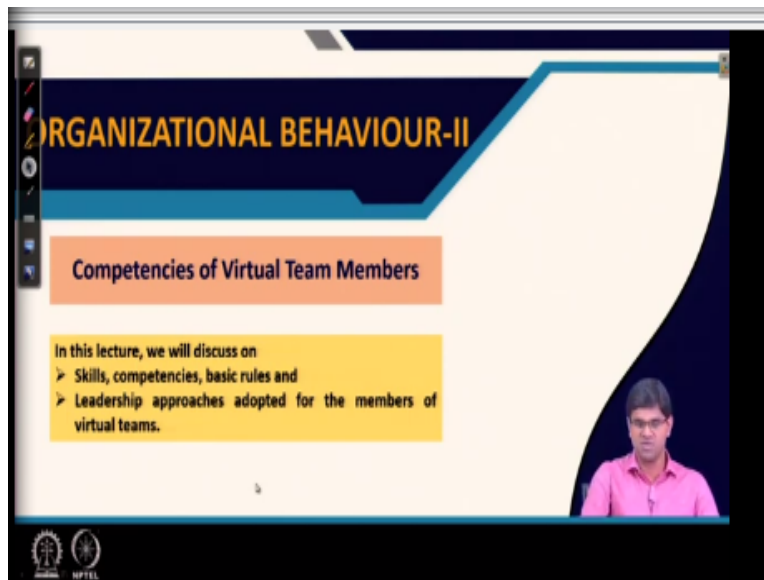


Organizational Behaviour-II
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Lecture-53
Skills and Competencies of Virtual Team Members

Welcome to lecture 3 of module 11. In the last lectures we discussed about different models of managing the virtual teams. And we learnt about 4 dimensions model and we discussed about multi level leadership models in virtual teams. Now, in this lecture we are going to discuss about important aspects of the virtual teams.

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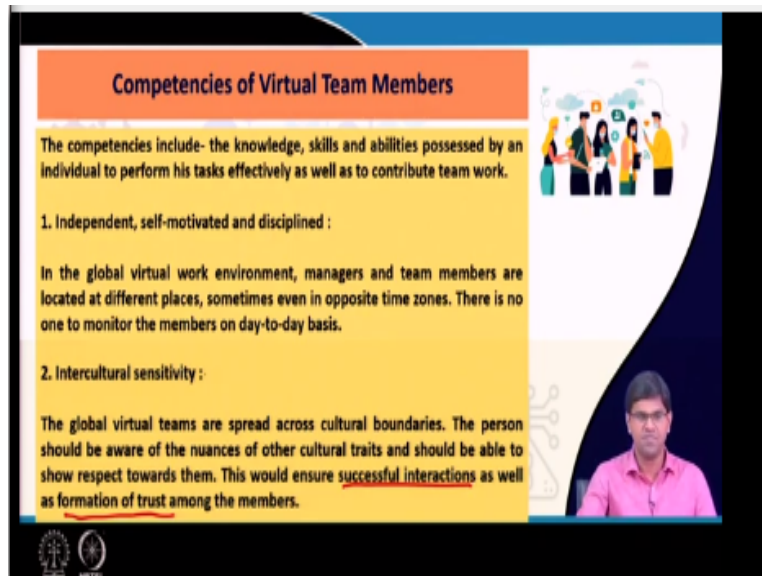


Which is about... we are going to discuss about skills and competencies required from a virtual team member and also some of the basic rules that has to be maintained in the virtual teams. This is important for 2 reasons: one is maybe you as a member you should know that whether you possess these skills or competencies else you need to develop those competencies or skills. And essentially if you as a leader from that perspective you as a manager if you want to build a virtual team you see that these are the skill and competence are required.

And some of the basic rules that require to build a better virtual team. Then we will also see some of the leadership approaches adopted for the members of the virtual teams. We will discuss

about transactional, transformational, and situational leaderships which are essential to understand how it is going to be relevant for a virtual team. Let us get into the lecture now.

