

Leading Virtual Project Teams Dos and Don'ts

Dr Penny Pullan and Evi Prokopi

**9th May 2016
Barcelona, Spain**

Presentation, Photos and Outputs



Global Congress 2016
EMEA



Room H2 Monday, 9 May

14:00 – 16:30

**Workshop: Leading Virtual Project Teams:
Dos and Don'ts
(Workshop)**

Dr. Penny Pullan and Evi Prokopi

PMI® Global Congress 2016—EMEA



#PMICongress

Welcome to
Leading Virtual
Project Teams

Come in & make yourself
comfy!

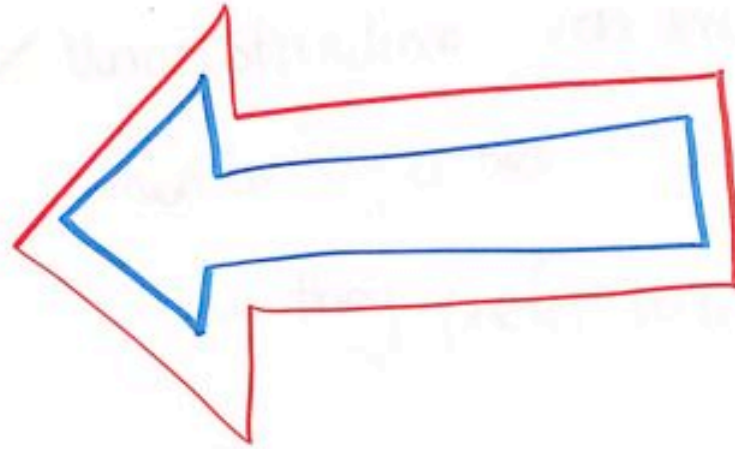
Come + sit at the front!

@ Leading Virtual
Project Teams

We  #PMI Congress



Come & sit with us at the
front



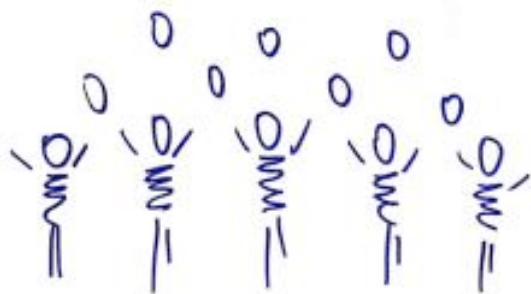
(We have chocolate)
(Keep that to yourself!)

@ Leading Virtual Project Teams



Isn't it great to be
together today at

Leading Virtual
Project Teams ?



Thanks for coming to

"Leading Virtual
Project Teams"



What you signed up for...

A project professional of today lives in an increasingly virtual world, resulting in the need to lead virtual projects.

The dynamics of remote teams require project managers to communicate with their teams differently.

Explore best practices and practical strategies in this interactive workshop that will help a project leader bridge the culture, time and language barriers and eliminate the distance.

Our Plan Today

2pm

3:25 3:35

4:30pm

Intro Penny


My issues



Intro Eri


Survey Results

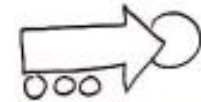
Group Activity


Intro Virtual Teams

Leadership Model


Skills


Best Practices

Create your own plan



Q&A



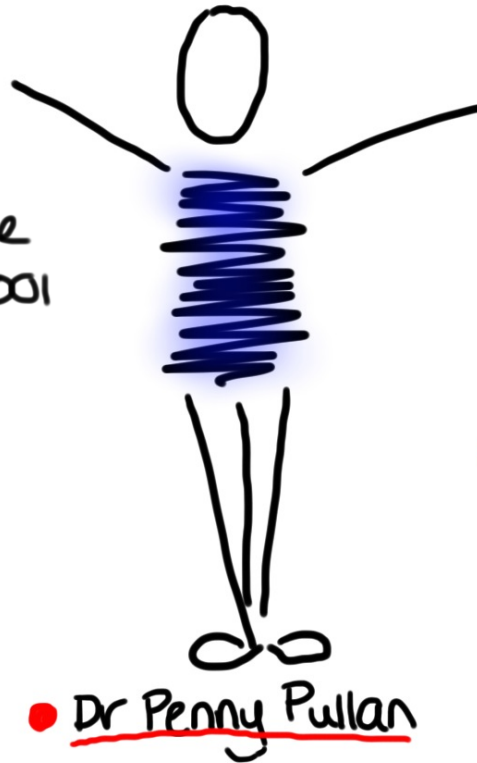
The room was full of people. Standing room only!

Learning Objectives

At the end of this workshop attendees will be able to:

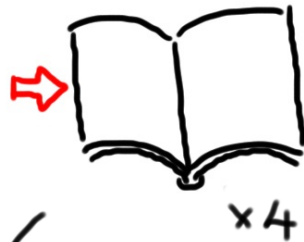
1. Discuss virtual team leadership, focusing on projects, programs and portfolios delivering change remotely.
2. Explore the challenges that project managers face leading virtual projects in 2016 and what works well.
3. Describe the skills and best practices that project managers need to lead their virtual teams despite being remote from each other.
4. Apply their plan to their own virtual project team with three things that they will do differently as a result of this session.

why me?



⇒ virtual since 2001

⇒ PMP

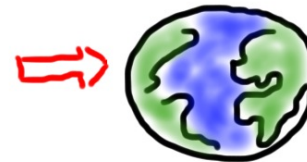


latest
'Virtual Leadership'

⇒ success in tricky projects

- risky
- virtual
- ambiguous
- disengaged

⇒ 20 years



why me?



⇒ 9 yrs PM

⇒ Runs global projects

⇒ Multi-lingual
cultural

⇒ Works with
freelancers

⇒ specialist in Project Human
Resource
Management

works all over
⇒ 
'virtually!'

• Evi Prokopi

What is a virtual team?

Any team where at least one member of the team works remotely from the others.

What about you?



What about you?

