

Vigilance

Business



An overview about the case, Prepared International, one of the world's largest pharmaceutical Pharmacy combined. Officially it's a merger but in practice it better might have been described as an acquisition of Valued, a Swiss based company with extensive US operations by Pharmacy, French based company.

Prepared is required to keep detailed records of how its drugs perform. With that, a database system called VIGILANCE was introduced to track and record adverse events associated with the use of its products under development and already in the market.

Vigilance will be used by division employees and as well as to generate report to provide various regulatory agencies around the world. It is a two-year project by US and French based core team which is responsible for designing and implementation. This is where conflict started since the case deals with two different factors interacting that affect conflict and team performance. These include contextual issues like a merger, cultural values and physical location.

It also includes team dynamics, leadership, interpersonal, interpersonal needs and concerns.

Both companies are into pharmaceutical industry but they differ in cultural orientation, way of communication and management style. The team struggles to collaborate effectively because of conflict over how work gets done when the team was not able to meet for more discussions on how they would proceed as a team. Conflict based on interpersonal relationships also

arise when the communication lead presented a communication plan to the core. One instance was during the teleconferencing, Mr..

Tidier (French, Project Manager of Vigilance), so quiet and presented little comments on the plan.

But after that he called Frank (American, Communication Lead Head) and said that nothing has to be presented at the meetings without his knowledge. Because of his, the latter felt that his discretion and expertise are being undermined. Second instance, although they came up to have teleconference meeting, still it is not successful because the type is information sharing only and does not let the members participate in the discussion. In every meeting, members' ideas are important, it should be analyzed and discussed to weigh if it is important and will contribute to the project's success.

Conflicts based in group identity.

To what extent are the core team members in the case establishing a team identity? How would you describe interdependence among the members of this project am? Include in your response the core team and overall project team. The Core Team members are a combination of a pooled, reciprocal and sequential interdependence. Pooled since they shared some common resources but each has own Job apart from others. Reciprocal because there is a dynamic interaction the sum of the parts; build on what others have done and hand off the work.

Common information of the group is shared by the Communication Lead, while the Training Lead share this common resource information for training purposes, an example of a pooled interdependence.

Global IS and the user leads who are expansible for checking system compatibility and if the system meets the tracking and reporting needs of other companies have reciprocal interdependence. Those who are in the validation lead also have a reciprocal interdependence as well. The migration users and IS who maintains and shares common resources have a pooled interdependence.

Do you think all team members share the same views on the ways in which they are interdependent? Members of the core team does not have the same views of interdependent. More evident on the US based Core team. Pooled interdependence, Mr.

. Frank recognized that there is necessity to share common information among the core team. It is the same reason why he presented a communication plan during the core teleconference meeting but Mr.. Tidier demanded that all information should be presented to him first, a conflict existed.

Sequential interdependence, people work independently and the result is the sum of the parts.

It means that one unit in the overall process produces an output necessary for the performance by the next unit. This is the main purpose of a team, each member contribute on a sequential process. Scheduling and planning of

the project team's resources in a sequential interdependence model is essential to have an efficient operation. In this case since the coordination to each core members are limited, the process stopped and only dependent to the taste of the project manager. Because Mr.

. Tidier wants to check and filter all information before it goes to the next process which is discussion to the group.

Too autocratic. Reciprocal interdependence is a dynamic interaction. American members wanted to stress to their French Colleagues that communication across sub teams was important, they wanted to emphasize that it is important to keep people informed of hat other sub teams were doing. But the French colleagues wanted to keep the hierarchical flow of communication through a chain of command, that is through the Global IS lead and Global User lead.

How do you think the people in this case are feeling? Should emotions matter?

US based Core team, started to feel negative emotions as feeling of unimportance, frustration, anger, withdrawal, lack of work enthusiasm, passiveness while handling the Vigilance Project. All emotions matter, it is a product of the underlying situation and a result of the conflict. Emotions matters in this case it adds up to the conflict teens the two teams, as for the US team their emotions are soaring high because they are frustrated and disappointed whenever their ideas are neglected by the motivation and eliminate conflict arising negative emotions that will affect the members work.

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What are some positive ways emotions can affect conflict? Members who formed the project team organization are managers and leaders of the two merged companies. The group thinks that ideas of the members should be recognized and appreciated and their involvement is important to decide for the project's direction to provide positive emotions to all members.

The positive way the emotions can affect to conflict is a warning signal that something is not being met in the objective of the organization, a red flag that attracts the attention of the management that a certain important issue must be regarded by the team.

What are some negative ways emotions can affect conflict? Relationship conflict will arise if the member of the team is not recognized and the effort has been disregarded or not appreciated. It will also cause conflict between the member and the leader. The absence of appreciation and affiliation would easily result to a negative relationship conflict. And eventually lead to disharmony, disunity and scattered focus of the attention of the team members leading to underachievement, low productivity and low morale of the team members.