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Competencies of Virtual Team Members

The competencies include- the knowledge, skills and abilities possessed by an individual to perform his tasks effectively as well as to contribute team work.

1. Independent, self-motivated and disciplined :

In the global virtual work environment, managers and team members are located at different places, sometimes even in opposite time zones. There is no one to monitor the members on day-to-day basis.

2. Intercultural sensitivity :

The global virtual teams are spread across cultural boundaries. The person should be aware of the nuances of other cultural traits and should be able to show respect towards them. This would ensure successful interactions as well as formation of trust among the members.

The slide features an orange header, a yellow background for the text, and a video inset of a man in a pink shirt. There are also icons of people and a globe.

So, what are these competencies? The competency we always refer to knowledge or a skill and abilities possessed by an individual to perform his or her task effectively and also contribute towards the teamwork. Now what are those competencies which are required from a virtual team member? First and very important competency is that be independent, self motivated and disciplined, why this is very important competency for a virtual team member?

Because where in the virtual work context people are connected from a dispersed geographical area and even sometimes even in a opposite time zones maybe probably if you look at you work in India and then your team member is working from North America where absolutely different time zone. For you if it is a morning then for them it is a night and then it is a vice versa.

So, and meaning that what is an indicate, there is no one to monitor the members on day-to-day basis. So, you need a person who are independent in nature or self-motivated you do not need a person who should be beside you to push you and monitor you say come on, you do this, you are not doing this, you are not working, you are doing this, you are going somewhere and there is a lag in your delivery, no.

For a virtual team members you should be really, self motivated independent and you are well disciplined. Because you do not have a person beside you to monitor you, whereas in a traditional team that your fellow team members are there and your team leader will be there, your manager will be there, they will always show up and then see ok, are you up to the mark or not? Are you doing it or not?

So, here in the virtual setup it is all in absence of a leader, in absence of your fellow colleagues in your physical work settings. So, you need to be independent, self motivated and disciplined. Then, especially the virtual team member should have an intercultural sensitivity, why? Because you will have your team members coming from a various different culture, so every culture will have certain believes and practices.

So, unless otherwise you do not have the sensitivity, the sensitivity I refer to respecting the different culture, accepting the different culture, appreciating the different culture. Unless otherwise you do not build this part of your individual skill or maybe your competencies, then it will be very difficult for you to work in a intercultural team setups.

Because in a virtual team we always have an opportunity that yes, people from multiple cultural contacts used to be work together on the same team. So, when you have a member coming from our representing from various cultures you should be sensitive enough to accept, appreciate and respect the cultures of the various cultures. This will always ensure the successful interactions as well as very importantly formation of trust.

So, unless otherwise you do not have the sensitivity towards the respecting the different culture, accepting the differences in their cultural practice it will be very difficult to for you to have a successful interactions or maybe other member may not perceive and build a trust on each other. So, this competency is one of the essential competencies for a virtual team member.

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Competencies of Virtual Team Members

3. Managing complexity and uncertainty:

Differences in time zones, languages, cultures, nature of tasks and technology-mediated interactions increases the complexity of the work environment.

There is also certain level of uncertainty about the roles within the teams, which technology tools to use, delegation of tasks and career growth. All this uncertainty and complexity acts as barrier to trust.

Then managing complexity and uncertainty; because when you talk about the virtual teams maybe your team members are working from a different time zones or maybe people coming from the different languages. Let us say you are happen to collaborate with some of the European countries probably each of the European countries have different languages maybe German or a French or many others.

So, there are various languages been spoken by those team members and there you can see complexity is high with the different cultures or maybe the nature of task or more. And it is always you see technology mediated interactions, it is not the physical interaction you are talking about, it is a technology mediator or enabled interaction, technology enabled interactions.

