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14. ABSTRACT
This paper describes how in contemporary life the mobile device distracts people from their work. The paper makes a comparison with civilian/commercial case studies, how mobile use impacts their productivity and how it is handled within those cases. Those studies form the input for a comparison on what communication theory is used to tackle the issue and how effective that strategy was. Finally, the paper discusses whether or not these strategies could be implemented in military society and provides advice and recommendation to leadership.

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MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

**THIRD CULTURE BUILDING AS A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY
TO COMPETE WITH ADDICTIVE AND DISTRACTING MOBILE DEVICES**

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF MILITARY STUDIES

AUTHOR: WILCO FABER,
LIEUTENANT COMMANDER, ROYAL NETHERLANDS NAVY

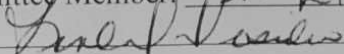
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Executive Summary

Title: Third Culture Building as a Communication Strategy to Compete with Addictive and Distracting Mobile Devices

Author: Lieutenant Commander Wilco Faber, Royal Netherlands Navy

Thesis: While providing the option to improve communication efficiency, smart mobile-computing & communication-devices (SMD) distract service members on the work floor, cause productivity issues, and therefore present a challenge to leadership. Third Culture Building (TCB) communication framework helps leadership consider the value of (seemingly) competing perspectives to maintain their military personnel focused on work, while not neglecting their personal relationships.

Discussion: Is Casmir's Third Culture Building Theory an applicable and appropriate tool for improving communication in the workplace with personnel who are distracted by their mobile devices? What can be learned from case studies in two different contexts? What modifications should be taken into consideration (how to fill/put flesh to the bones) to make Casmir's model work in a military environment?

Conclusion: When the primary qualities of TCB are in place, Casmir's framework provides leadership a tool to bridge one's culture of values, ethics, standards, needs, and outlook with the others and construct a mutually beneficial third culture.

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Preface

In my former job as Commanding Officer of HNLMS VLAARDINGEN, I observed some of the following quotes: “Why can’t I communicate with these youngsters?” and “Why are the young sailors so much attached to their smart devices and not interested in a proper conversation?” On many occasions, the Chief Petty Officers expressed their frustration in communicating with the “other,” the “younger” generation. I observed many young sailors who were addicted to their mobile devices and even, on one occasion, focused more attention on an incoming notification on the mobile device than on an alarm from the engine control panel. As a result, I became interested in how we can better support our NCOs and bridge the gap between them and their superiors.

While attending the USMC Command and Staff College, my MMS mentor introduced me to Casmir’s Third Culture Building as a communication strategy that can improve the interaction between people. In this paper, I will argue that this communication theory can be used in a military setting and can be a useful tool for improving work relationships and increasing productivity on the work floor.

I have had the great pleasure of studying as an International Military Student at the Marine Corps University in Quantico, meeting many new friends from all over the world, and expanding my knowledge and understanding of the world we live in. In particular, my military advisor LtCol Kevin Glathar, USMC, challenged me to be even more critical and open minded. This all could not have happened without the constant support and sacrifice of my girlfriend Gerlinde, who followed my challenges, progress, and adventures mostly from abroad. Special thanks to my MMS mentor, Lauren Mackenzie, PhD, Professor of Military Cross-Cultural Competence and the faculty (awesome ladies) of the Leadership Communication Skills Center at the Marine Corps University.

1. Introduction

In modern day society, a smart mobile-computing & communication-device is a must have for everyone. People use their smart mobile-computing & communication-device (SMD) for accessing online services and information, and for staying connected to the world around them. Today in the United States nearly two-thirds of the population own a smartphone, and for many these devices are a key entry point to the online world.¹ In the Netherlands, the Dutch are even more attached to their mobile device as 78.8% of the Dutch population uses their smartphone as the main device for Internet access.² Most people bring their device everywhere they go in order to stay connected and updated. On an average day, people spend nearly an hour scrolling through Facebook status updates, liking Instagram posts, or chatting on Messenger, with an average of twenty minutes per visit on each specific social media application at a time.³ Historian Simon Schama describes the people who stare at the screens on their mobile devices as the “look down generation,” which is a very common sight in today’s society as people spend so much time on their SMDs.⁴ This generation, of which the boundaries are hard to determine by age profile, is so addicted to their smartphones that the smart device has more or less become an extension of their bodies. People bring their SMDs constantly along with them, anywhere they go, including to work. As people get pre-occupied with their SMD during working hours, valuable production time might be at stake, and the ability of people to concentrate on a single subject declines.⁵

The presence and use of SMDs in the car cause hundreds of traffic accidents annually in the Netherlands.⁶ Horsman and Connis estimate that “in the United States, drivers were using mobile phones in almost a quarter of all reported incidents.”⁷ These figures prove concerning, since the ability of drivers to operate their vehicles proficiently is significantly decreased whilst

using a mobile device, thereby increasing the chances of an incident or accident occurring on the road. The railway accident in Germany, killing eleven people on February 19, 2016, is another terrible example of the misuse of the smartphone while on the job.⁸

This problem certainly extends to the military context, where the SMD is ubiquitous throughout the ranks. Quite often military personnel use their personal SMD to execute work assigned to them, such as making a picture to explain something to a colleague or as proof to justify their work, translating a word from an instruction manual, and even communicating with their colleagues on board other vessels or while deployed. Although this can increase efficiency, SMDs can also be a serious source of distraction from work and decrease productivity. This dichotomy often causes friction with the people who choose not to be as connected via digital networks.

1.1 Distraction by Mobile Device and Different Perspectives

With SMDs progressively embedded into all aspects of life, organizations find their employees increasingly eager to use their own personal device to conduct work.⁹ While at work, it provides the individual the opportunity to stay continuously connected with the outside world. The ability to be “always on” tends to blend work and personal life.¹⁰ SMDs generate auditory or tactile notification to alert users of incoming messages and calls. Although these notifications are generally short in duration, according to researchers at Florida State University, “they can prompt task-irrelevant thoughts, or mind wandering, which has been shown to damage task performance.”¹¹ Several studies show that interacting with a mobile phone is associated with poorer performance on concurrently performed tasks because limited attentional resources must be shared between different tasks. The researchers argue that “cellular phone notifications alone

significantly disrupted performance on an attention-demanding task, even when participants did not directly interact with a mobile device during the task.”¹²

Although most people use SMDs for email, text messaging, there is diversity in the amount of time people spend on the smart device and in the various applications they use.¹³ In general, the age group 18-28 years spends at least double the amount of time on mobile devices compared to the fifty plus group.¹⁴ The usage of the different applications can vary enormously. Although hard to actually determine the exact boundaries by the groups, in general, there is a disparity between the two sets of people who use the mobile device in a different manner. One group is more conservative in the use of applications and in general to the use of mobile devices. The conservative group does receive and write email; post items on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter; check for news updates; and communicate directly with an “old friend” via a message application, for example WhatsApp. But the other group is more adventurous and takes full advantage of the capabilities of their mobile devices. They tend to make use of more contemporary applications through which they discover and get connected with “new friends.” The amount of time spent and the way people use their mobile device differs, including the observation of how the other is distracted by a notification on the mobile device. This difference can cause frustration between the individual employees and their management, as both can be part of either of the groups.