Virtual VS Face-to-Face Teams

Virtual teams
cross time &
geographical
boundaries

They rely on
technology for
communication

=> Slow feedback



Face-to-face
teams are co-
located

They have face-to-
face interactions

=> Fast feedback

Virtual VS Face-to-Face Teams

More competitive

Less satisfied due to heterogeneous nature

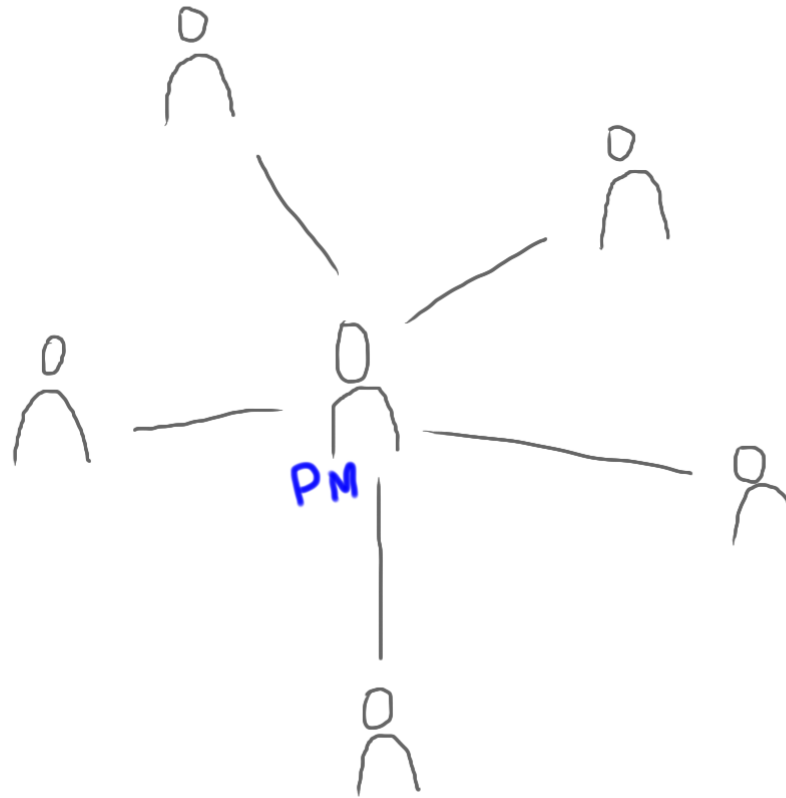
Greater conflict

Encouraging, strongly committed to the team

More satisfied with the quality of team working

Conflict is less frequent

The simplest virtual teams



Star Group

Freelancers in the Virtual Workplace

Independent work increase due to:

- Freelancing is easier than ever before
- Employees' dissatisfaction due to repressed creativity
- Fluctuating economic conditions causing corporate downsizing



Freelancers in the Virtual Workplace

Freelancers – Independent Professionals

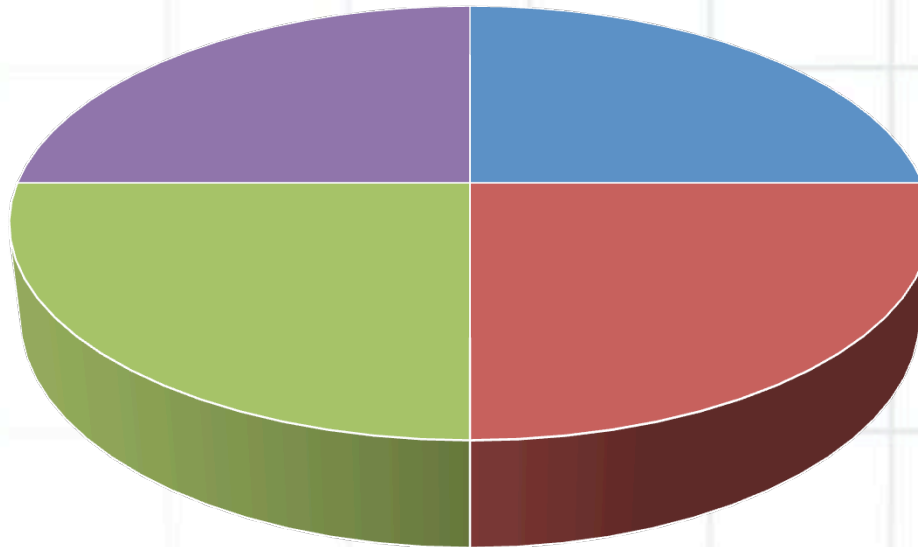
Definition by the Freelancers Union:

Individuals who have engaged in supplemental, temporary, or project- or contract-based work in the past 12 months



Freelancers Statistics

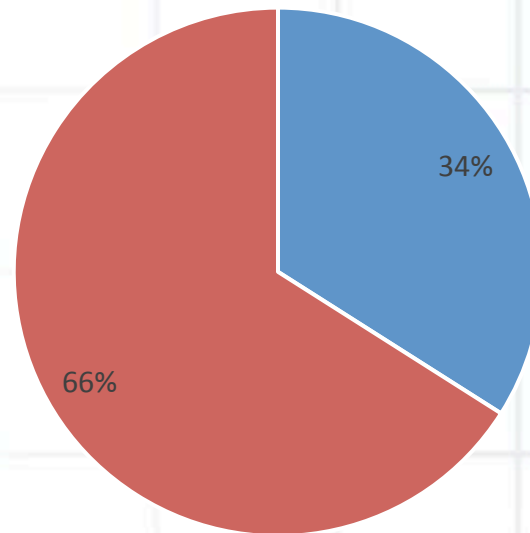
Demographics of most likely to become self-employed