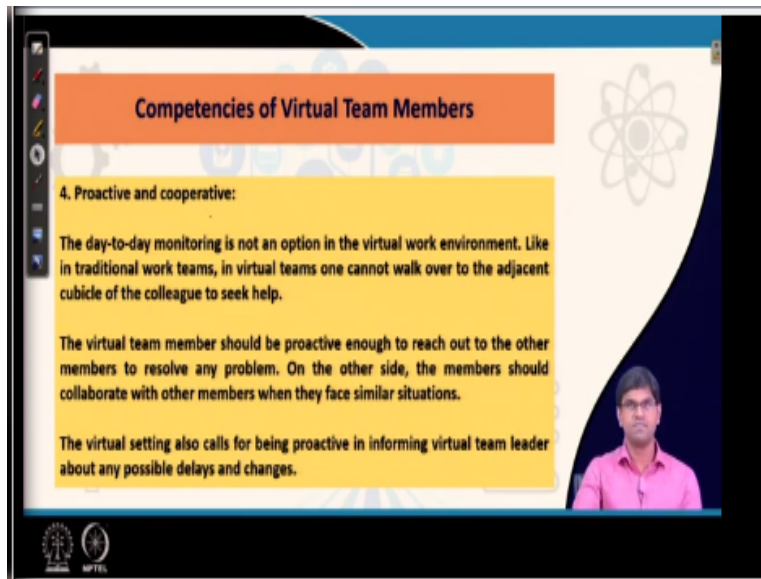
So, this always increases the complexity of the work environment. It is not that certain; it is not that simple work context or a work environment we are talking about. Whereas if you just imagine physical work setup where we know that with whom I am interacting and there is not much complexity as such maybe probably people all come from a homogeneous cultural background.

All people come from the same regions or may be the same country probably we share a similar cultural background or a beliefs and practices. Whereas in the virtual teams you happen to have people from a different region, different country and you have the complexities, the complexity

is really high. So, the person should have ability to manage the complexity and also manage the uncertainties.

Because the uncertainty is really high in a virtual team, sometime you say the there are some work been assigned due to some of the technical error the other team member is not able to come up and show up on the team meetings or maybe contribute towards that days performance. Probably you have to be geared up jump in to deliver their task because you are also having the equal response and accountability to perform the task. So, individual should be having the managing ability to address the complexity and also manage the uncertainties.

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Then you should also be a person to be very proactive and cooperative, why? Because as I said in the first point that there is nobody is going to monitor you in a virtual environment. So, or maybe probably you cannot just walk out of your cubic and then see to go to the next cubic and then see or learn about what is it happening? Probably in our current workplaces may be in the physical work settings we have an opportunity.

In case I am stuck with somewhere probably I have an opportunity that I walk out of my cubic and go to the next cubic and then say so what is happening, can you just tell me this? That is not available or probably in you as a member you should be very proactive, you should reach out to

the other members to resolve any problem. Because you are not physically connected, you do not see other members are available to reaching, helping you out.

So, you need to be proactive in seeking out information or seeking out or providing your support to solve any problem. So, you need to be highly proactive persons rather than very reactive or maybe very pessimistic and not an person who will be very proactive in nature. So, we should be really proactive and also you should be very cooperative. Especially in a virtual teams you need to collaborate adjust and support other team members which are very, very essential. So, you should be very proactive person also be very cooperative in nature in order to be a good member in a virtual team.

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Competencies of Virtual Team Members

5. Networking:

Virtual team work environment leads to social isolation because most of the team interactions are centered on the tasks. Members should build networks within the team by interacting on areas other than work.

These would deepen relationships, understand the personalities and make meaningful connections. Social networking tools are best to facilitate such interactions

Team Member → Proj. A
Meeting → Deliverable
Building Relationships → Problem
Challenges → Decision Making
References → Networking Platforms

Then, networking. So, in virtual team work environment we people need to social isolation. Because most of the time this team interactions are centered on the task, see what we are saying let us say you are all team members, you are working on that is called a virtual team, let us say project A. So, this your virtual team. So, you are all member and you are all doing the task and when you will have a meeting you will have a meeting or virtual meetings only to discuss about some of the key deliverable.