US Army Colonel Hibbard describes the observed frustrations as well. In his thesis he states that the Army’s leadership has a major challenge due to generational differences, as “many leaders speak a language of pre-digital vocabulary and struggle to communicate with this generation that speaks a dynamic new language, possesses different thinking patterns and communication preferences.”¹⁵ It is hard to communicate with people who are distracted by their mobile device, mostly because their sense of what is important differs (as does their definition of

what “good” communication consists of) and effective communication between the two parties can be hampered. The aim of this study is to close the communication gap between the two, in hopes of enhancing the productivity of the team.

While they do provide the option for improved access to information and potential efficiency, the negative side of SMDs is the tendency for work distraction, decline in productivity, and communication challenges with leadership. The Third Culture Building (TCB) communication framework will be suggested as a means for bridging the cultural gap so that leaders can keep their personnel on task, while not neglecting their personal relationships.

1.2 Preview of this Paper

After the review of the impact of Smart Devices on productivity and Casimir's Third Culture Building theory, this paper will discuss two case studies in a corporate and educational context, respectively. Then, the paper examines whether the measurements taken in each case study align with the steps described in Casimir's model. The lens of Third Culture Building will be used to frame the two case studies and glean lessons learned. After introducing aspects of Casimir's Third Culture Building theory that can be applicable to the military environment, the paper ends with recommendations for military leadership on implementing the lessons in order to acknowledge the advantages of the third culture and subsequently a better working environment.

1.3 Review of Literature Related to the Impact of Smart Devices on Productivity

Research by Sinha Neeta and Arora Poonam conclude that members of generation Y are so adept with the usage of mobile devices that “they hardly consider it as a distraction even in the midst of most challenging work.”¹⁶ Despite their positive impact, there is a negative side of the use of smart devices as well, which in some literature is regarded as a consequence of the so-called “technostress.”¹⁷ The experts still are not exactly sure how smartphone use affects our

productivity levels and concentration spans, but the 2016 study from Florida State University sheds more light on the matter.¹⁸ It states “that mobile notifications can play havoc with our focus, even if we don’t actually pick up the phone to respond to them. The problem is that alerts can break our concentration, whether we take action on them straight away - if you hear (or feel) that a text has come in, then the likelihood is you’ll start wondering who it’s from, what it might say and how you could respond.”¹⁹ According to the researchers, all of that thinking takes up valuable “bandwidth” inside the brain and takes our mind off the task at hand. As described in the first paragraph of this introduction, several severe accidents have occurred due to the misuse of the mobile device. A 2014 study in a driving simulator found that while driving the driver got distracted by notifications; this resulted subsequently in an elevated crash risk of texting while driving, which lingered even after the texting event had ceased.²⁰

Distraction and interruption are also the first two items people report when asked how cell phones hurt their business.²¹ According to a 2016 survey, seventy percent of the workers keep continuous eye contact with their SMDs while at work.²² The same survey assessed that workers waste at least two hours per day as their “attention is stolen” by their personal mobile devices. In her article in *Proceedings Magazine*, Commander Darcie Cunningham, US Coast Guard, points out the struggle of leading the Millennial generation and how she feels the need for “course-correction.”²³ Although she receives a lot of comments on her article, many acknowledge that there is an issue between the different generational cultures.²⁴ In a commentary on the aforementioned article about Millennials in the *Air & Space Power Journal*, two United States Air Force officers propose some suggestions to bridge the cultural gap, which reassemble the building of a third culture out of two existing ones.²⁵

1.4 Review of Literature Related to Third Culture Building

In the late seventies, Dr. Fred Casmir developed his thinking on the actual development or building of what he called a “third realm” or “third culture” to model desirable communication and relationship between people.²⁶ His theory focuses on the process of people from two different cultures coming together to form a third culture between them. Based on cooperative, nonthreatening, and mutual beneficial interaction, a “third culture” can not only build the bridge, but also shape a whole new relationship in which the participants flourish. Third Culture Building communication can be best understood as a way to bring two or more individuals together in a new established culture, while leaving the original culture behind. This does not mean that individual cultures become irrelevant. The new, effective, and mutually acceptable way of benefitting from the human relationship is built upon what the different individuals all bring along. This includes some of the history as well, but the main thought is that there is a need and a requirement for cooperative and mutually beneficial communication between the stakeholders. Two or more human beings who find it necessary or desirable to share limited resources in a specific environment for mutual benefit, then, according to Casmir, develop “their own framework, value systems, and communication system for purposes of survival, mutual growth, and enjoyment of life experience.”²⁷

Both Getinet Belay and Robert Shuter, in their commentaries on Casmir, state that Third Culture Building is nothing new. Belay argues that earlier work, which envisioned “symbiotic processes that could harmoniously connect human beings beyond existing cultural boundaries,” is similar to Casmir’s thoughts.²⁸ Nevertheless, later in his article Belay admits that, contrary to what other historical models described, Third Culture Building requires something more of the participants. Shuter relates Casmir’s model to earlier work by synergy theorists, social interdependence theorists, and equity theorists.²⁹ He reasons that Anton Stauffer’s synergy

thoughts from 1982 that “an overlap of cultural beliefs and values... achieve more than the sum of each component” are similar to Casmir’s mutual growth.³⁰ Shuter states that any relationship that produces influence and change is inherent interdependence, and that relational partners influence each other indifferently and therefore develop new relational norms based on perceived equity like Third Culture Building does. Later in his commentary, Shuter reasons all three theories as building blocks of Third Culture Building and Casmir’s theory “are more than adjustment and adaptation – it is a renegotiation and synthesis of the most integral components of the human cultural experience - attitudes, values and more.”³¹

