ray defined these relationship boundaries very closely and managed the scope of the project with rigour. Issues which threatened to compromise his plans for the project were classified as out of scope and promptly sent back to the originator. Accordingly he managed time, task and people ruthlessly. Ray vigorously resisted Petrus’s and Hendri’s attempts to deviate from the contract terms and conditions (see page 135, of the narrative in Part 2). His own responsibilities were attended to diligently, attentively and tirelessly. As a result his team managed to bring in their project on time and at first glance with ready acceptance by the client.

Ray was brutally truthful to his Western cultural heritage. With respect to attempts to delay the project he responded directly and forcefully by resisting demands to train OIL assignees in the consulting methodology, tools and techniques. He also resisted numerous requests to reduce the number of days and the number of consultants assigned to the project. Insistence by Petrus (CGL Project Manager) to involve the OIL assignees in the consulting process for training purposes resulted in Ray’s impatient response that “we just can’t afford to wait.”

Ray’s actions support the research of Trompenaars who notes that Western cultures regard time as a resource to be valued. Ray considered the contract and the associated schedule established the work domain for him and the client. The client also regarded the contract and work schedule as important but had different approaches to achieving the project objectives.

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Petrus (the senior male Indonesian Project Manager) intended to honour the obligations enshrined in the contract and work schedule by using Ray’s consultants to train OIL people. Petrus knew that the consultants did not know how the OIL organization was structured or how the oil business worked. He knew they were unfamiliar with the OIL management and staff. In contrast, Petrus had a lifetime of experience in the oil business and working with the OIL organization. He believed that this knowledge was the key to the success of the project. However his experience did not include the implementation of software packages. He relied on the experience of the consultants to provide this skill. It was his expectation that the CGL management consultants would train the OIL employees assigned to the project. OIL employees had the OIL organization knowledge, and he considered that after receiving training from CGL they would also have the software implementation skills required to complete the project.

Petrus’s approach relied on the contractual obligations of the CGL consultants to train the OIL assignees. Ray’s approach relied on the work schedule and contractual commitments to complete the project on time. He regarded the commitment to train the OIL assignees as secondary to completing the project on time. Ray, in his forthright and direct style made his intentions clear and put Petrus on notice when he said “You've got to deliver on time and you know there's no question if you don't deliver on time, we've got to deliver on time and it's whatever it takes.”

It was this cultural parameter which underpinned Ray’s approach to the consulting project and it was these differences in approach which established the conflicted situation between CGL and their client OIL. Trompenaars’ research identifies this cultural value and contrasts Eastern and Western approaches to time as either synchronous or discrete. As noted in Part 1 Easterners consider the quality of time to be important whereas Westerners consider time to be a commodity to be valued and used. Ray valued time with money and had the position and the power to determine what would be done, when and by whom. In contrast Petrus did not have the power to implement his approach.

As described in Part 2 all consulting projects have five phases. The output from the first phase “defining the commitments” is a contract. How the commitments specified in the contract are satisfied is largely determined in the second phase of a consulting project. As previously noted the second phase is called “Planning the thinking and doing”. In this phase the CGL assignment managers defined how the work would be completed. The last three phases of the consulting process are execution phases.

Both Assignment Managers, Ray (BPR Assignment Manager) and Greg Wong (Software Implementation Team Assignment Manager) were in a position of power and authority to determine what work would be completed. They did this by “Planning the thinking and doing”. The OIL project managers and Darsono did what they could to influence this phase of the project. However Greg Wong and Ray regarded their actions as requests due to the indirect method of communication. Most

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282 Gathered from page 16 of Ray1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 129.
283 The reader may wish to refer to Part 2 page 92 for a more detailed explanation of the five phases of a consulting project. For the purposes of this part of the analysis only phase 2, the Planning Phase is central to our concern.
of these requests were ignored, all were resisted and none were adopted. The critical phase, which determined how and what was done was the second phase, “Planning the thinking and doing”. Petrus (OIL Project Manager), Hendri (OIL Project Director), Sukino (OIL Project Manager) and Darsono (CGL Project Manager) had little or no control over this phase. As a result the planning phase did not incorporate their ideas.