Or probably to discuss about any problem or probably to discuss about some decision making. So, what is actually happening in these instances? You are actually having the meetings

specifically centered on the task, can we talk about the deliverable? Can we talk about a problem? Can we be talking about decision making? So, what is actually happening? You are actually essentially losing out building the relationship.

In any team environment it is important that how good you build your relationship with your fellow team members that will lead to cohesiveness, cohesion in the team members. That will lead to good membership or a team fellowship; this will eventually lead to performance. So, it is important that you build the networking beyond the regular times or the interaction. So, because this will deepen the relationship and it will also enable you to understand the other individual team member's personalities and make a very meaningful connection.

So, this is very important, so say social networking tools are best to facilitate such interactions, maybe out of the work context you can have an interaction, that will enable you to become a build the relationship. So, building relationship as I said it has a series of outcomes. So, networking should also be one of the competencies required for the virtual team member.

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Competencies of Virtual Team Members

6. Using Information and Communication Technology (ICT):

The virtual team member should be able to effectively use variety of ICT to communicate and collaborate with the team members.

He/she should adapt in using various ICT tools like, emails, web conferencing, instant messaging etc., in a logical and coherent manner which should be easily understood by others.

*MS Teams
→ Functions
→ Chat box
→ Sharing files
→ Break out rooms*

Then the next competency is that now using ICT, information communication technology. So, you as a virtual team member you should be able to effectively use variety of ICTs to communicate and collaborate with the team members, probably how good you are at the ICTs to

using various tools or modules. Maybe for example if you are talking about one platform called MS Teams. So, there are various modules or functions.

So, probably arranging from I am just giving example chat box or then may be sharing files or may be breakout rooms. So, now how good we are in able to use the ICT so effectively in order to have a better collaboration with my team members? Am I able to create sub group discussions or small group discussions? How good I am at the using this ICT tools? So, that is also one of the important competencies required for a virtual team member.

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Competencies of Virtual Team Members

7. Trustworthiness, openness and honesty:

In addition to the above mentioned six individual competencies the virtual team member should also be trustworthy and honest in his/her dealing with others. He should be able to deliver on his/her promises honestly and should be open about any problems.

As the members are being from different locations with different time zones, they should ensure reliability in their conversation, information shared and communication made with other members.

Handwritten notes:
"Trust" -> "V.T." -> "Trust" -> "Disclosure/Share"
"T" -> "S.E. Information"
"A. Reliability"

Then comes in addition to all these 6 competencies we discussed about, the important one is coming about how team members should be also be trustworthy and honest in dealing with others. So, this is important because as I said we have been reiterating the fact of a trust is essential in a virtual team, V T. So, because of that will determine how other members are going to be harnessed or maybe share more information.

Because unless otherwise you if you see trust is also related to disclosure of information or I would say sharing of information. So, as the trust increase sharing of information will also increase, the moment sharing of information increase the more performance. So, there is always association between the multiple other factors we are talking about. So, you should also be trustworthy and honest and you should be able to deliver the promises or honestly should be

open to any other problem. So, this is one of the other competencies which are essential competencies for the virtual team members.

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The slide is titled "Skills of Virtual Team Members" and lists several skills suggested by Morley et al. for virtual team members. The skills are:

- Self-management and self-discipline, with individual accountability;
- Openness to technology and technological change;
- Excellent team-participation skills, with experience of working in teams, particularly in using technology to communicate;
- Propensity to trust—that means to have confidence in other team members to fulfill their tasks and to behave in a consistent and predictable manner; and
- Suitable personality traits that include the patience, perseverance, persistence, tolerance, flexibility, and understanding.

Handwritten notes on the slide include:

- Show How Many Platforms
- Discontinuous / High
- Complexity

A video inset in the bottom right corner shows a man in a pink shirt speaking. The slide also features a graphic of hands holding social media icons and logos at the top right.