Shuter also criticizes Casmir and argues that by embracing the Third Culture Building theory, people lose personal and cultural identity; any change in their cultural tradition may be observed as a form of cultural imperialism.³² While on one hand cultural heritage is lost, multiculturalism becomes more popular and Shuter argues that “multiculturalism may be at odds with Third Culture Building.”³³ The appeal for cultural negotiation, convergence, and adaptation are all anathema to the multicultural goal of preserving an individual’s culture. Contrary to Third Culture Building, multiculturalism is not founded on synthesis. Shuter claims that, especially in the United States, many cultures “are being ignored in curricula and textbook in the name of *e pluribus unum*.”³⁴ Later in his commentary, he argues that many scholars in the eighties and nineties have redefined models of multiculturalism with a strong ethical component that weakens the unique identity of multiculturalism.³⁵ By doing so Shuter favors Third Culture Building, which searches for common ground between parties that should always be present. In their famous book on personality, psychologist Henry A. Murray and anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn make an argument for this common ground between personalities by stating that “every person is like all persons, like some persons, and like no other person.”³⁶ Also, Belay argues in his commentary that Casmir’s approach to intercultural and international communication, based on

Casmir's humanistic motives, is one of universalist concern in which Casmir excludes multiculturalism.³⁷ Casmir would justify his approach with the argument that "it is individuals who communicate, not institutions."³⁸ The focal point of this paper is on the everyday communicative interaction between people and not the broader (intraorganizational, interorganizational, intrastate, and international) perspective, and therefore, the broader perspective can be neglected. Belay and Casmir both agree that Third Culture Building "focuses on the challenges and opportunities that current processes present to the human personality."³⁹ Further, the creation of a new construct, as suggested by Casmir's model, does not automatically imply that the old will disappear. Therefore, despite the skepticism of some intercultural communication scholars, multiculturalism and Third Culture Building can coexist.

Casmir refers to Starosta's work for understanding Third Culture Building by listing the nine chronological phases. He regards these phases or steps as a natural development that facilitate the process of Third Culture Building, which can be found in Appendix A.⁴⁰ Later in his career, Casmir narrowed these steps of successful communication down to eight and, at the same time, made these steps more practical.⁴¹ These steps include the following:

1. making contact with the communication partner
2. acknowledging a mutual need for cooperation
3. gathering information about one another
4. reflecting on one's own outlook, needs, values, ethics, and standards
5. reflecting on how one's own outlook, needs, values, ethics, and standards can be integrated with those of the communication partner
6. negotiating, creating, testing, and modifying one's approaches
7. bringing it all together
8. (re)negotiating both the communication and the relationship with the partner

These steps, Casmir asserted, emphasize eight primary qualities that are central to the study and practice of communication between cultural beings. First, Third Culture Building (TCB) is an organic, bottom-up, and emergent practice in that participants transform their

resources for purposes of making something constructive. Second, TCB is focused on process, and it provides users with a general framework for engaging in communication. Third, TCB is an egalitarian approach rooted in the ideals of fairness and democracy. Fourth, TCB requires self-knowledge and/or self-discovery, and knowledge of one's communication partner. Fifth, TCB is both conscious and deliberate. Sixth, TCB is based in proactive action. Seventh, the TCB framework imagines possibilities for positive outcomes. Eighth, TCB requires time. These eight primary qualities of TCB are all required to move forward in an effort to build new definitions, relationships, and realities. The cases described and analyzed in the following chapters make it clear that efforts to tackle the cultural issues are in place; however the cases do not embrace all of the required eight steps of Casimir's model.

2. A Commercial and an Educational Case Study

Management of commercial companies, college professors, and military leadership alike face the same issue of how to counter the bad working habits and frustration caused by addictive behavior to the Smart Mobile Device. This chapter will present two cases in an educational and commercial context, respectively. The paper will fully describe and analyze each case before moving on to the next one. Each case starts with a description and a statement on the context of the frustrations. Secondly, the paper will articulate which method the management, professors, or leadership in general issued to tackle the issues, and thirdly, state the outcome and results of each action taken. Finally, each framework will be analyzed and compared with the Casimir's eight steps and eight qualities in order to bring insight why the measures and actions taken in the two studied cases did not bring the results the respective environments were after .

2.1 Commercial Study (South African firms)

Alexandre Rodrigues examined in his 2011 study the perceived impacts of smartphone use on the performance of senior managers in South African firms. Via a phenomenological research design, Rodrigues examined people's perception, understanding, and perspectives on the use of smartphones.⁴²

2.1.1 Background

The respondents in Rodrigues' study exhibited mixed feelings when asked about their smart phone use. Various paradoxes associated with the use of this technology emerged in his study, as the device could both have a positive (constructive) and a negative (destructive) impact on individual productivity and wellbeing.⁴³ Rodrigues describes these impacts as follows:

On the constructive side, the smart phone can help one harness the benefits that the tool has to offer, especially if used correctly (i.e. with self-discipline and control). These

benefits (perceived or real) include increasing one's productivity, maintaining a work-life balance, aiding one during emergencies, helping employees communicate effectively, keeping workers up to date with news/events, and providing people with a host of useful tools, such as mobile email, cameras etc., all of which help to improve the performance of an individual in their daily lives....On the destructive side, the device can lead to a number of potentially undesirable outcomes, especially if used inappropriately (i.e. by people who have workaholic or addictive tendencies). These adverse consequences may include causing interruptions at work, extending work hours (creating addiction), endangering one's health/other's lives, creating a fear of missing out (FOMO), and letting one down (lack of reliability/robustness).⁴⁴

The major overarching theme that emerged from Rodrigues' analysis was that of the "always-on connectivity."⁴⁵ The merit of having constant, immediate access to the Internet and contact blurs the line between business and the home environment. This two-edged sword causes the imbalance and the frustration.

2.1.2 Method

Rodrigues describes in total fifteen strategies to manage the imbalance and misemployment of the smart devices.⁴⁶ These strategies can be divided in two sub-sets: dictated restrictive rules (how and when to use the smart mobile device), and cognitive rules (how to communicate). The dictated rules include instructions for setting up an auto-response for out of office messages, directions for switching to silent mode and disabling the notifications, restricting the bandwidth usage and ability to visit certain websites, and the prohibitive use of the smart mobile device at all. On the other hand, the cognitive rules were a more pragmatic outcome of having respect for one another and of personal discipline on how and when to use the smart mobile device. These strategies included managing the expectations in advance of one's contractibility during a meeting, self-control to conduct preparatory action to minimize distraction, and dialoging the use of SMDs.