As noted earlier Trompenaars’ research showed that Eastern cultures consider the quality of time important. In the process Eastern cultures take into consideration the past, present and future when making decisions in the present. Trompenaars argues that an Indonesian will consider a work schedule to be flexible and therefore adapt the schedule to accommodate events. However Petrus’s requests to reduce the number of consulting days were considered by Ray as reductions in the CGL commitment to the project. Only when pressed did Ray finally acquiesce to Petrus’s demands to reduce the number of consulting days. Ray’s response was to eliminate 15 days originally scheduled for a task called “cost allocation”. In direct response to this request and because he equated time with money Ray also reduced the number of consulting days he was on the client site. His reaction was “bugger it, I’m going home. I’m not going to burn up free consulting time.” His attitude is noteworthy because he ignored the Indonesian attempts to renegotiate without understanding what they were trying to achieve. He demonstrated that his response was strongly conditioned by a characteristically Western bias for action, compared to a bias for behaving in a characteristically Eastern manner consistent with role and context.

Ray had no concern for the embarrassment felt by Petrus and the impact on others when he left the project for 15 days. Petrus and Hendri did not understand why Ray considered 15 days so important. The contract between OIL and CGL was for a period of two years, and 15 days was not a lot of time considering the length of the contract. They expected Ray to be flexible and to alter his work schedule to allow for such a small change. Petrus and Hendri regarded the relationship as much more than a commercial commitment. It represented a long-term commitment between the companies, and required mutual accommodation by both parties. This understanding was not reciprocated by Ray who was only concerned with short-term performance and certainly he had no concern whatsoever for how others might be impacted or how they might feel. The result was that the original contract was not extended. The message that the Indonesian senior managers received was that of a lack of interest in an ongoing business relationship.

I shall now briefly review the role played by the CGL Practice Leader, Greg Wong.

**CGL Practice Leader - Greg Wong**

Greg Wong was aware of the difficulties of working on the PHOENIX Project only to the extent that time and distance frustrated his attempts to get more consultants to accept his invitation to travel to Sumatra. This is consistent with the research of Trompenaars who found that Western cultures consider time and nature to be something to be conquered and subject to control. Therefore, he was not concerned that Americans or Australians would find the environment and work conditions difficult. He expected that like all Westerners they would prevail over the

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284 Gathered from page 15 of Ray1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 139.
conditions. Furthermore, he prevailed over the circumstances because he could do so by increasing the number of consultants working on the project. In effect, this approach hid the difficulties of the work and the working conditions from the consultants he recruited. An unfortunate outcome of this for Greg Wong was that the consultants perceived his behaviour as deceitful and manipulative.

For example, Janet (an CGL consultant of US nationality who worked on the BPR Project) criticized Greg Wong for being manipulative when he recruited her. She accused him of lack of integrity in his negotiations with her. Kate (the JAD facilitator also from the USA) also commented on the cultural adjustment required to successfully make the transition from a Western country to an Eastern country. She complained that there was no briefing provided and no concern expressed about their welfare on arrival. She was especially critical of the perceived lack of basic services when she said “There are some real basic things … I expected that we would be given … things, like a clean house, or a clean hotel room, access to emergency telephone numbers, access to addresses, access to mail, … when you ask about the mail service here everyone looks at you like, well, you don't bother with mail here, when you know that it just can't be true.” In this quote Kate captures the environmental and adjustment difficulties experienced by many of the consultants who were assigned to the PHOENIX Project.

In his defence, Greg Wong argued that he would not have been able to recruit if he had been entirely frank about the working conditions. His argument further reinforces the problems of consulting in the region and recruiting elsewhere. Assignees from Australia, Jakarta, Singapore and Taiwan all reflected on the complex nature of the work environment and work conditions.

A number of matters contributed to OIL not renewing the consulting contract at the end of the BPR phase of work. The JAD incident eroded confidence in the consultants and particularly in the contribution of Greg Wong to the project. This was further exacerbated by Greg Wong and Ray’s inflexible stance with respect to requests to reduce CGL consultant headcount and consulting time. Furthermore this was reinforced by Ray’s insistence to reduce his personal leadership and commitment to the project by 15 days as a result of acquiescing on a request to reduce consulting time spent on the task of “cost allocation”. Additionally he also embarrassed the PHOENIX Project management by sending the entire consulting team back to their respective homes after a dispute concerning training. These matters contributed to the non-renewal of the CGL consulting contract.