Let us go and discuss about some of the skills of a virtual team members. So, Morley and their colleagues have suggested some skills required for becoming a member in a virtual team. So, maybe we are already become a member of virtual teams, maybe because of the current situations or because of the pandemic, organizations have moved to a virtual work setups.

But some of the skill which are required which is about self management, self disciplines with individual accountability, why? As I said in a virtual work environment there is nobody is going to have a close monitoring on you or nobody is going to have an eye on you to see what he or she is doing every minute or every half an hour. So, meaning that you should be more self managed, more self disciplined and you should have an individual accountability.

Yes, I, being a member in this team I have an accountability to ensure that these are my deliverables I will be able to do it. Then openness to technology and technological change, unless otherwise you are open to accept or embarrass the technological advancement or ready to learn the technology platforms it will be very difficult for you to continue to be a good member or a contributing team member in a virtual teams.

Let us say you say that I do not want to attend the virtual meetings or I do not want to share files on the meeting platforms. Or probably you say I do not want to learn to use this kind of other important functions in the tool. Then what will happen you will eventually become a not a good contributor to the team effectiveness or maybe probably you are trying to bring down the team effectiveness also.

Then you should also have a excellent team participation skills with experiences of working in teams particularly using technology to communicate. If you are not a good team player, it will be very difficult for you to be a good player in a virtual team. And if you are really good with the technology to communicate probably instant messaging or maybe now you see that everybody have the whatsapp groups or a small groups.

So, if you are technology driven person who were to use the communications or social media handles or social media networks to communicate effectively. So, that are all some of these skills you require especially in a virtual team. Because you also need to build the networking, yes, you should be a team working person. And a propensity to trust that means you have a confidence in other team members to fulfill their tasks and also you behave in consistent and predictable manner.

Now you should have a propensity to trust, there are you mean that you should have a confidence in other team members. So, you have to trust and believe that yes, other team members are having a competence to deliver and they will also support me when I deliver them and then they will also deliver me back. Then you should also have some of the personality being patient, perseverance continue to pursue that until you achieve and tolerance, flexibility and understanding.

These are all some of the personality traits which you as a member should have to be in a virtual team. So, because we know that lot of uncertainty and complexity is always high on the virtual teams. So, owing to these 2 important factors of uncertainties and complexities, it is important that yes, you should have a patience and perseverance and flexibility and understanding. These are some of the skills required for a virtual team member.

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Rules for Virtual Team Membership

There should have certain rules of engagement of member during the team formation. These should include:

- > The establishment of equal access to information for all members;
- > Promotion of continuous communication between team members;
- > Continuous performance feedback from the team manager;

Handwritten notes in red ink:

- 5-10 → All members → Information
- By team building → pg.
- Regular Feedback to team members

The slide also features a network diagram with nodes and arrows, and a small video inset of a man in a pink shirt.

Now we are goanna discuss about some of the rules of a virtual team memberships. So, first is the establishment of equal access to information to all members, that is one of the important role. In case let us say you as an organization or you as a manager wanted to create a virtual team. So, the first rule is that you have to provide equal access to information to all members.

So, when I form a virtual team with 5 to 10 members, I should provide all my members equal access to information. Everybody should have an access to whatever the information provided to each of the members. Then there should be promotion of continuous communication between the team members. It should not be very once in a week or maybe not regularly you should ensure that yes, there is a continuous communication between the team members.

Meaning that you are enabling more interactions between the team members because that will also lead to trust and team building eventually as you say this will lead to a performance. So, then continuous performance feedback from manager. So, because we are not in a physical work setup, it is important that the manager provides continuous or probably you can even call it as regular feedback with more details.

Since we are in a virtual setup if you can provide a feedback with more details this will help my team members to reassess and reposition them. Because reassess what went wrong? Why it went wrong? How I can fix it? So, provide continuous feedback from a manager.