2.1.3 Outcome

Rodrigues did not carry out exhaustive research on the results and outcomes of the different strategies, but, supported by other literature, he described some of the consequences of the strategies. The restrictive strategies initiated by the management of the companies (and not always supported by their employment) work against the productivity argument and might be impractical as “the smart mobile devices are here to stay.”⁴⁷ The South African managers were convinced that smart mobile devices improve one’s ability to communicate, and therefore they support the usage. Nevertheless, one of Rodrigues’ findings was that a need to manage the use of such devices, especially during work gatherings, is essential. The usage and acceptance is thus context dependent. In order to accept the usage, rules need to be agreed upon and personal discipline in place to carry them out. It is required from a user that he or she ensures that one is always in control of his or her habits and must be aware of the proper etiquettes on the use of the device. Therefore, managing the expectations in advance of one’s contractibility during a meeting, despite the first thwart, was very useful.

Personal discipline linked to the use of the smart mobile device needs to be in place to counter excessive multitasking and unhealthy Fear of Missing Out (FOMO) habits, which are two of the main causes of counterproductivity.⁴⁸ The executive management needs to be particularly aware of their own smart mobile device use and set an example that will encourage constructive habits. This includes leading the discussion on smart mobile device etiquettes and shaping the environment of being unafraid to reprimand others with regard to their use.

2.1.4 Study Framework Analysis

Rodrigues’ research stresses the importance of self-discipline and setting the boundaries as the main items to manage the smart mobile devices and “putting the control back into the hand

of the user.”⁴⁹ Despite the fact that Rodrigues did not literally state the outcome of each of his fifteen strategies, his study provides insight into the main theme and thoughts of senior managers of commercial business in South Africa on countering the issue in regard to the use and frustration of smart mobile devices.

The first step in Casmir’s model on Third Culture Building (making contact with the communication partner) is met as Rodrigues argues for “respect for another and open dialogue.”⁵⁰ The second step (acknowledging a mutual need for cooperation) is also met as both the managers and the employees see issues with the use of smart mobile devices in their surroundings and become now and then frustrated. It is unclear whether the third step (gather information about one another) is met. Nonetheless, one can ask oneself if people already know another or not in a working environment. Colleagues are not total strangers to one another, but how well do they really know each other? Therefore, depending on the situation and the work relation in place, Casmir’s third step is met. The stated discussion about the etiquettes and reprimands by leadership and employees give content to Casmir’s steps four and five (reflecting on one’s own outlook, needs, values, ethics, and standards, and how this can be integrated with those of the communication partner). In Rodrigues’ paper, there is no mentioning of two-way interaction other than the earlier mentioned open dialogue and management-led discussions; therefore, it is unclear whether (intended or not) input was given to Casmir’s steps six, seven, and eight. This leads to the conclusion that about half of the steps in Casmir’s model were carried out by the South African senior managers.

When compared against Casmir’s eight primary qualities of TCB, they do not meet all the points. First the managers do not regard it as a “bottom-up” practice, but approach the issue foremost with regulations from the top down. Secondly, by doing so managers do not view themselves as equals. Nevertheless, as they need to provide the right example to the employees,

managers need to step down and equalize themselves with their personnel. Third, employees will not automatically accept and agree with the rules and regulations regarding the use of smart mobile devices imposed on them. Whether the South African managers take time into consideration is unclear from the research. Derived from the manager's first action to start off with issuing regulation, one could assume that they would like a quick fix. On the other hand, some of the stated strategies by Rodrigues are in line with the TCB qualities. Most notable is the quality to know oneself and one's habits, which is unlike the requirement of self-discipline with the use of an SMD. Noteworthy is also the opportunity the open dialogue and the leadership lead discussion provide to suffice with the TCB requirement for a conscious and deliberate communication effort based in a proactive action.

2.2 Educational Study (US Higher Education System)

Arizona State University scholars Pauline Hope Cheong, Robert Shuter, and Tara Suwinyattichaiorn examine in their 2016 paper how to manage student digital distraction and hyperconnectivity. Via interviews with sixty-five professors from two North American universities, they describe communication strategies and challenges for professorial authority. In another 2015 study, Jeffrey H. Kuznekoff, Stevie Munz, and Scott Titsworth describe the impact of mobile phones in the classroom by examining the effects of texting, twitter, and message content on student learning, communication, and education. Their study partially builds on previous research, but foremost describes the outcome of an experiment among 145 undergraduate students enrolled in communication classes at a large Midwestern university.

2.2.1 Background

The Midwestern researchers regard "the struggle of retaining student interest and engagement while students remain connected to the outside world through their mobile devices"

as “one of the biggest challenges instructors face in the 21st-century college classroom.”⁵¹ Most commonly, instructors observe students who are physically present, yet mentally occupied by non-course related material on their mobile devices. Ninety-five percent of the students admitted that they always bring their mobile phone with them to class, and most of them expect to be able to use their smart mobile device in the classroom. Not only does the performance of the one smart mobile device user decrease in class, it also distracts those students seated around the “multitasker.”⁵²

The Arizona State University paper states that “students’ distractions and in-class diversionary activities like fiddling have historically been of concern to communication educators.”⁵³ They regard disruptive summons and notifications from mobile devices, instant messaging, and diversions like social media use as contemporary digital distractions in classrooms. Nowadays students are less focused and harbor a “strong sense of entitlement to the freedom to direct their attention wherever they want.”⁵⁴ Students’ hyperconnectivity and option to conduct multiple tasks, while in class, with their smart mobile device threaten the professor’s authority to instruct.

2.2.2 Method

The study carried out by Kuznekoff et al. suggests cautiousness against rushing to integrate texting and Twitter into the classroom as they could only prove that relevant messaging does not have a negative impact on learning, but a positive outcome of this use could not be verified.⁵⁵ Further, they advise professors to provide students a break in the lecture or class, so the students can use this time for message composition, including tweeting questions for the “less vocal students” in class.⁵⁶

Cheong et al. categorize the strategies to manage students' digital distraction under four main themes. First, and the most popular strategy amongst their interviewees, is the preemptive use and communication of codified rules. In many cases students had to sign an agreement, which included a ban on the use of smart mobile devices in classrooms. Secondly, via strategic redirection professors help channel students' attention from their digital distraction back to the instructors' teachings in class. Either by intentionally posing questions, creating propinquity, integrating technology in the lectures (e.g. wireless clickers to elicit students' response), or asking their students to engage in impromptu online information searches during class, professors redirect the attention to them. The third classroom management strategy was the enforcement of communicative sanctions. This strategy included public humiliation via "naming and shaming," personal reprimands, and disabling wireless access or confiscating students' smart mobile devices. In contrast to the former discursive sanction strategy, the fourth approach was to deflect and ignore. The interviewees reported that they shifted their focus away from managing deviant behaviour and made their students accountable for their diversionary practices and consequences.