■ Young ■ Well educated ■ Men ■ Brought up in an entrepreneurial environment

Freelancer Statistics

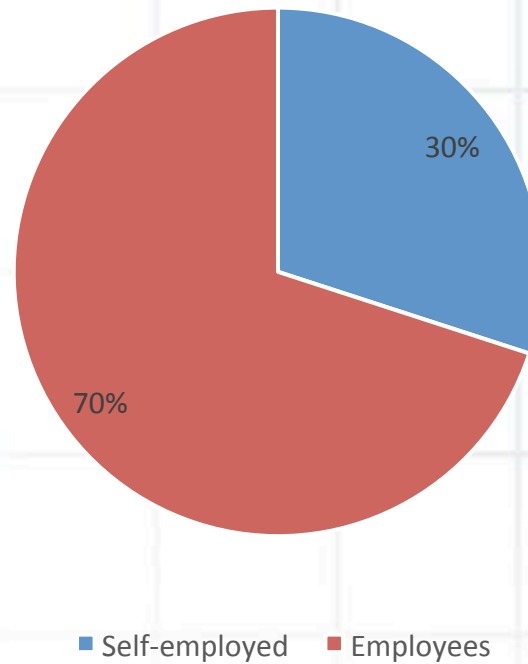
US workforce



■ Self-employed ■ Employees

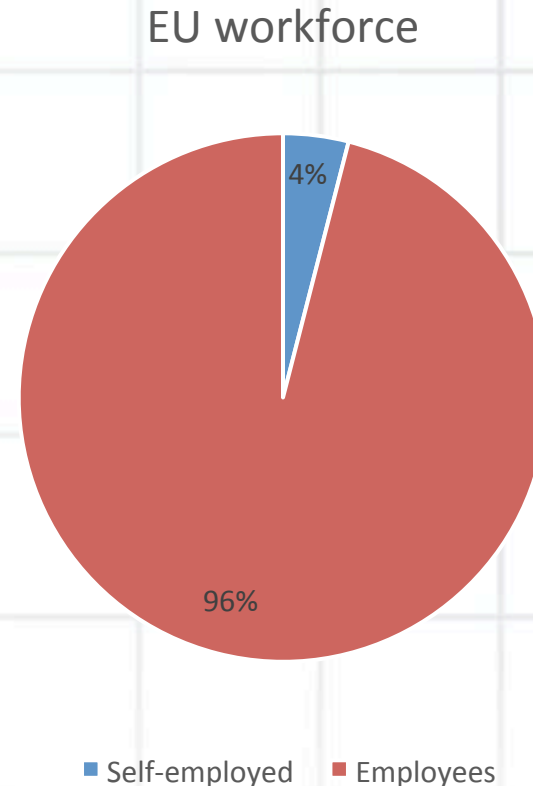
Freelancers Statistics

Australian workforce

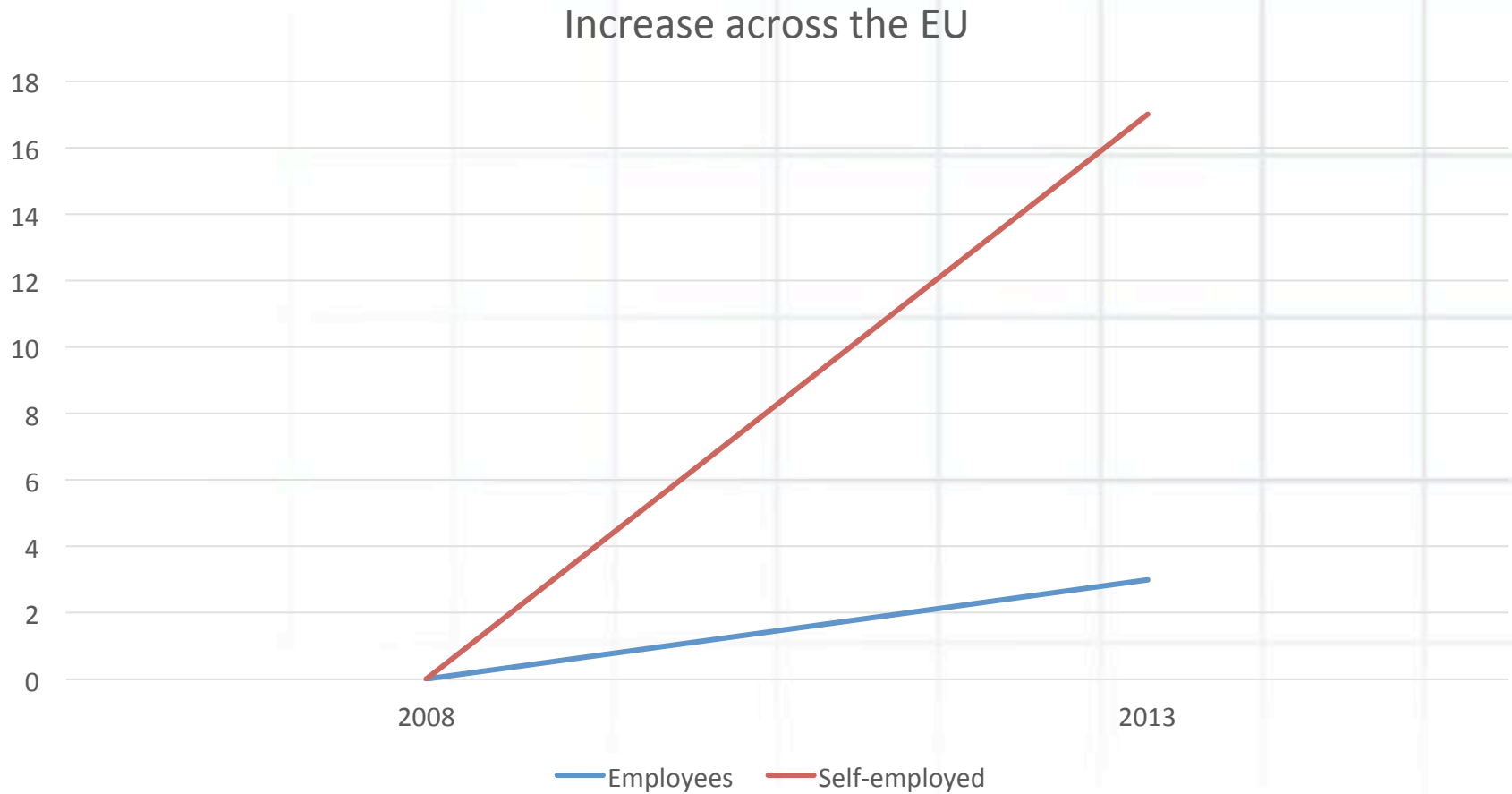


Freelancer Statistics

37% of EU citizens wish to work independently but are deterred by fear of failure, a lack of finance and skills, and red tape



Freelancer Statistics



Workplace Statistics

2008 – 2013: EU Financial Crisis

7 million jobs were lost
in the EU

1 in 10 people were left
without work

New work for over 1
million people

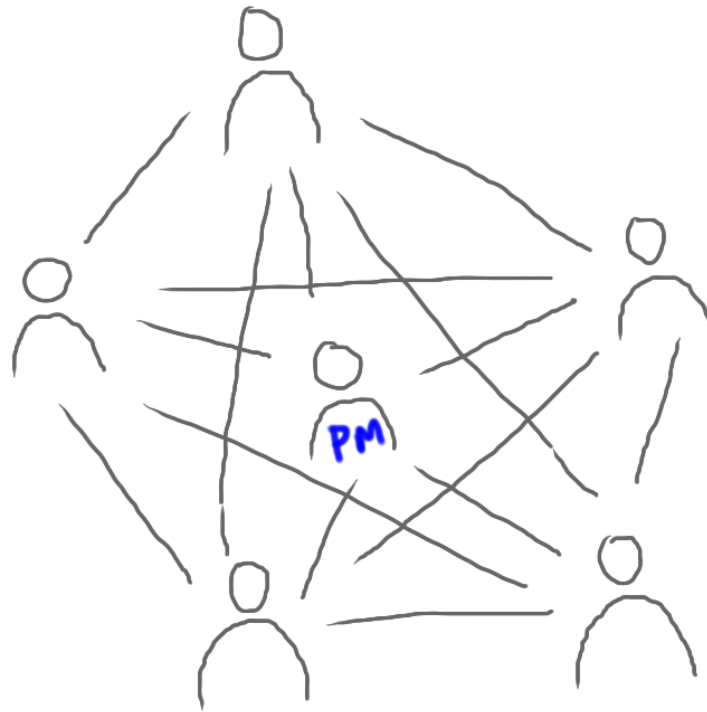
Some of them work
full-time

What about you?