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Rules for Virtual Team Members

- The establishment of norms around the use of communication technologies, including terminologies to support knowledge transfer; and
- The establishment of a clear code of conduct, along with standards for availability and acknowledgement, plus the establishment of guidelines for meetings and discussions to ensure that minor disagreements do not escalate.

Then now you should also establish a norm about the use of communication technologies including terminologies to support the knowledge transfer, what kind of a norm you are going to create? What is the tool you are going to use? How we are going to facilitate the interaction better? If somebody talks, how others have to support? And how do counter argue and put forth your points?

So, you should create some norms of the interactions pattern. And establish a clear code of contact along within a standard for availability and acknowledgement and plus establishment of guidelines for meetings and discussions. This is very important in a virtual meeting. Because we had talk about in the virtual meetings and virtual teams where we need to say that how we are going to the meetings should be scheduled and then how the interactions to be facilitated?

How the time and opportunity has been provided to the team members and also discuss about what how you can actually counter argue, provide inputs? If in case of any disagreements how it has to be solved, I now not allowing it to become an escalating other bigger problem within the team. So, these are some of the rules to manage the virtual teams in an organizational setup.

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Leadership Approach in Virtual Teams

Leadership approach has greater implications on the productivity and effectiveness of virtual teams. The virtual team leaders are essentially required to replicate leadership approach to manage, multi-cultural, multi-time zones and multi-geographical team members. Most relevant and appropriate approaches of leadership for virtual teams include-

- Transactional approach. ✓
- Transformational approach and ✓
- Situational approach. ✓

Now we are going to discuss about leadership approaches in the virtual teams. So, especially when you talk about a virtual team leadership is very important in a virtual world team setup and because it has lot of implications on the productivity in effectiveness of the virtual teams and virtual team leaders are essentially required to replicate certain leadership skills which are able to manage, multicultural multi zones and multi geographical team members.

And we are going to discuss about some of the 3 important leadership approaches for virtual teams. One is the transactional approach and another is a transformational approach and the situational approach. So, we will see all these approaches now.

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Leadership Approach in Virtual Teams

Transactional approach

- Virtual team leaders has to execute the task and achievements of the team per given timeframe for which leaders usually carry out the tasks like-
 - Regular communication with members ✓
 - Using media available as per demand of the situation ✓
 - Accountability for each task of members ✓
 - Regular and prompt responses for each problem ✓
 - Well-defining roles and responsibilities of members
 - Continuous feedback and appreciation for successful achieving the target

So, the transactional approach. So, in a virtual team setup when a leader has to execute the task and the achievement of the team as per the given time frame, so what should a leader do? So, leaders should carry out the task like regular communication of the members. So, you need to always have a regular communication with the members as we are actually saying even the rules of the in a virtual team member also as I said.

Regular communication is important and using media available as per the demand of the situations. If there is some quick information has to be passed to one of the team member. You as a leader you do not need to use only the working platform probably you can use maybe the whatsapp or maybe text messages or an email. So, you should determine or you should choose what media actually I can use which are available based on the demand of the situations?

I do not need to essentially setup the platform, setup the meeting and share the information, probably I should use a media which will available as per the demand. Then, accountability of each task of the members. So, a leader has to make sure that yes, members are accountable for each task and regular and prompt responses for each problem. You as a leader you should provide a prompt response to each problem.

Because as I said we are all in a virtual team setup, it is important that how promptly you are able to respond. So, that they do not repeat it or maybe they do not feel like their lost support or

they do not get the support. So, it is important that yes, you have to provide a regular and prompt response to each of the problem. And define the roles and responsibilities of the member. So, clearly defined the roles and responsible each of the members in the virtual team.

Because it is all the more important than the conventional traditional team setup that defining the rules, what he or she has to do? And what are their accountabilities? That has to be very clearly communicated, defined, so that these team members owns that responsibilities and then take accountability for each of the roles described to them. And provide a continuous feedback and appreciation for successfully achieving the target.