Emotional concerns framework > Appreciation concerns Were there some opportunities for Tidier to express more appreciation? Mr.. Tidier Marin (Project Manager of Vigilance) had many opportunities to express more appreciation to members who lay down ideas and suggestions. Some of them are the following: 1 . Scheduled weekly teleconference meeting should be used to communicate and understand core team member's ideas and suggestions.

In this activity Mr.. Tidier wants to control the meeting discussion, he wants to filter information or topic to be discussed in every meeting. According to Ms. Reynolds, the core team validation lead, Mr..

Tidier was too autocratic to be practical. Meanwhile opportunity of improvement in this point is to open the meeting to discuss whatever positive and negative aspects which will help the project to be successful. 2. Some of the project core members express their action plan like what Mr..

Frank the communication head. Rather than asking Frank to discuss with him first any material to be presented, why don't Mr.. Tidier appreciate Mr.. Franks effort and ask him to continue sharing ideas.

As the manager of the team, in addition to control he should let core members to bring up their bright ideas and listen to their plans. . Rather than consistently responding negatively to US team insights and suggestions why don't he listen, ask the team support to analyze every proposal and maximize these bright ideas to run the project. More merit in their views. The US based Core team should do the following: 1 Assertiveness & Decisiveness.

From the start, since cultural barriers existed the first kick off meeting there should have been a cultural awareness objective focus, the Vigilance project was a combination of a two racial identities, and the Americans should be aware of that. The culture would be a barrier.

They should have asserted the way the meetings, process and plans be presented. 2 Resourcefulness. The communication of the core team is vital

and should not stop only in teleconference which sometimes cancelled. American should insist to proceed the regular meeting also to face to face discussion.

3 Preparedness. Meeting without agenda or target will waste their time, Americans should be prepared for every meeting and show quantifiable data for their concerns or objective plan for their proposals and plan. Affiliation concerns What are some things that the project leader could have done to address concerns over affiliation?

The project leader should have done the following to address affiliation: 1 Mr.. Tidier should have treated the core team members as colleagues.

It is the leader's job to meet the organizational objectives. And team management is important. 2 The weekly teleconferencing/ meeting should be a place for brainstorming and positive discussion. And not be monopolized by the project manager's idea 3 Communicate, communication is the best tool. Don't stop when problems arise either to the process or to the member. Solve it by communicating and discussing the issues.

Mr.. Tidier should be more appreciative to member's effort from the start they lay down proposals or suggestions. On the contrary to the French management style, as being overly authoritative and lacking in necessary team building elements (source: horticulturalists. Com) Could the American team members have done more to promote affiliation? The American core team members should have been more assertive, decisive and insistent in calling for the attention of the French core team members for periodic meetings and never rested on teleconferencing.

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The issue of cultural differences and physical distance management are tantamount problems that a merge company like Prepared will face.

Periodic meetings, face to face, will lessen problems brought by cultural conflicts and promote strong relationship among core team members. Since the physical presence, human factor of warm, shake hands agreement and emotions involved showing sincerity were factors which are essential in promoting affiliation. How can team leaders minimize concerns over autonomy? > Autonomy Concerns. According to Carol Reynolds, the core team validation lead. Mr.

. Tidier, was too autocratic to be practical.

The usual French management style. The American core quantifiable targets. From this, specific assignment should be distributed to team members. Link the team's target to member's output and discuss regularly the progress and results.

This will eventually lessen the leader to act independent or have self-rule decision. All his actions should be aligned to the team directions. How might status concerns have gone unaddressed in the core team? Status concerns have gone unaddressed in the core team because of in depth discussion on how to run the project was not discussed among the core team.

The roles should have been identified and clarified by each team member to the leader. Concerns should also been respected properly as in the case of the Communication lead, Mr.

. Frank. What can we do as team members to acknowledge others' status?

As member of a team, you should know your team mates strength and maximize hem in the project, while knowing their weaknesses you can help you decide what support you can give. In addition respect to each person's particular status should be observe. What can we do to ensure that our own status is recognized by others?

As member of a team, you should know your role do your part to meet all assigned tasked on time as planned.

Be ready anytime it requires clarification about your assignment. For any doubt consult your leader or ask opinion of you co members. Be assertive, decisive and be a team player. Might things have gone differently had Frank not become withdrawn after the phone all from Tidier? If Frank accepted positively the comment of Mr.. Tidier and tried or follow the instruction of his leader, the group's think that the situation might go differently.

From the point of view of a leader, Mr..

Tidier action is normal that is to know every data of his members prior to any meeting especially when in front of their big bosses. Likewise if Frank as a member understand and think deeper for the purpose of his leader direction again maybe they will continue to work together. Does the case offer any examples of extra-role behaviors that affected team dynamics? Could the American team members have done more? What about the French team members? In what ways does the case demonstrate the relationship between task conflict and affective conflict?