2.2.3 Outcome

Fixed lecture theater settings and the limited classroom time for disciplinary interventions negatively affect the professors' ability to guide and direct students' attention.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, the study by Cheong et al. displays that by managing and balancing different online and offline class activities to redirect students' attention to them, professors enacted and reinforced their authority to lead. This suggestion is in line with the Kuznekoff et al. proposition to plan for a technology break during the lecture to ensure that smart mobile devices do not interfere with students' listening and note-taking activities in class.

Cheong et al.'s first strategy to impose rules was only partially successful as students violated the undersigned agreement and kept using their smart mobile devices. Also, strategic redirection of the students' attention leads to modest success as it absorbs a lot of time and energy and influences the other non-distracted students' teaching. Therefore, the professors try to find a balance in accomplishing pedagogical objectives while enacting their classroom authority.⁵⁸ The integration of technology in the lecture was also limited "as they seemed less effective in the long run."⁵⁹ The actively engaged discursive sanctions based on the issued rules were also not very successful as the interviewees reported "limited confidence in determining success of their strategy."⁶⁰ Cheong et al. do not reflect on the outcome of deflection as the fourth strategy, probably as the neglect seems to emphasize the fact that the educator is not engaged. Nonetheless, it would be interesting to note whether neglecting "bad" classroom behavior and the support of attentive proactive engagement to the lecture by students would have positive influence on the total classroom community. This might be an interesting subject for a follow-on study.

2.2.4 Study Framework Analysis

The study carried out by Cheong et al. indicates that instructors use a variety of strategies to counter digital distractions, try to reach out to students, and reconfigure their authority in 21st century learning environments. The researchers did not conduct an empirical investigation of observable phenomena as an outcome of each of the strategies, but this study provides insight in the main themes and thoughts of educators in an American university environment on countering the issue of distraction and the frustration with the use of smart mobile devices in classrooms.

By addressing their students in the classroom, professors naturally meet the first step in Casmir's model on Third Culture Building (making contact with the communication partner). It

is not obvious if the second step (acknowledging a mutual need for cooperation) is also met as the student might not see the impact of his or her behavior. He or she might only wonder why the study results are not as one would have wished for. On the other hand, in the case that students feel the professor's frustration and want to engage, they could find ways to communicate with the educator (e.g. all universities have a student council). The study does not describe whether both parties gather information about one another (the third step of Casmir's model), but one can assume that educators are interested in pedagogical contexts and in their students. Likewise, students are presumably as interested in their teacher. The implementation and codification of rules can to a certain extent be regarded as content to Casmir's steps four and five (reflecting on one's own outlook, needs, values, ethics, and standards, and how this can be integrated with those of the communication partner) as to a certain level professors try to implement modern techniques and incorporate the active Internet search within their classes. The researchers concentrate on the actions of the professors and do not describe any way of two-way interaction in their article. Therefore, it is unclear whether input was given to Casmir's steps six, seven, and eight. This leads to the conclusion that, as in the case of the South African managers, the American educators carried out about half of the steps in Casmir's model.

When compared against Casmir's eight primary qualities of TCB, the described strategies do not meet all the points. First, the professors do not regard it as a "bottom-up" practice, but enforce regulations upon students. Secondly, the professors do not see themselves as equals of students, but more as the ones who must guide their class. As students "are dedicated to their screen no matter what you do," this highlights that students do not automatically accept and agree with the rules and regulations regarding the use of smart mobile devices imposed on them.⁶¹ According to the interviewees, the element "time" is a constraining factor in their engagement to counter the distraction in classroom, as they are limited to the assigned teaching period for face-

to-face interaction with their students. Despite the fact that half of Casmir's described qualities are not met, some of the stated strategies fit well in his model. Most notable is the "myriad approaches" which Cheong et al. have illustrated and the fact that instructors feel challenged and are searching for pedagogical approaches.⁶² This all suggests that the professors pro-actively explore possibilities for positive outcomes without advocating for one specifically, but foremost to the benefit of both teacher and student.

2.3 Conclusion

Both case studies display frustration by others related to the observed use of smart mobile devices in either the working or schooling environment. Both case studies also argue that the use of the smart mobile devices has a negative impact on the performance of the respective employee (or employer him/herself) and student. The constant temptation to do things, such as react to a notification on their smart mobile device, drives managers and educational professionals to employ rules from above on their societies to counter these disruptive distractions. In both fields of work, people acknowledge the great potential of the smart mobile device; on the other hand, many people in both communities also favor a total ban on the usage.

Both cases give input to at least half of the steps described by Casmir's communications model, but it is remarkable that neither of the studies in the two environments addresses steps six, seven, and eight, which deal with negotiating, bringing solutions together, and renegotiating. Also, half of the TCB qualities are met. It is remarkable that in both environments the implied strategies start from a top-down approach instead of the other way around. A follow on from that approach is the fact that the stakeholders in both environments do not see each other as equals. The managers rise above the employees as the professors are in the lead of their students. In that kind of environment, it is unlikely that slow and deliberate reflection of both parties will take

place, and mutual information seeking (both associated with the quality “time”) is also not very likely.

3. Third Culture Building Theory Applicability

A military organization is historically the great bastion of hierarchy and deference.⁶³ People still see the military as a society that obeys rules, where the hierarchical structure is obvious by rank insignia, and lower ranks are told to do their jobs without discussion. From a generalist's (or outsider's) point of view, one could argue that the military organization with its structure and procedures does not resemble Casimir's eight qualities of Third Culture Building. This raises the question if there is room for a third culture in such a context. And when this is the case, can Third Culture Building close the gap and take away the frustration caused by the use of SMDs as described in the introduction? This chapter will first argue that, despite a different general thought, the modern military organization is typically based on consultative leadership and therefore open to third culture building, and secondly that Casimir's model could be an appropriate tool to counter the frustration caused by excessive use of smart mobile devices, improve the communication in a community and, by doing so, improve the overall productivity.