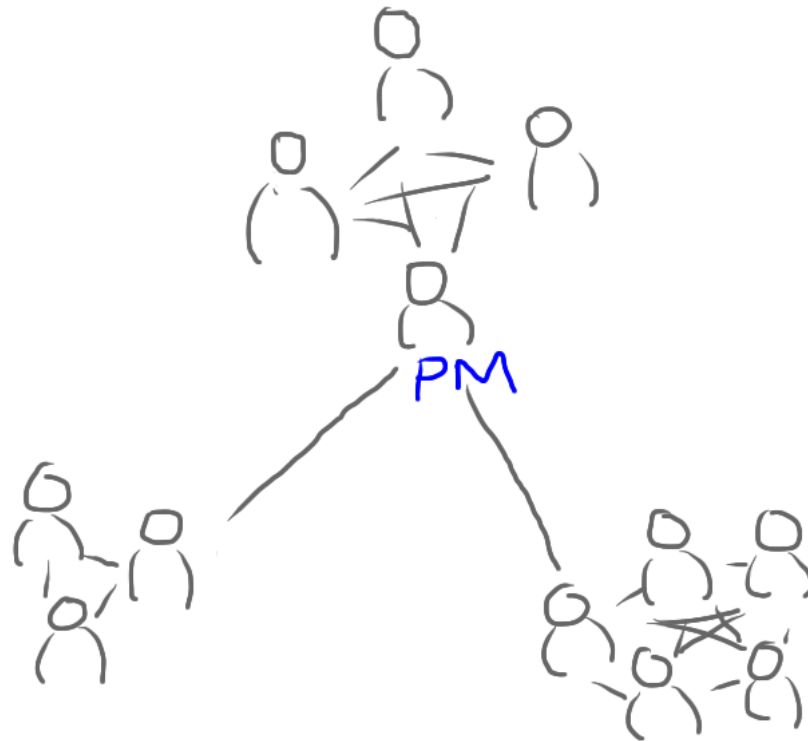
What about you?

More complex virtual teams



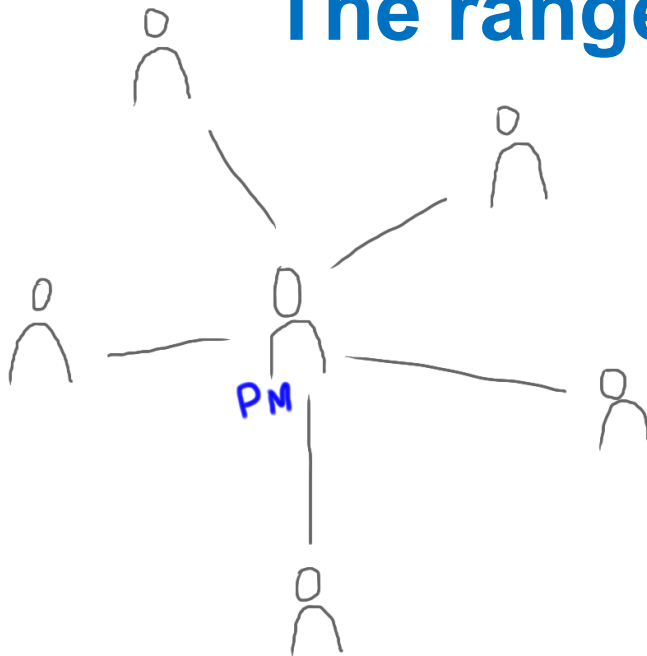
Spaghetti Team

Combinations

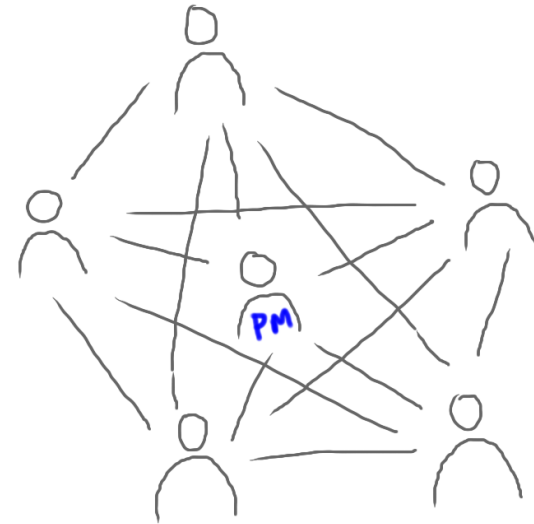


Combination

The range of virtual teams



Star Group



Spaghetti Team

Increasing complexity and ambiguity

Short term; Clear process;
Specialist team members;
Central leadership ; Can be hierarchical.

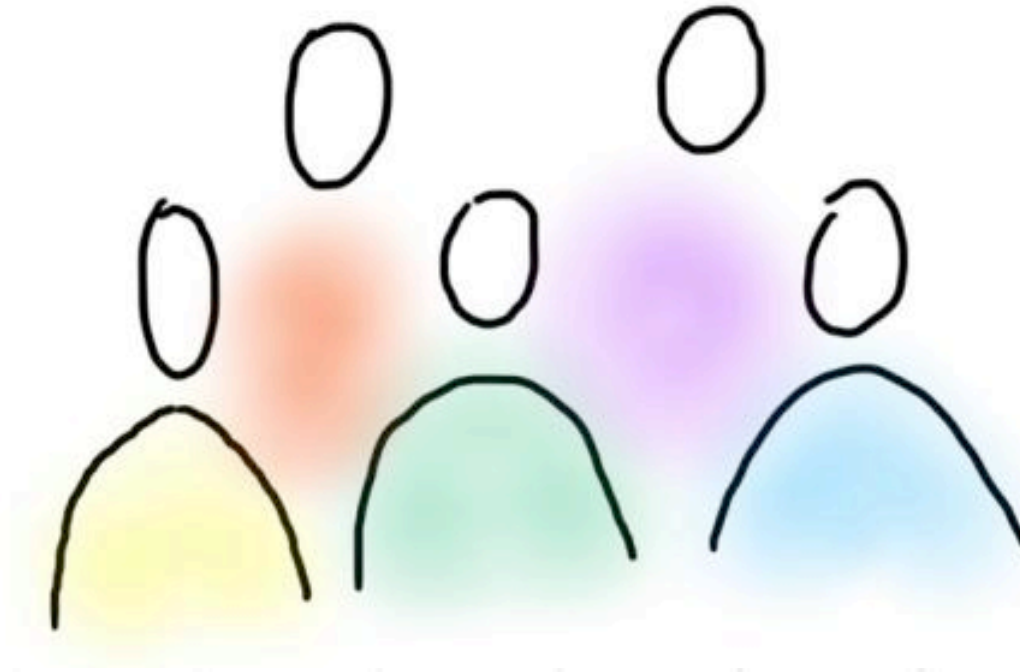
Longer term; Less clear.
Team members work together.
Facilitative Leadership; Distributed leadership.

What about you?



What about you?

What about your virtual project teams?



Let's explore your challenges.