Both the US core team and France core team exhibit initiative, expertise, decisiveness, years of experience, a strong point of view and a since they are leaders and managers from the two merging companies. Yet when these talented individuals join forces on a high-profile project team like Vigilance, their personal strengths didn't mesh effectively to deliver on mission of the project.

What is the lacking point? It is the team and members activeness to shared the mission, vision and values to align their personal interests, harness their collective expertise and focus their individual efforts.

They didn't establish clear roles and responsibilities. Framework for making decisions was not considered also resulting to conflicts. II How is distance affecting team dynamics and performance? Are there other ways to think about distance besides physical separation? What are some other issues that come from having team members located on the East and West coasts of the United States, or in different parts of France? What about people located in the same building? Could they encounter some of the same problems?

Distance has a great impact on team dynamics and performance.

We are not only focusing on physical/structural separation but giving emphasis also on cultural/social differences and psychological distances.

It is evident in the Vigilance Project, the issue of cultural distances, as well as physical distance between American and French core team member, exist. Changing the scenario, that American and French core team members were located in the same building. Physical distances will never be a problem.

Communication barrier is removed. But the arising problem here will be the cultural/ social differences between them.

Categorize answer into broad headings: structural/physical distance and emotional/ psychological distance? How do you think these various forms of distance affected the strength of associations that were being formed among team members? Do you think lack of trust causes people to feel distant, or is lack of trust the result of other kinds of emotional distance? How have culturally based differences in values affected dynamics in the core team? Relational distance comprises the structural/ physical distance, the emotional/ psychological distance and the social/cultural distance.

The existence of any of the following forms of distances affected the strength and organizational achievement of goals and objectives. The absence of trust is a result of emotional/psychological distance among the team. Trust play an important factor in any organization for harmonious relationship and objective realization of the team goals. Without trust, like in the case of Vigilance Project, Mr..

Tidier monopolized the meeting without taking considerations on the suggestions and inputs of the American core team. Yes, laterally based differences in values affected the dynamics in the core team.

American core team values individualism, diversity and ethnicity. On the other hand, Which of the Hypotheses' cultural values dimensions are most relevant to events in the case: Power or Uncertainty Avoidance? The Vigilance Project case shows a Power Distance Hypotheses' cultural value dimension. Power Distance Index is the extent to which the less powerful
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members of institutions accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. This represents inequality (more versus less), but defined from below, not from above.

(source: Society for Human Resource Management) The French core team, especially Mr..

Tidier shows a power distance cultural value dimensions, this could be one of the reasons of his authoritative management style. III Analyzing the Intervention by Senior Management What do you think about the decision to appoint sub team sponsors? What problems can it solve? Which problems might it not solve? What are some things you like about the approach? What don't you like about the approach? What are your thought about the email that was distributed throughout the entire division and not just to members of the team? Can you assess the value of this intervention in relation to issues identified through the emotional concerns framework?

How might this intervention affect some of the issues based on distance?

The intervention made by the Senior Management in appointing a sub team sponsors will in some point bring solution to the one sided kind of management of Mr..

Tidier. Giving chance to the American core team to be heard during prescribed meetings. The approach made by Mr.. Lance Paulson, the Drug Safety Director was so light and not too critical to either sides, the American and French core team. But the law that I perceived was that the approach never called the attention of Mr.

Tidier who had been I think in my own perspective was the root of the conflict in the Vigilance Project. Even the cultural awareness workshop which is very important in a merge organization with cultural conflict like Prepared, was not emphasized in the director's email. The action made by the senior management may boast the confidence of the American core team since the presence of the sponsors which will serve as a mediation and decision making authority. The gap made by relational distances were filled in some ways.

The issue on trust had been solved, since there will be sponsors who will mediate and decides on critical issues.

What is the best role for the sponsors? Do you think they should function more as mediators or as Judges in disputes? Which approach would better serve the interests of the company at this point? What kind of training or experience should Haling and Toe have in order to take on their roles? What actions would you take if you were assigned to be a sub team sponsor? Would you be proactive? To whom would you reach out? Development specialist were part of the team from the beginning? In addition to sing sub team sponsors, what other kinds of interventions might you try at this point in the project?

The best role for the sponsors is to be a mediator and Judge in the organizational dispute. But more on a mediator of a culturally diverse organization. Since the Vigilance project is a diverse organization with excessive intellectuals, years of experience teams and strong point of view

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for both Americans and French core team, Haling and Toe should have a training and a further studies on cultural diversities and conflict resolution. If I will be assigned as a sub team sponsor, I will push to have cultural awareness workshop for the US and France core team.

To call their attention on focusing not on their differences but on how they will perform and work together harmoniously and productively giving emphasis on their similarities and goal achievement.

If a human resource or organizational specialist were part of the team from the beginning, conflicts had been minimized. I will suggest and I will put an emphasis on the importance of cultural awareness program.