3.1 Casimir's Theory in a Military Organization

Already twenty years ago, Colonel Dunivin argued that the American military is, "undergoing a cultural paradigm shift—moving away from its traditional [combat, masculine-warrior] CMW beliefs and values of exclusion toward an inclusionary view of soldiering."⁶⁴ The new military culture, as Colonel Dunivin describes, can be characterized by egalitarianism and inclusiveness. Also in the British Army things are not as hierarchical and strict as their core values show: Courage, Discipline, Respect for Others, Integrity, Loyalty, and Selfless Commitment. In a British Army Guide, the Director General Leadership describes respect for others as "treating others as we would wish to be treated ourselves."⁶⁵ According to the Director General, this is not only a legal obligation, but he argues that it is a creed that builds effective

organizations with a positive outlook, where team members feel valued and motivated. These thoughts are in line with Karl Moore's requirements for the military leaders to embrace a consultative leadership style.⁶⁶ According to a description by UNESCO:

The Consultative Leadership Style combines elements of both democratic and directive leadership orientations. They value group discussion and tend to encourage contributions from the separate members of the team. However, although group discussions will be largely democratic in nature, Consultative Leaders typically make the final decision as to which of the varying proposals should be accepted.⁶⁷

Although communication in a military organization might seem very hierarchical, in fact it holds all of Casimir's eight primary qualities of Third Culture Building.

3.2 Third Culture Building to Close the Gap

Casimir conceptualized the Third Culture Building framework as a way to construct a mutually beneficial interactive environment in which individuals from two different cultures can function in a way beneficial to all involved.⁶⁸ People who are continuously attached to their smart mobile device and the others who get frustrated by those people are arguably in two diverse cultures. For example, the professor who wants to retain the attention of the social media engaged students in the class room, or the manager who is distracted each time someone receives and responds to a notification while in a meeting. Both examples illustrate a requirement for a mutually beneficial atmosphere to counter the gap that momentarily exists.

3.3 Conclusion

The gap between people with a different view on how to use smart mobile devices in the public, educational, and commercial domains can be closed by focusing on the potential benefits of building a new culture between them. Even in a military environment, which is traditionally seen as hierarchical, Third Culture Building can be used to overcome the frustration between dissimilar people with different ranks or different beliefs on how to react and respond to the use

of smart mobile devices. TCB is better suited for interpersonal communication (in relationships) than group communication, but important insights from the theory can still be gleaned and incorporated into small group contexts.

4. Recommendations for Military Leadership

“The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.”

George Bernard Shaw⁶⁹

In order to make the framework of Third Culture Building effective, Casmir stressed that there are eight primary qualities that are “central to the study and practice of communication between cultural beings.”⁷⁰ Not all of these qualities were met in the two case studies presented, but this chapter will provide advice to military leadership on how to fulfill these qualities within a military context. Another outcome of the case studies was the observation that in both environments the actors did not implement all eight steps of Casmir’s model. This chapter will also offer guidance to military leadership on how to accomplish all eight steps, and advice on implementing the eight qualities, in order to counter communication and associated productivity issues and build the bridge to what they perceive as a different “look-down” generation.

4.1 Lessons from the Case Studies

The analysis of the two cases studies showed that none had implemented all eight steps of Third Culture Building as argued by Casmir. Neither were the primary qualities in place to facilitate a working environment in which a third culture would have the opportunity to raise.

4.2 Advice to Military Leadership

When coping with the smart phone addicted personnel, one should realize that the other might live in a totally different culture, have different standards, outlooks, needs, values, and ethics, and therefore might just see things differently than oneself. To be able to start building a third culture and work things out, one should strive to facilitate the eight primary qualities as

described by Casmir. How these circumstances can be created in a military environment will be described in the first sub paragraph followed in the second sub paragraph by options on how to carry out Casmir's eight steps framework.

4.2.1 Military Leadership Create Primary Qualities for TCB

Among many other things, military leadership is most responsible for setting the scene and creating the environment for personnel to work in. Although it sounds like a *contradictio in terminis*, the first quality that Casmir asserted, the requirement for an organic and bottom-up approach, is actually initiated by the top. Leadership determines the atmosphere on the work floor and allows for the lower ranks to take initiative.⁷¹ To create this kind of atmosphere, leadership should use a consultative leadership style where, based on fairness and some kind of democracy, people treat each other equally. This ties in nicely with Casmir's third quality. All the other qualities that Casmir mentioned are not specific responsibilities for leadership to set up.

Both stakeholders have a responsibility toward the creation of and the respect for the other six qualities to come to a third culture. This result can only be achieved if the stakeholders have self-knowledge, are open to self-discovery, and understand what each is motivated by. It requires, according to Casmir, a kind of growing together, as during the process "participants discover and negotiate how they can best work together."⁷² The participants should focus on the process, as TCB is just a general framework that helps to build a third realm. The framework imagines possibilities for positive outcomes and therefore, one should not restrict oneself to any solution. This whole process takes time, so allow for it to consume time, but do not wait out and expect it to happen. Only by a pro-active approach towards the issue can the participants reach the third culture. Conscious and deliberate communication is essential in the process to get to that

point. Casimir's framework helps setting up this mutually beneficial communication process and relationship.⁷³

4.2.2 Implementing Casimir's Eight Step Framework

The first step of the framework states that one needs to make contact with the communicating partner. This seems to be very obvious and easy; however, one needs to keep the above-mentioned qualities in mind and create a mutually beneficial and egalitarian environment. Based on literature and a 2015 RAND study, the 360-degree assessment tool could be used to understand the strengths and weaknesses of a person or a relation. It is also “an opportunity to gain insight—a tool that can facilitate conversation between leaders and subordinates about what is needed to develop.”⁷⁴ In addition to the use of this model in the first step, it can help to facilitate the acknowledgement of the mutual need for cooperation (step 2), to gather information about one another (step 3) and to reflect on one's own outlook, needs, values, ethics, and standards (step 4). The RAND study describes how the assessment tool “could be used for leader development, [...] help service members evaluate the results and incorporate them into self-improvement goals.”⁷⁵ This then “facilitate[s] conversation between leaders and subordinates about what is needed to develop.”⁷⁶ The 360-degree assessment tool is not something that one uses on a weekly basis, but can provide the first bases for further communication and relation building. Additionally, leadership is advised to consider the value of “integrative complexity” in their continued personal and professional development. Defined as “the process of understanding and integrating what is old with what is new, switching between perspectives, and resolving inconsistent cognitions between them,” integrative complexity is essential for making sense of cultural complexity and managing interpersonal conflict.⁷⁷

Further, Tadmor, Tetlock, and Peng explain integrative complexity as: “The capacity and willingness to acknowledge the legitimacy of competing perspectives on the same issue (differentiation) and to forge conceptual links among these perspectives (integration).”⁷⁸ This approach, in which a person considers and combines multiple perspectives is a more sustainable effort to bridge the cultural gap and advance the communication towards an end that benefits both parties.