**Culture – A Social Defence**

We have noted that people enact culturally ordained ways of resolving issues. In the same way I favoured direct action to resolve the PC cable problem and the

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285 Gathered from page 2 of Kate1.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 115.
286 Part 2, page 128.
287 Part 2, page 129.
Indonesians favoured indirect action to locate their PC Argyris 288 would argue that both actions were a defence against the anxiety of dealing with the root cause of the problem. In both high and low context cultures this manifests itself as avoidance of the anxiety of dealing with others. My bias for direct action was an avoidance of the uncertainties of negotiating with the Indonesian software implementation team. Conversely, the Indonesians avoided the embarrassment of dealing with the management consultants as people rather than as respected, but not spoken to, objects. If we allow this psychodynamic orientation to stand, we can better understand some of the roles adopted, actions take and resulting outcomes.

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288 Part 1, Chapter 1 page 22.
Chapter 18 – Summary and Findings

Summary
The research shows that cross-cultural consulting was a difficult and complex matter for the client and the consulting organization: cross-cultural differences compromised the enactment of traditional consulting roles and routine, day-to-day, culturally fixed, customs and habits inhibited cross-cultural learning. As a result the consulting process was problematic and produced unwanted outcomes.

Greg Wong’s roles (CGL Practice Leader and Software Implementation Team Assignment Manager as noted on the organization chart in Figure 5 on page 96 of Part 2) required he balance the costs of paying for consultants against services and benefits to be provided to and enjoyed by his client. However, because he encountered difficulties recruiting consultants from the West to work on a project in the East he understated the environmental difficulties, and did not compensate by investing in consultant briefing sessions on the environment, the client and the PHOENIX Project. Furthermore, he did not balance the costs against the benefits. This had the effect of asking the consultants and the client to bear the costs themselves and to personally learn how to work effectively together. As the JAD incident demonstrated this learning did not occur to the disappointment of all parties.

Greg Wong did not choose to work cross-culturally. Because of his Hong Kong Chinese heritage he had the background to understand an Eastern perspective. However, he chose not to engage the client in a broad cross-cultural dialogue. He talked about the importance of working cross-culturally but critical recruiting decisions taken by him did not reflect what he espoused.

Hari’s role (OIL assignee to the BPR project as a consultant) also required the application of cross-cultural skills. Unlike Greg Wong he was not in a management position in the consulting team. However, he was from a management position in the OIL organization and he put this to good effect by combining his knowledge of the OIL business with his role as consultant to OIL the client. He managed to work effectively across multiple roles and across multiple cultures to provide an outcome, which was acceptable, and of value to OIL the client. He accomplished this without compromising the respective parties involved. For example, CGL and OIL as legal entities, professional managers within OIL and professional consultants within CGL were not compromised by the difficulty of the cross-cultural work. This demonstrated that Hari was able to effectively balance cross-cultural work and produce an acceptable result for both the consultancy group and their client (his employer OIL).

Darsono (CGL Project Manager; male Indonesian) also had the background to work cross-culturally because he was bilingual and had worked in middle management roles for a Western multi national company. With respect to the PC incident he adopted a Western approach to the resolution of the matter. He directly confronted the BPR Assignment Manager with the issue compared to an indirect approach. However, he did not manage the resolution of substantial issues in the same direct manner or utilise a complex hybrid combination of indirect and direct approaches, as did Hari. As a result his contribution was less effective than it could have been.
Ray (CGL - BPR Assignment Manager) did not have the language skills which would have provided a window of understanding through which he would have gained an understanding of Eastern cultures. However, he was an experienced management consultant with Asian project experience. Because management consulting work is associated with initiating and or implementing change to established work practices within client organizations he would have been aware of the difficulties of managing change in mono cultural projects. Therefore, it is surprising that he did not demonstrate any flexibility in his working style when working in this multi cultural project. This lack of empathy and flexibility to work with and accommodate differences starkly contrasts with Greg Wong (the CGL Practice Leader), Darsono (the Indonesian CGL Project Manager), Fa Leung (a consultant from Singapore) or Kate (the JAD facilitator from the US). All of these consultants recognized cross-cultural differences and demonstrated empathy to greater or lesser degrees. In contrast Ray, who had much more consulting experience, did not even show he heard much less understood that cultural differences existed. As a result of his uncompromising leadership style the consultants’ relationship with the client was unsatisfactory and the BPR consulting contract was not renewed.