This is another important, we have to provide a feedback and appreciate if they are approaching, if they are delivering the task or deliverables. So, you should appreciate them for whatever the task they are achieving. So, these are all the some of the ways that leaders have to carry out as in a virtual team.

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Leadership Approach in Virtual Teams

- Transformational approach

In this approach, leaders have to adopt different mechanisms to motivate and encourage the team members. In this approach leadership is expected to do the followings-

- In the formation stage of the team, team identity needs to be fostered by leaders
- Leaders should talk with members about trust so that members are prepared do deal with the problem arises
- Members need to be helped to build up relationship and social ties.
- A shared platform need to be given to discuss opinions, learning and anxiety.

Now we are talking about a transformational approach, what kind of a transformational approach one has to use? So, leader has to adopt a different mechanism is to motivate and encourage the team member. So, what a leader has to do? In the formation stage of the team, team identity needs to be fastened. So, the leader has to develop a kind of create an environment or a climate that yes, you are developing a team identity.

Yes, you are all belonging to the team and you all having the membership of the team and then this team is important in an organizational setup. So, you are trying to create an identity, yes, I belong to this team, I happy or my self-esteem is attached, so the success of my team or failure is impacting me, I am so much associated with the team identity. So, team identity needs to be foster whether it is, leader has to build that yes, we are all belong to this team.

Now this team is important in an organization, we are actually delivering key support to the company. So, you are actually building the team identity and so that team members enjoy being in the team and identify the importance of being in this team. Then leaders should talk with the members about trust. So, that the members are prepared to deal with the problem arises. So, the fact or trust is coming out again and again in indicating that yes, trust is an important factor especially in a virtual teams of course in the conventional team or a traditional team as well.

But in the virtual teams yes, trust is an important factor which will enable a multiple other team dynamics or the team performances. So, members need to be helped to build a relationship and social ties. So, leader has a role to see that how you can foster or facilitate more relationship better relationship between the team members and create more social ties because it will build a better relationship with the team members and will bring out a more strong team in the virtual context.

Then shared platform need to be given to discuss opinions, learning an anxiety because you should provide a platform where you can discuss about the opinions or maybe disagree with points or maybe you want to hear more upon, why this decision has been taken? So, leader has to play critical role in ensuring that yes, you as a leader how you are going to develop the team identity? Provide more opportunity for my team members to build the relationship, strong ties within the team and also create a platform to interact, discuss about their opinions. This is also one of the approaches required for leaders in a virtual team.

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Leadership Approach in Virtual Teams

- Situational approach

The virtual team leader has to adopt an approach as befitting the situation at hand. This should reflect in this approach towards managing the members' motivation to work and communication styles.

Leader should also be sensitive to the different cultures.

Lack of Skill -> Directing
Lack of Motivation -> Delegating
Highly Skilled & Highly Motivated -> Participating

Then the last one is about situational approach. So, virtual team leader has to adopt an approach as before in a situational. Because it is not that one way or one approach fits the all. So, based on the situation a leader has to choose in a kind of a style or maybe reflect what kind of way I can actually motivate my team members to work or communicate styles. So, for example let us say my team member is lack let us say situation, lack of skill or a motivation.

So, when my team member is having lack of skill or maybe lack of motivations, my approach should be different. In this my approach should be I should be providing directions, directing should be my approach. In case let us say my team member is highly skilled and highly motivated, in this instance I do not need to be directing rather I can be using the delegating approach. So, what is it indicating is that?