CULTURAL
ISSUES

language/culture

Expectations of
when a job is done
(standards)

Motivation
Team spirit / Trust

Goldman Sachs
Germany

MOTIVATION
LEADERSHIP / BUILD TEAM

COMMUNICATION
FEEDBACK

Culture
Communication

Time Zones

time zone

TO FIND
STATION
TIME
SUBSTANTIAL
ZONE

TIME ZONE

TIME ZONE

Our Virtual Team Issues

Communicative
Languages and
whether a learner is
listening

CULTURE 6
TEAM BUILDING

Work with different
CULTURES

ENGAGEMENT

COMMITMENT
(MUTUAL VS. PHYSICAL)

LACK OF URGENCY FROM
YOUR PEERS

Culture of *S. aureus*

Communication
Tactics
Language, Feedback, Body language

MISSING COMMUNICATION CHANNEL

Str. Mandelblatt
Engagement

Communication

COMMUNICATION
(THE DIFFERENCE
BETWEEN LANGUAGE)

Availability Technology

- IT support
- webcast / telepresence
- Power using memory

integrity

KEEP PEOPLE
FOCUSED
ON MEETINGS

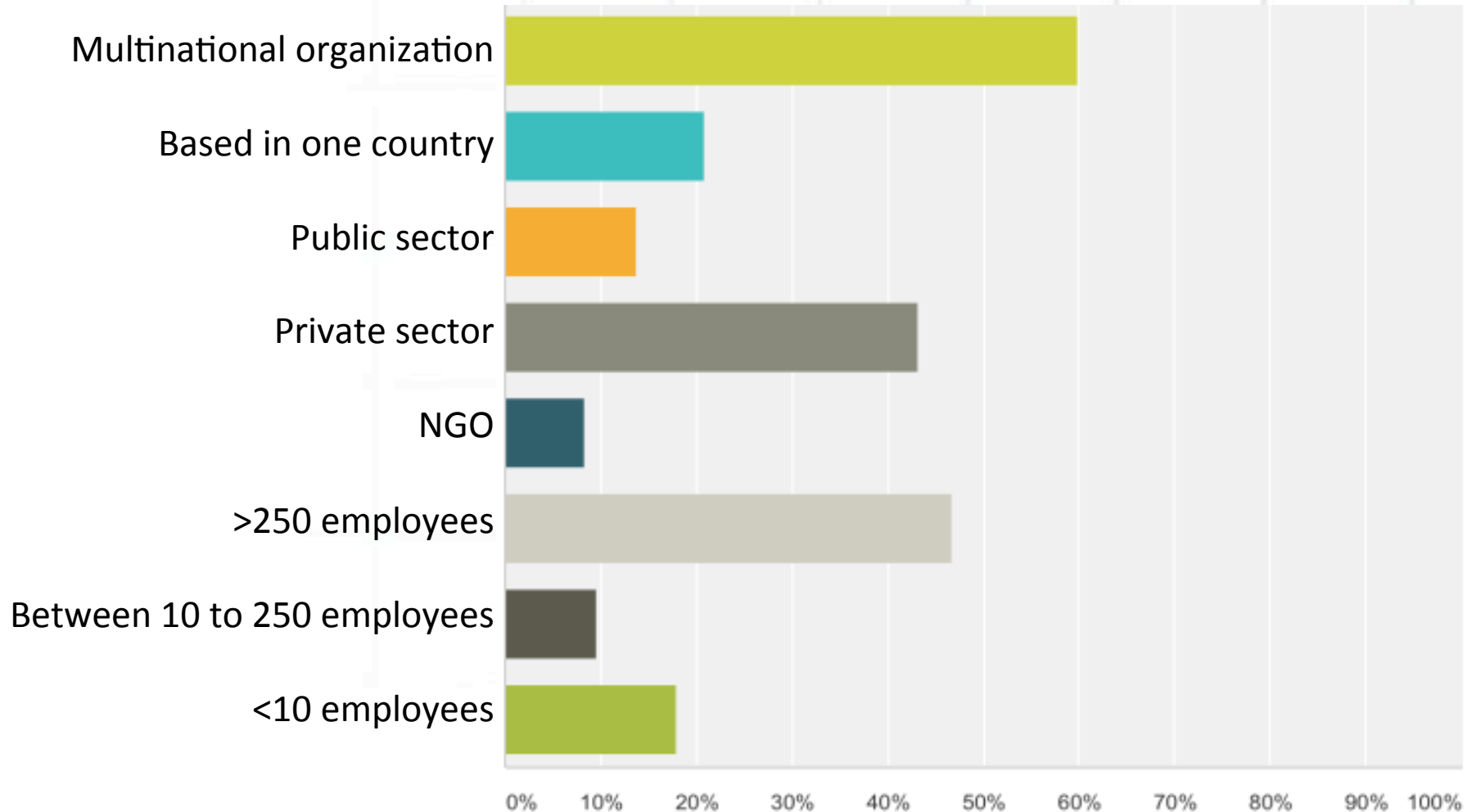
Team building
getting engaged
build trust

CONTROL
PERFORMANCE,
DELIVERY

Penny's survey results:



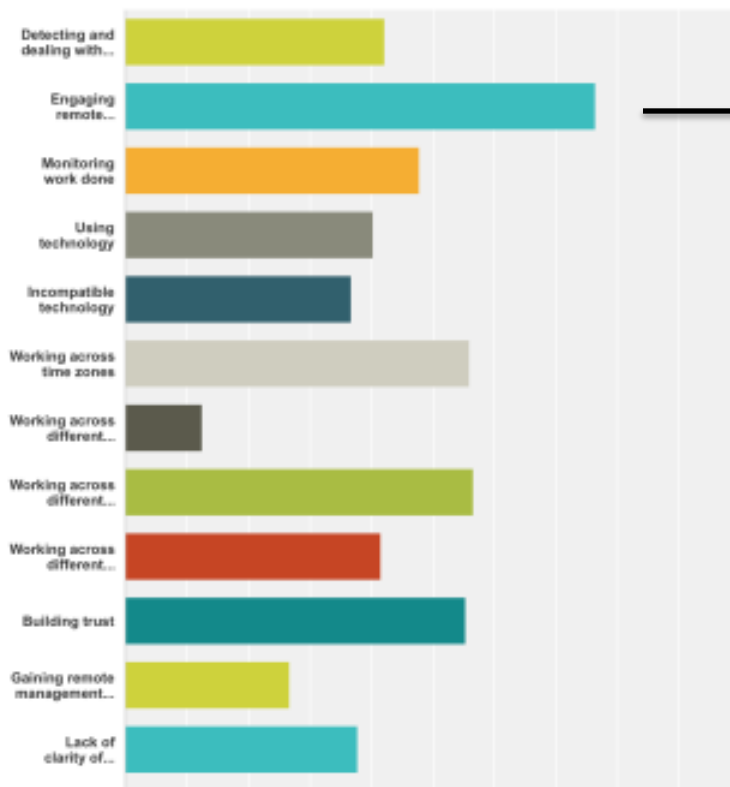
What sort of organization do you belong to?



The Top Challenge!

When I've asked about virtual working challenges before, here are some of the answers that have come up. Please tick all that apply to your situation:

Answered: 161 Skipped: 3



‘Engaging Remote Participants’ – chosen by 75% of respondents

Next level

- Missing out on dynamics and nuances of conversation (58%);
- Working across time zones (56%);
- Working across different cultures (56%);
- Building trust (55%).

And then...