Findings
There are three principal findings from the research. Firstly cross-cultural consulting is a complex and difficult matter for the client and the consulting organization. Secondly, it is possible to work cross-culturally with positive outcomes and thirdly, this can be best achieved by utilizing personnel who can function as cultural “hybrids”. Aware of both cultures through contact, they are able to work both inside and outside of their own cultural construct. The data showed that two consultants, Fa Leung and Hari, had the capability to effectively work in this manner.

Hari acquired cross-cultural consulting skills either during the period of the PHOENIX Project or as a result of his experiences in the US prior to the project. The data demonstrated that the capacity to communicate cross-culturally was the key to developing effective cross-cultural capabilities. Hari supports this observation when in a demonstration of his ability to cross-culturally understand, negotiate and communicate he said of Ray “he is always forceful and sometimes it looks like he is forcing what he wants on us. But actually we can argue and he will back off. And I think that I have become comfortable with that situation.” This represented a significant personal breakthrough for Hari and the BPR team. Hari was able debate the issues with the BPR team rather than simply accept that the Western management consultants knew better. It explains in part why the final presentation to the OIL Steering Committee was well accepted.

Cross Cultural Hybrids
Fa Leung and Hari demonstrated the capacity to effectively work across two cultures. However, the reader should be mindful that both Fa Leung and Hari had English and Bahasia Indonesian language skills. In addition, both had worked in the US and were employed by US multinational companies. This provided each with cross-cultural

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289 Gathered from page 6 of Hari3.doc and appearing in the Narrative, p. 171.
experiences prior to the commencement of the PHOENIX Project. However, others with this background did not demonstrate the ability to work cross-culturally. Greg Wong and Darsono had multiple language skills and multi national work experience but did not have the capability to work cross-culturally.

The two consultants who had cross-cultural skills and capability, Fa Leung and especially Hari, produced far more acceptable business outcomes compared to the consultants who only demonstrated mono cultural consulting skills. The research has demonstrated the importance of acquiring and using cross-cultural skills.
Chapter 19 - Postlog

The Impact of the Research on the Researcher

As foreshadowed in the section on Self In Research following the Preface, the researcher should be under scrutiny with regard to the feelings experienced and the allegiances which formed in the course of the research.

At the outset I was uncertain about the direction of the research. My role as a technical support person within CGL organization had ended because I wanted a career which exercised my management skills. As noted I therefore elected to reinvent myself as a management consultant and at the time of the research had invested two years in this transformation. The research was located in Indonesia and during the research, while Ray (the BPR Assignment Manager) was off site I took the opportunity to step into the role of Assignment Manager. I noted that while the living conditions might be judged difficult I did not personally have any great problems adjusting to them.

Upon returning to Australia, after the project, I found similar work challenges were not available. On being offered another opportunity to work in Asia I chose to do so. I subsequently worked on major assignments in Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong over a period two years. These assignments required that I assume the responsibilities of the Assignment Manager. The most difficult of these projects was in Taiwan. The client was a semi conductor manufacturer and their plant was located in provincial Taiwan. The outcome of this project was similar in some respects to the OIL project. The client was disappointed with CGL. However the Director of Manufacturing provided me with a personal reference in recognition of my contribution. I then moved from Taiwan to Hong Kong where the client was an international airline. The client was very pleased with the outcome of this consultancy and remains a referee for me to this day. This outcome is an indication of my cross-cultural consulting experience and capability. I now have three years’ consulting experience in four Asian countries, across four different projects as consultant and as Assignment Manager. Through a process of reflective emersion in matters cross-cultural I have acquired a cross-cultural consulting capability recognized by my clients. Upon returning to Australia I found CGL did not recognize my overseas contribution and we therefore chose to part company. I have since established a small management consultancy with two colleagues.

This professional transformation from technical support person through the process of reinventing myself as a management consultant to establishing myself as independent consultant has paralleled my academic development. Leaving behind the safe, secure and relatively protected world of being a senior consultant within a large multinational is a decision that I would not have contemplated when I began the research. As I end the research I am challenged to implement my Asian consulting experience with the knowledge gained from this study of cross-cultural consulting.