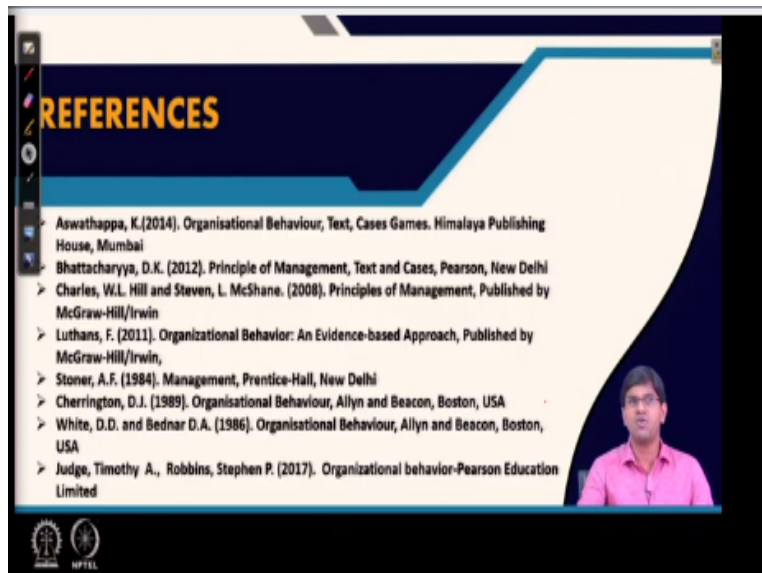
You do not need to have a single approach to handle all your team members based on the situations, based on what is happening and understanding the situations you use a different approach. So, as to how you can actually influence the team member, enable a better functioning of the team or ensuring your team is able to deliver or perform well. So, leader should be having a more knowledge about understanding, perceiving the situations.

Based on the situation based on making the cognitions about the situations you come up with an approach which will enable your team members function effectively in a virtual team. So, leaders

should also be sensitive towards the different cultures, it is very important. You as a leader you will have to manage the team member coming from a varied culture and you should develop a sensitivity towards different cultures, you should appreciate respect and be sensitive towards the other cultures.

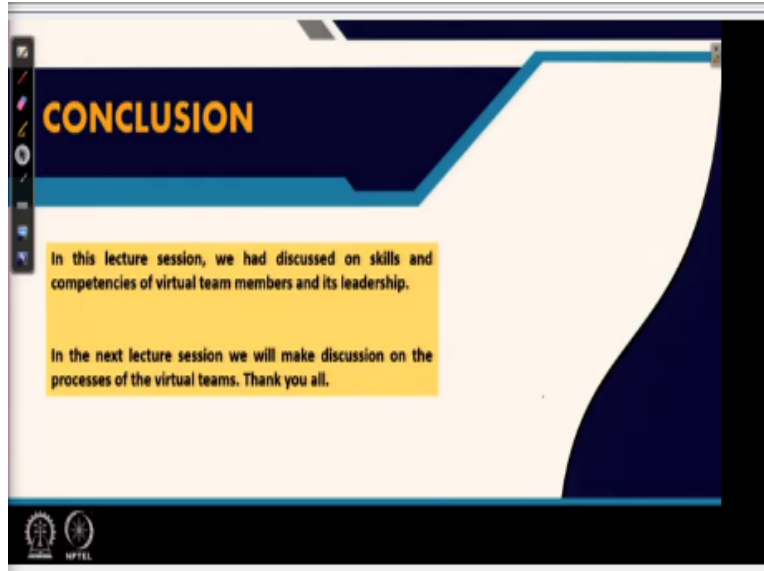
And then respect them and appreciate those cultures and so that this knowledge is also important that, what kind of team management you can do. So, these are all important approaches and ranging from transactional, a transformational and the situational approach is all essential in the virtual team setups.

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So, these are the some of the references we have used for this today's lecture.

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And in today's lectures we discussed about some of the competencies required for the virtual team member and we also discussed about the skills required for the virtual team members. And let us say if you want to develop a virtual team, what kind of a ground rules you have to build? That also we discussed, this will provide more information about. What kind of a ground rule you should develop? So, that now you can have a better virtual work teams.

And we also discussed about some of the leadership approaches which are required to manage the better virtual teams. So, my next lectures we will discuss about a process of the virtual teams, so looking forward to see you all in the next lecture. Thank you.