- Monitoring work done (47%);
- Different understanding of the same term or word (44%);
- Detecting and dealing with conflict (42%);
- I don't get to spend much time with remote people and so I don't know them as well as local team members (42%);
- Working across different languages (41%);
- Using technology (41%).

✓ Regular clear communications,
without lengthy gaps in
between

What works?

✓ Technology should be easy
to use & up to the challenge.

✓ Clear roles & responsibilities

✓ Use video over audio alone

✓ The use of meeting agendas



✓ An open team culture,
with each person listened to &
able to ask for help from the
others

✓ Widespread use of
screen sharing technology

✓ Being clear about how the
team will work together,
in meetings & overall

✓ Time to get to know each other
and build rapport + trust

✓ Understanding each team
member's perspective and
how they prefer to work.

✓ use of a common repository
that everyone can access



Exercise: Exploring virtual work







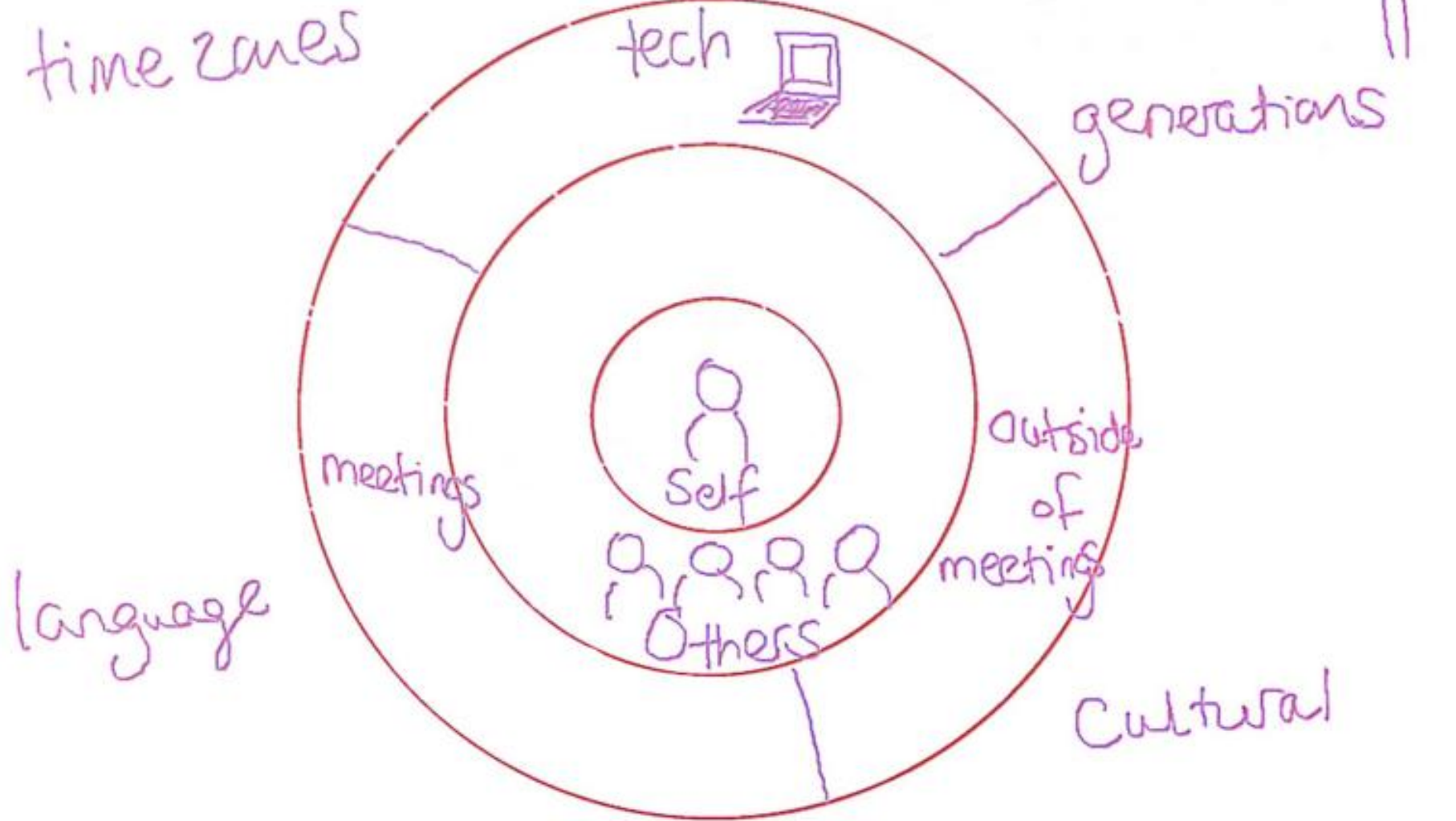






What do you think of
their 'squares' of wool?

The Virtual Leadership Model



Complications of Virtual Working



Generation



Language



Wide Time Zones



Break – 10 minutes



Skills for Effective Virtual Team Management



Virtual Project Managers' Skills

Virtually-adapted skill set based on the team's diversity

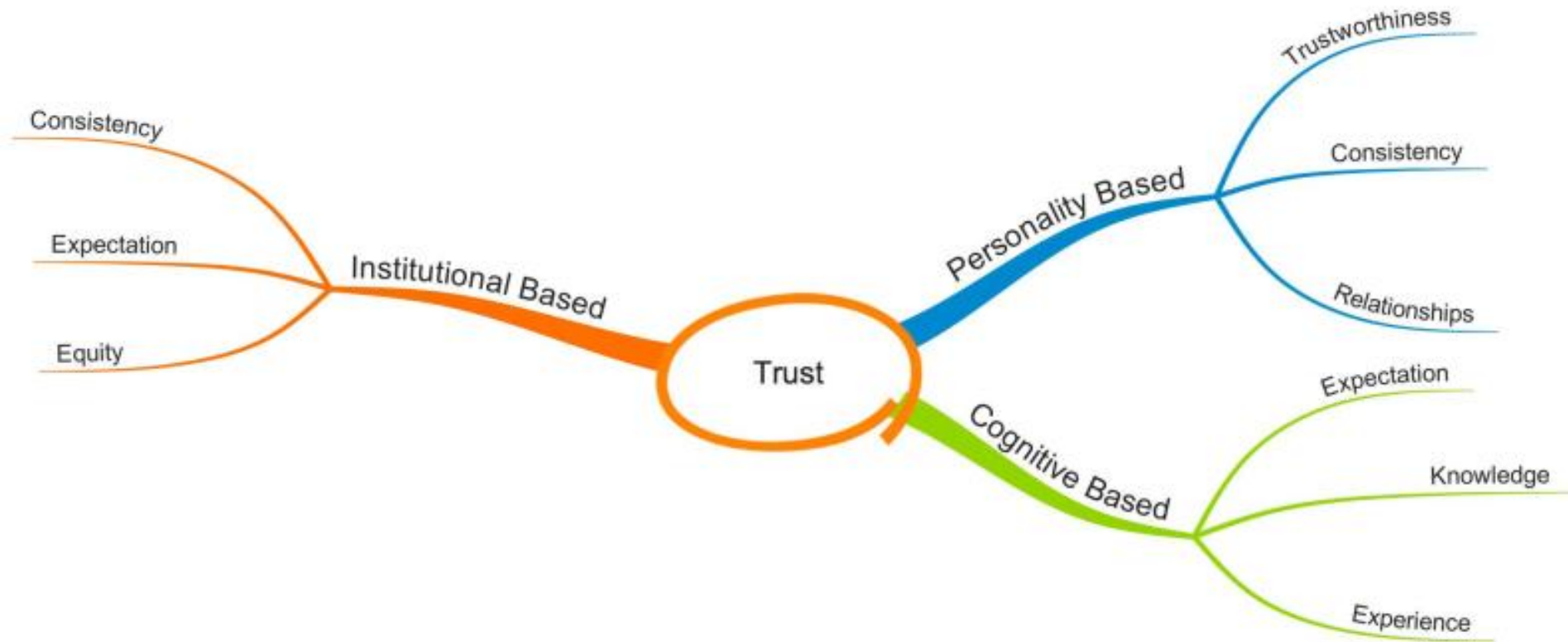
- ✓ Clear directions - no questions unanswered
- ✓ Creation of cohesion
- ✓ Choice of the appropriate decision-making process
- ✓ Communication – trust – relationship building
- ✓ Remote communication - use of video