The future probably includes me finding challenging consulting work in Asia; only this time I trust the projects will be informed by my deepened understanding of cross-cultural work.
Looking Forward

Australia’s relationship with its Asian neighbours offers significant growth opportunities. For these opportunities to be realised it will be necessary for companies to develop cross-cultural skills and expertise. The key to all cultures is language. However language skills do not come easily and include the need to gain cross-cultural knowledge. The ability and the skill to structure business contracts and to negotiate in a manner which reflects the needs of the business and the values of both parties will be just as important.

Just because there appears to be an understanding does not mean there is understanding. It is the norm that people will assume that others are like themselves. In so doing negotiators for both parties will make the mistake of assuming consensus. A price will be paid for this faulty assumption in the latter phases of projects. As the research shows the differences in approach will emerge when planning the implementation, which in consulting dialect is known as “planning the thinking and the doing”.

The four cross-cultural projects I have worked on successfully completed the first phase and all experienced difficulties in the second, third, fourth and fifth phases. For example the Taiwan contract was extremely difficult for the client and the consultants to renegotiate. Essentially the project stopped and was renegotiated many times. It was only after several false starts that the project was completed. The original and final proposals were quite different in scope and scale. In the interim money, credibility, business reputation and opportunity were lost for the Taiwan semi conductor manufacturer and the consulting company.

My assignments in Singapore and Hong Kong had similar outcomes. The planning of the implementation phases resulted in arguments, disbelief, disappointment and losses for both parties. In Hong Kong the client presented the consulting company with a claim for losses, which exceeded one million US dollars. Projects which are located in provincial areas are more likely to have chronic problems which the parties will find extremely difficult to resolve. The project difficulties which I experienced in Hong Kong and Singapore were resolved more readily than those in provincial Indonesia and Taiwan.

The commitment phase, when contracts are being negotiated and commitments made by the client and the consulting company is where all projects encounter difficulties. In my experience these difficulties are realised after the projects have commenced. What was thought to be common understanding and mutual agreement is seen.

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The five stages of a consulting project were discussed in detail in Part 2 on page 92. The reader is referred to this explanation for a detailed description of the five phases of a consulting project. However the reader is reminded that the first two phases are important because it is in these phases where commitments are made to the client. The outcome of the first phase is a signed contract and a willingness to proceed being expressed by both parties to the contract. The outcome of the second phase “Planning the thinking and the doing” is a detailed plan of who will do what, when it will be completed and how it will be accomplished. The latter phases of a consulting project involve execution of the detailed action plan produced in phase 2.
differently once the client has seen how the consultants behave. It is only when rhetoric gives way to action that differences in understanding and approach are realised. Future research should exploit this finding by developing tools and techniques to reverse the sequence of events so that “how the work is done,” informs the commitments reflected in the contract.

In the interim the problem remains for those who cannot wait for the research. One solution is to have cultural hybrid consultants who have the professional skills to negotiate cross-culturally with like-minded consultants. The challenge should be the negotiation of the first two phases of the consulting agreement. It is important to find people with these hybrid skills who can staff the negotiating teams. Alternatively allowing sufficient time in the planning phase for collaboration will also provide opportunity to identify differences in approach. In any event the third strategy to achieving a common understanding is to staff the Assignment Management positions with personnel who can work cross-culturally. These positions need to be closely aligned with the needs of the client. The personnel who occupy those positions need to have the ability to translate client needs into consulting approaches. With respect to the staffing of projects, consideration should be given to the need to include consultants and assignees that have cross-cultural capability and speak the client’s language. Lastly this staffing plan needs to include senior personnel whose sole responsibility is to develop relationships with the client’s senior management.

I shall now turn my attention to the environment and the stresses and strains this places on any consultancy. Usually cross-cultural projects are for periods of three months to two years. It is quite common for a cross-cultural project to run for twelve months or more. Therefore consultants have to commit to working on the client site for duration of the project. It needs to be recognized that not all consultants will be able to make this commitment. Notwithstanding this difficulty the staffing task is essential to the success of the project. It has been my experience that successful projects result from the work efforts of one or two key individuals who make the commitment to the client for the duration of the project.