Casmir acknowledged the diversity in communication habits, preferences, modes, needs and interests.⁷⁹ In order to integrate those of the communication partner (step 5), there is a need for a continuous open and honest communication process. Daily or weekly evaluation moments can be used to structure this and provides a platform to negotiate, create, test and modify one’s approach (step 6), as well as merge it with the other (step 7). The open dialogue between the partners is of utmost importance to make progress in these steps. To better understand the interpersonal communication needs of each character in a team, knowledge on different team roles as branded by Meredith Belbin (see Appendix B) might be of use to the leadership. For the renegotiating process of the communication and the relation (step 8), an assessment tool such as the 360-degree assessment should be used to evaluate the created open-ended third culture, or again Belbin’s communication advises in order to keep the evaluation moving and progress can be made before the next official assessment period might be of use.

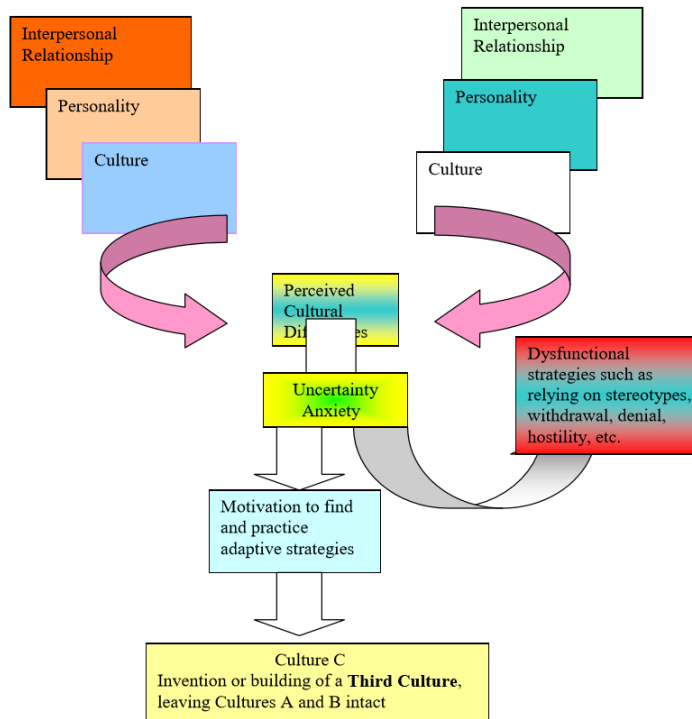
Casmir’s eight step model helps to lead people to build a third culture. In order to get there, people need to communicate, which can be facilitated by tools like 360-degree assessment, Belbin’s communication advice, and the development of integrative complexity.

Appendix A – Third Culture Building Communication Theory

Casmir refers to Starosta's work for understanding Third Culture Building by listing the following nine chronological phases, which he regards as a natural development, and these steps facilitate the process of Third Culture Building:⁸⁰

- T1: A notices B.
- T2: A makes self known to B.
- T3: A seeks information about B.
- T4: A engages B in the same processes already described.
- T5: A and B start to question their attitudes, mores, and values as they relate to each other.
- T6: A and B replace some attitudes, mores and values and modify others to more resemble each other.
- T7: A and B integrate new or revised attitudes, mores and values into existing constellations.
- T8: A and B renegotiate their relationship in light of changing circumstances and contexts.
- T9: Some of the renegotiated aspects of the relationship become permanent and self-perpetuating.

Dr. Stephen Holmes describes in his article on Intercultural Communication and Dialogue Process the process of Third Culture Building and provides a figure to better understand the framework:



Appendix B – Belbin Team Roles and Inter-Role Communication

Dr. Meredith Belbin is a British scholar with a background in ancient languages and psychology. In the 1980s, he conducted extensive research to the effectiveness of management teams. During his nine-year research, he organized several management games and found that groups needed the right mix of people to be effective. His research first identified nine team roles that are essential in a team of people. Based on the results of his research, Belbin was able to forecast the winner of these management games. Even teams with something less than the ideal distribution of talents could, according to Belbin, “compensate for shortcomings by recognizing a latent weakness and deciding to do something about it.”⁸¹

Max Isaac and Kevin Carson provide in their *Guide to Belbin Team Roles* a summary of the nine team roles:

Plant

People who are strong in the Plant role are innovators and inventors and can be highly creative. They provide the seeds and ideas from which major developments spring. Usually, they prefer to operate by themselves at some distance from the other members of the team, using their imagination and often working in an unorthodox manner. They tend to be introverted and react strongly to criticism and praise. Their ideas may often be radical and may overlook practicalities. They are independent, clever, and original. They may be weak in communicating with other people, especially those who are not as cerebral as they are. The main contribution of the Plant team role is to generate new proposals and to solve complex problems. The Plant role is often needed in the initial stages of a project or when a project is failing to progress. This role is prone to divergent or tangential lines of reasoning which can be counterproductive in some settings.

Monitor Evaluator

Strength in this role requires a serious-minded, prudent approach with a built-in immunity from being over-enthusiastic. This can slow down decision-making. High critical-thinking ability is a requirement for this role as well as an ability to take all factors into consideration. This role contributes by analyzing problems and evaluating ideas and suggestions, weighing the pros and cons of different options.

Specialist

The individuals who excel at the Specialist role are dedicated and pride themselves on acquiring technical skills and specialized knowledge. Their priorities focus on maintaining professional standards and on furthering and defending their own field.

Eventually, they become an expert by sheer commitment along a narrow front. As managers, they command support because they know more about their subject than anyone else and can usually be called upon to make decisions based on in-depth experience. While they show great pride in their own subject, they may lack interest in other people's subjects. This role plays an indispensable part in some teams. It provides the rare skill or knowledge that is key to fixing the problem being addressed.

Shaper

The Shaper role is associated with high levels of motivation, a lot of nervous energy and a strong need for achievement. If obstacles arise, this role is required to find a way around them. This role is required to drive forward progress. As the name implies, this contribution shapes group discussion or activities.