Virtual Project Managers' Skills

Do's

- ✓ Understand people's needs
- ✓ Teach respect
- ✓ Create cross-generational teams
- ✓ Create and provide motives
- ✓ Use an integrated strategy:
Communication, Accountability, Skill, Measurement

Trust in Virtual Teams

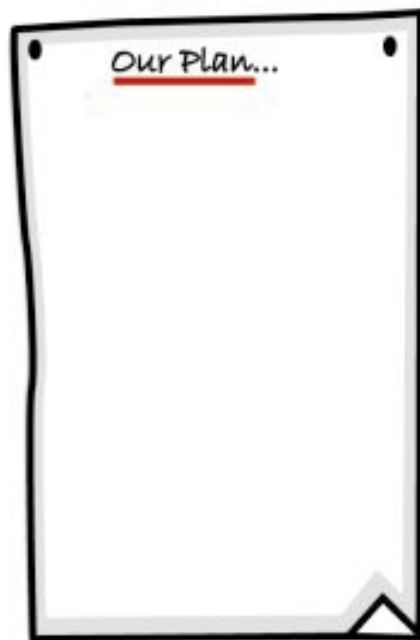


Best Practices



Run Effective Virtual Meetings

- No monologues - ask questions frequently
- Verify that everyone hears the person speaking
- Call people by names
- Take notes – who spoke, when, about what
- Long explanations should be sent out ahead of time
- Speak slowly, use short sentences, avoid slang
- Make the implicit explicit
- Keep them short - up to 60'-90'



Who's Doing What...



How We Work Together...

Today We Will...

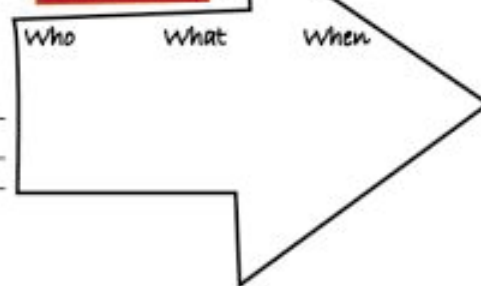


What's Next...

Who

What

When



Best Practices



Slow Down to Speed Up

- Take the time to set expectations & create processes
- Elaborate on what you need from each team member
- Ask yourself questions & write your findings
- Use the communications plan & team operating agreements

Best Practices

Communicate to Engage Your Team

- Dynamic Communications Plan & TOAs
- Consider appropriate collaborative software
- User-friendly & of high quality communication tools