The staffing task is usually compromised, not by the long-term nature of the commitment but rather a failure to communicate this commitment to the consultants assigned to work on the project. The ability to accommodate the personal and professional needs of assignees within the commercial and professional development opportunities available is the responsibility of those in charge of staffing the project. Failure to attend to these needs will result in quality problems for the client and additional costs for the consulting company. Failure to negotiate contracts which accommodate the needs of the consultants is simply a failure to communicate the context of the project. Fortunately this common failing can be readily resolved by those who would staff such projects communicating clearly their expectations to assignees.

If Western consulting companies are committed to developing Asian businesses then they will have to change their traditional approach to the market. Asian companies generally want to develop long-term relationships with chosen consulting companies. These relationships require an enormous investment on behalf of the client executive team to brief the consulting principals about their business, industry, industry
structure and relationships with governments. Reliance on short-term contractual relationships will generally lead to tragic outcomes for both parties.

Lastly consulting work generally requires that companies change the way they do things. This is stressful for those companies and the people who work for them. However cross-cultural consulting adds another dimension to this stress. It is common for consultants working cross-culturally to quickly burn out or tire to the point where their ability to contribute is compromised. Some will not be able to tolerate being away from their families for extended periods of time and will leave the project and return home long before the end of the project. Others will not be able to cope with the environment, the language difficulties and the pressure to get things done. Some of these individuals will end up seriously ill; some will be asked to leave the project because of stress-induced behaviours unacceptable to the client and the project managers. These environmental issues are non trivial and are almost always ignored by a traditional consultancy. Solutions to these problems must be considered before venturing off shore in pursuit of cross-cultural opportunities in Asia.

Notwithstanding these difficulties the consulting opportunities for Australian companies in Asia are numerous. These opportunities are a product of our geographic and time zone location and multicultural heritage, all of which make it relatively easy to access and service countries in North and South East Asia.
Bibliography


Burke, K. (1964) Perspectives of Incongruity, Bloomington, University of Indiana Press, Indiana.


## Glossary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignee</td>
<td>An assignee is an employee of OIL assigned to work on the PHOENIX Project. E.g. “Hari was assigned to the PHOENIX Project for two years.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment and Assignment Manager</td>
<td>Assignment and project are synonymous terms used by consultants to refer to work commissioned by a client. Alternatively the term assignment can be used in the context of a consultant or an employee being “assigned” to a project. This means that the person is assigned to work on the project for a period of time. The “assignment” may be for the duration of the project or for a shorter period of time. E.g. “the duration of my assignment will be three months”. Lastly the term may be used to refer to the consulting role of Assignment Manager. The most senior consultant on the project holds this role. The Assignment Manager determines who does what work, when it is done, who is involved and how it is completed. It is a leadership role which requires detailed knowledge of the area of practice (accounting, software implementation etc) as well as general business skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BPR</td>
<td>BPR is an acronym which stands for Business Process Reengineering. A BPR Project will examine how to perform work more efficiently. A BPR project generally results in changes to work practices and often leads to reductions in the workforce. The BPR Team in this study was assigned the task of identifying new accounting procedures to replace the old accounting procedures in the finance department of OIL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGL</td>
<td>CGL is an acronym for Consulting Group Limited. CGL is a consulting services company which is a division of a large US based computer manufacturer and IT services organization. CGL is the consulting company which in the research which is providing consulting services to OIL.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Client</td>
<td>This term is often used by consultants to refer to the company which commissions the consulting project. In this study the client organization is OIL. For example a consultant could well say “the client (referring to OIL) is an oil company.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy</td>
<td>A term often used to refer to a consulting organization, which offers consulting services to public and private sector organizations on a fee for service basis. However the term consultancy is often used to refer to a consulting project. E.g. The consultancy (project) at OIL employed several consultants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>A consultant or management consultant is a person who sells his knowledge and time to corporations for a fee.</td>
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<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>IT is an acronym for Information Technology. The IT department in many organizations is often referred to as “IT”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAD</td>
<td>JAD is an acronym which stands for Joint Application Development.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term</td>
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<td>In her book “Joint Application Design – How to Design Quality Systems in 40% Less Time” the author Jane Wood,(^{291}) notes that JAD was devised by an employee of CGL and field tested and refined by CGL Canada in 1977. She defines JAD as a joint venture between users and data processing professionals thus the name Joint Application Design. It centres on a structured workshop (called a JAD session) where the users and IT professionals come together to develop a computer system. The primary benefit of the methodology is that the social structure forces the key players to sit in the same room together and to discuss the project regardless of management position, gender, professional skill or organization function represented.</td>
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<tr>
<td>OIL</td>
<td>This is an acronym for Oil Indonesia Ltd (OIL). OIL is an oil production company, which is located in Sumatra in Indonesia. OIL has contracted CGL to provide consulting services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pelembang</td>
<td>Pelembang is the name of a town in Sumatra. Pelembang is a company owned oil town of approximately 600 families located on the island of Sumatra.</td>
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<tr>
<td>PHOENIX Project</td>
<td>The name used to refer to the software implementation project which was the subject of this research.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project</td>
<td>A temporary structure set up within an existing organization. The temporary organization is established to accomplish an assignment. In this study the PHOENIX Project was designed to design, build and install a software package for OIL. The duration of the project was for a period of two years. A consulting project typically has a number of phases. Often the sequence requires a design phase which is then followed by a build and then a commissioning phase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Software Package</td>
<td>A software package is a generic name for a product like Microsoft Word or Lotus Notes. The software package in the narrative is a financial package which accounts for the financial results for a company.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sumatra</td>
<td>Sumatra is a part of the Indonesian archipelago. Sumatra is located east of Singapore and lays parallel to and approximately 50 – 100 miles off the west coast of Malaysia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2000</td>
<td>The term “Year 2000” refers to a software problem which affected many software applications. Many old applications recorded the year format in two characters. This created a problem for the turn of the century which resulted in these applications confusing 00 with the year 1900 instead of 2000. As a result a great deal of software had to be updated to allow for four character year fields. OIL was installing a financial software package to replace an old software application which did not support four character year fields.</td>
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Appendix – A
Project Organization Structure
## Appendix – B  Integration of Cultural Theorists and Cultural Characteristics