Implementer

Executing this role requires practical common sense and a good deal of self-control, discipline, and an ability to tackle problems in a systematic fashion. On a wider front this role requires high levels of reliability and a capacity for applied action. Individuals who execute this role effectively can be seen to lack spontaneity and show signs of rigidity. The Implementer role is necessary to keep the team focused on what needs to be done. An aptitude for establishing project plans and anticipating barriers that need to be addressed is required.

Completer Finisher

This role represents people who have a great capacity for follow-through and attention to detail. Individuals who excel at this role may be motivated by internal anxiety and are not often keen on delegating, preferring to tackle all tasks themselves. In management, they excel by the high standards to which they aspire and by their concern for precision, attention to detail, and follow-through. This role is essential when there are tasks that demand close concentration and a high degree of accuracy.

Resource Investigator

This role brings a lot of energy to the team. Those that execute this role well are often enthusiastic, extroverted, and quick to act. They are good at communicating with people both inside and outside the company. Although not necessarily a great source of original ideas, bringing to the team other people's ideas and developing them is the function they fulfil. As the name suggests, they are skilled at finding out what is available and bringing it back to the team. Being inquisitive is an asset in this role. This role requires an ability and interest in exploring and reporting back on ideas, developments, or resources outside the team.

Team Worker

Great capacity for flexibility and for adapting to different situations and people characterizes this role. Being perceptive and diplomatic are attributes that are required to fulfil this role. Good listening skills are important as is the ability to work with sensitivity with others on the team. The impact on the team of having this role executed effectively is that team morale tends to be better and people seem to cooperate better. Their role is to

prevent interpersonal problems from festering within a team and thus allowing all team members to contribute effectively.

Coordinator

Teams need individuals who are quick to spot individuals' talents and to use them in the pursuit of group objectives. Those that do a good job at the Coordinator role are well placed when put in charge of a team of people with diverse skills and personal characteristics. Their motto might well be "consultation with control" and they usually believe in tackling problems calmly. Mature, trusting and confident, they delegate readily. In some organizations, this role can clash with that of Shaper. The distinguishing feature of the Coordinator role is the ability to motivate others to work towards shared goals. While not necessarily the cleverest members of a team, Coordinators have a broad outlook and generally command respect.⁸²

Concluding from this summary, the first three roles can be congregated as ideas oriented roles, the second three as action oriented roles, and the final three roles as people oriented.

According to Belbin, a "Team Role describes a pattern of behavior characteristic of the way in which one team member interacts with others in facilitating the progress of the team."⁸³ As a follow on, he provided therefore some advice in working along with the different characters.

Working with a Plant:

- Keep in mind that conversations with a Plant always turn out differently than expected.
- Let the Plant surprise you and don't get too attached to an original purpose or agenda.
- Plants take a detour to make their point. Stay focused on the core idea of his message. Leave out the details and practical objections until the idea is fully communicated.
- Plant pulls back quickly when his counterparts are dominant, loud or forcing decisions.
- If you decide to do something with his idea, never forget to recognize and name his part.

Working with a Monitor Evaluator:

- Prepare yourself well, stick to the facts and always come with well-founded arguments.
- Be reasonable, open yourself to logical considerations and show what your questions and doubts are. Thereby you will get the commitment of the Monitor/Evaluator, in which case they are happy to think with you instead of against you.
- Urge no judgment, because they attach strongly to their own conclusions and to explore cases from several sides.
- If others do force through their will, against all logic, then the ME shakes his head and puts his objections into words yet again. If this does not bring the desired effect, then the ME does not know what to do. Chances are that he pulls out.

Working with a Specialist:

- The Specialists doesn't like working together.
- Focus only on the content of his profession.

- The Specialist will not intrude on others and expect the same respectful distance from others to them. They do not like the prying eyes of Resource Investigator and will strongly resist the whimsy of the Plant.

Working with a Shaper:

- Always be clear, concise and to the point.
- Be well prepared on the feasibility of the plans if you do not want be overruled.
- Make sure you always have clear-cut alternatives ready for when you want a different approach. Because if the Shaper has put his mind to something he is difficult to convince. Do not discuss too many details, and take a clear stance.
- The Shaper is naturally suspicious. When you do not take him seriously or do not give him room to do things his way, you will hear from him and he will challenge you. When you do, the Shaper is a dedicated and committed employee who comes up with more than you expected.

Working with an Implementer:

- Be accurate and realistic.
- Be reliable and predictable, do what you promise.
- If the plan changes, let him know in advance and explain why.
- Make clear agreements, preferably in the form of a roadmap, a plan or a program where transactions can be checked on realistic deadlines.
- Keep rhythm and regularity.
- Implementers are allergic to messiness and ambiguity.

Working with a Completer Finisher:

- Take time to break the ice and build a personal relationship.
- Show that you have eye for detail, that you appreciate their diligence and their caring values.
- Don't dismiss the objections of a Completer Finisher too soon. They are rooted in a deeply felt sense of responsibility that everything is safe and in order. They have to overcome shyness to speak out do not always have the logical arguments ready.
- The Completer Finisher needs to be well prepared for what lies ahead and gets frustrated when things take a sudden change. Give him time to prepare.

Working with a Resource Investigator:

- Provide a friendly and emotionally warm environment with room for digressions and sidetracks.
- Do not be too attached to a tight schedule.
- Do not discuss too many details. Ask questions that focus on the feeling and the pleasure of doing.
- A Resource Investigator thrives in informal meetings, with a high tempo and high variety of topics.
- A Resource Investigator loves exploring possibilities or setting up experiments to avoid boredom which sometimes leads to surprising contacts and surprising successes. Give him enough freedom to explore.

Working with a Team Worker:

- Take the time to break the ice and establish personal contact.
- Present your arguments and wishes in a friendly way.
- Show that you regard the Team Worker as a friend and not as an opponent.
- Ask questions-how about his vision. But don't be too demanding or insistent on a swift and decisive response.
- If the Team Worker does not feel part of the team, he can be surprisingly stubborn and resentful. Invite him to participate.

Working with a Coordinator:

- Be clear and to the point and you stick to those issues that are relevant in the context of the conversation topic.
- Make clear what you stand for, but be a good democrat: show that you're willing to accept a majority decision and drop a minority idea to the benefit of the team.
- Find the right time for your input, not too early or too late, because once a decision is made it is not likely that the Coordinator will turn it around.
- See if he, consciously or unconsciously, puts his own interests forward, which he, if asked, immediately and frankly will admit.

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