Best Practices

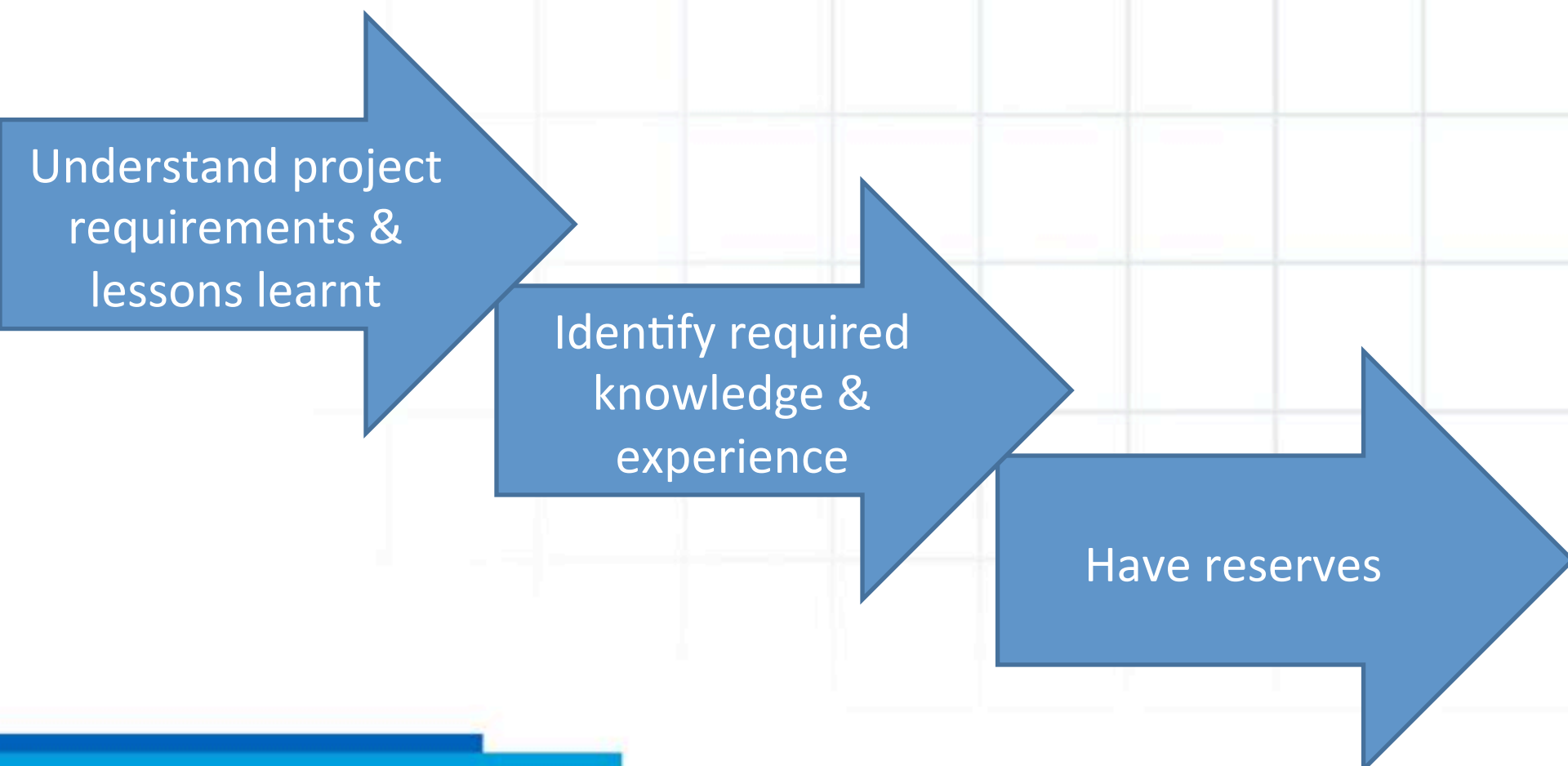


Build Connections With and Within Your Team

- Create an inspiring virtual presence that cares
- Out of sight and out of mind
- Find the right balance of communication frequency
- Be consistent
- Understand how your voice sounds
- Use video
- Take and give constructive feedback
- Create a virtual water cooler

Best Practices

Know What You Want When Recruiting



```
graph LR; A[Understand project requirements & lessons learnt] --> B[Identify required knowledge & experience]; B --> C[Have reserves];
```

Understand project requirements & lessons learnt

Identify required knowledge & experience

Have reserves

Best Practices

Keep Your Eyes and Ears Open for Conflict

- Conflict seems to be more likely in virtual teams
- In co-located teams, it is easier to see a conflict
- In a remote team, it is likely to grow unnoticed
- Prompt attention & action

Best Practices



Aren't you glad we had this meeting to resolve our conflict?

Best Practices

Develop Your Team Members

- Know their current skills & potential
- Help them to realise and apply their talents
- HR Management is a meritocracy



Best Practices

Level-playing field

- Mixed teams: face-to-face and remote.
- Keep the field level.
- Be fair and considerate.



What happens when it works

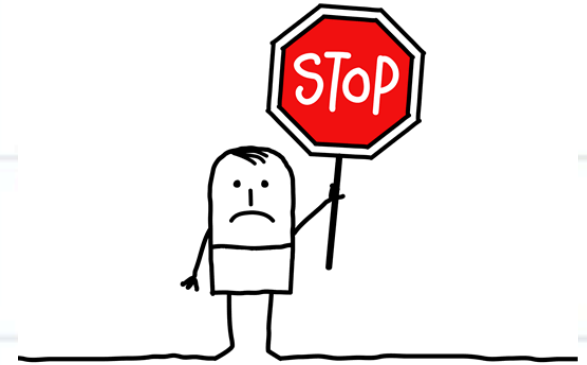
Leading Virtual Project Teams Do's

- Do develop your own virtual leadership
- Do run effective virtual meetings
- Do slow down to speed up
- Do engage your team
- Do use video
- Do build connections with and within your team
- Know what you want when recruiting
- Keep your eyes and ears open for conflict
- Develop your team members

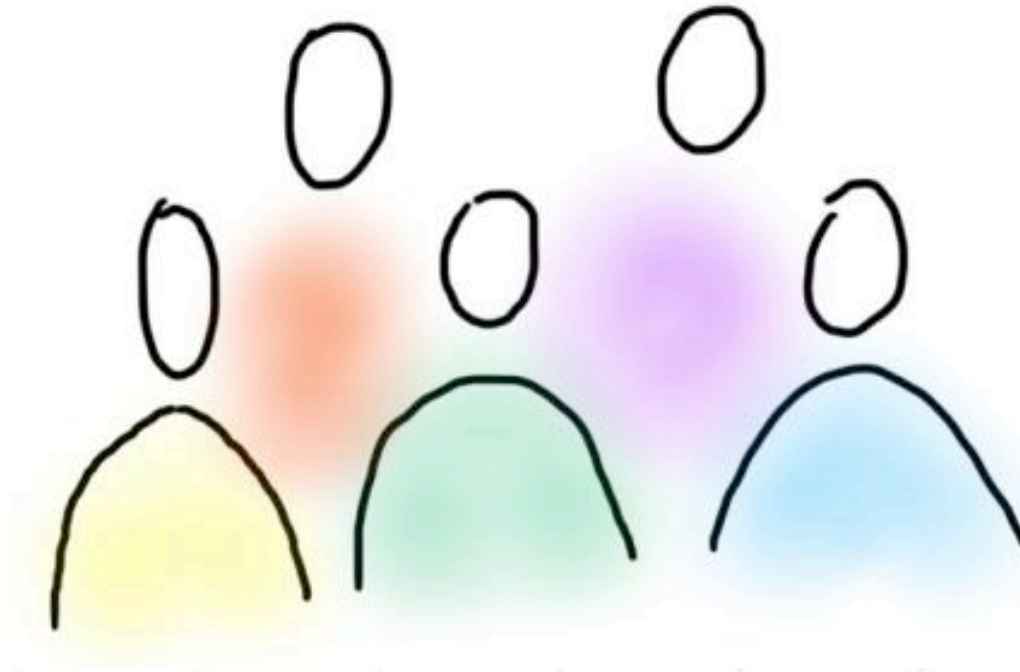


Leading Virtual Project Teams Don'ts

- Don't disappear
- Don't give loose job descriptions
- Don't ask for the impossible
- Don't overlook conflict
- Don't overcommunicate



Your next steps?

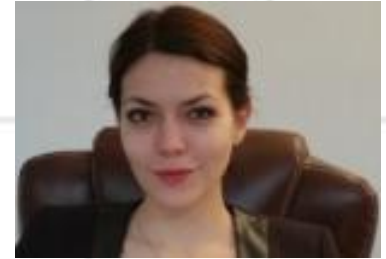


What will you do as a result of today's session?

Questions for Penny and Evi?



Thank you!



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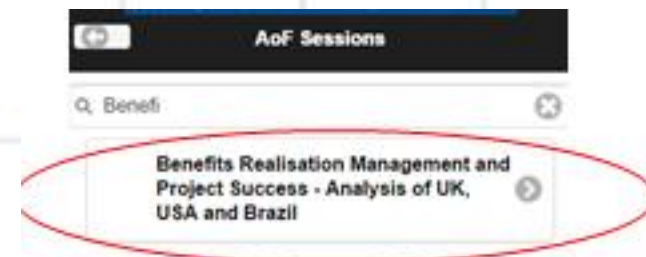
Name | Evi Prokopi

Web | www.skemaprojects.com

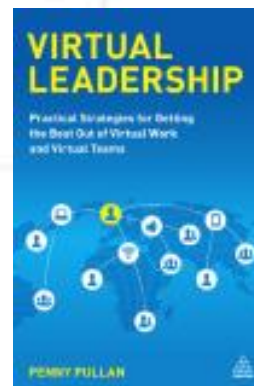
Email | evi@skemaprojects.com

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@pennypullan



Evi Prokopi
Penny Pullan