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<td>Specific Involvement</td>
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<td>Status by Ascription</td>
<td>Status by Achievement</td>
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<td>Synchronous Time</td>
<td>Discrete Time</td>
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<td>Nature to be Accommodated</td>
<td>Nature to be Manageable</td>
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### Interview Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position Title</th>
<th>No. I/views</th>
<th>Date of I/views</th>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Native language</th>
<th>Facility with English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hari</td>
<td>Senior Accounting Supervisor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31/1/94 16/3/94 26/4/94</td>
<td>CPI - Pelembang</td>
<td>Bahasa Indonesian</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OIL Assignee to the BPR Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Johan</td>
<td>CGL - Consultant</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20/1/94 2/4/94 22/4/94</td>
<td>CGL - Taipei</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kate</td>
<td>CGL/JAD Facilitator</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29/1/94 13/3/94</td>
<td>CGL - Kansas</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa Leung</td>
<td>CGL - Consultant</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23/1/94</td>
<td>CGL - Singapore</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>CGL - Consultant</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24/3/94</td>
<td>CGL - San Francisco</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Wong</td>
<td>CGL Practice Leader</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31/1/94 22/3/94 27/4/94*</td>
<td>CGL</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>Fluent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ray</td>
<td>CGL Engagement Manager</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19/1/94 3/3/94 27/4/94*</td>
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<td>English</td>
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<td>Darsono</td>
<td>CGL Consultant</td>
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<td>31/1/94 21/3/94 3/5/94</td>
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<td>Bahasa Indonesian</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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<td>Timbul</td>
<td>CGL Consultant</td>
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<td>23/1/94 5/3/94 4/5/94</td>
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<td>Poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rinaldo</td>
<td>Independent Consultant</td>
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<td>24/1/94</td>
<td>Self Employed Consultant**</td>
<td>English and fluent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aline</td>
<td>Moslem student &amp; local resident***</td>
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<td>27/4/94*</td>
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<td>Bahasa Indonesian</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* After the final report and presentation was completed I recorded a group discussion on the evening of the 27th April 1994.

** Rinaldo was an independent consultant employed by CGL to do a specialist piece of work on the project. He worked on the project for a period of four weeks.

*** Aline was a student from Cirabon who developed a relationship with Janet and through this association to members of the BPR consulting team.