香港中文大學

心理研究社

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SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTRE

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Suggested citation:

Chin, Ai-li S. 1972. *Hong Kong Managerial Styles: Chinese and Western Approaches to Conflict Management*. Hong Kong: Occasional Paper No. 22, Social Research Centre, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

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August, 1972

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A. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

This report has a dual purpose. It is a description of a particular method of conducting a management seminar -- the laboratory method of learning or experiential method of group inquiry; and it is the record and analysis of a semi-structured learning event around the theme of cultural differences in management styles. The occasion was the Seminar on Understanding and Managing Conflict in Organizations, and the location was Hong Kong. The Seminar was jointly sponsored by the Social Research Centre and the Lingnan Institute of Business Administration, both of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Hong Kong Management Association. Registration for the two-day session was limited to 20 persons. The 19 who were finally able to attend came from 13 business organizations in widely different fields: transportation and shipping, banking and utilities, electronics and publishing, manufacturing and retailing. Participants were all of senior managerial level, consisting of seven expatriates or "Europeans"* (Hong Kong's synonyms for Westerners, including Americans), and 12 Hong Kong Chinese, some of whom were Cantonese and others were from Shanghai and elsewhere. The seminar staff consisted of one Westerner (American), one Chinese, and one Chinese-American. Between them, they had had some experience in a managerial position in industry, bureaucractic posts in government, and in conducting workshops and

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* They were 3 from the U.S., 2 from north Europe, 1 from U.K., and 1 from Australia.

seminars for business and other organizations.**

Two statements relating to the two purposes of this paper need to be made. One is that the laboratory method of conducting a management seminar, which has been in practice in the West for the past few years, is to the best of our knowledge new to Hong Kong. As a "first" of its kind here, it has some value as a pioneer. Not only was the procedune new, but the kind of content it was able to elicit from the participants was also new. And this is related to the second point bearing on the main theme which emerged from the seminar: differences between Chinese and Western managers in their approaches to organizational conflict, as well as patterns of intergroup relations in the context of the seminar. Such direct, face-to-face airing of cultural differences in managerial style in

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** The staff members were as follows:

1. Dr. Robert Chin, seminar leader, is Director of the Social Research Centre and Professor of Sociology, Chinese University of Hong Kong 1971-72. He is Professor of Psychology at Boston University and a Fellow of NTL -- Institute of Applied Behavioral Science. He has conducted O.D. Labs in the U.S.

2. Dr. Gano Evans is Visiting Associate Professor at the Lingnan Institute of Business Administration of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1971-73. He is Associate Professor of Managerial Sciences at the University of Navada. Dr. Evans was especially in charge of the instrumented exercises and has written an expanded report of the results of the exercises and his lecturettes. His speciality is business administration.

3. Dr. Ambrose King is Lecturer in Sociology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and Co-ordinator of the Kwun Tong Industrial and Economic Organizational Research Project of the Social Research Centre, Chinese University of Hong Kong. Dr. King was especially in charge of the second, or "Chinese version" of the role play. Dr. King has served in Chinese administration and is versed in Chinese and Western organizational behavior.

Mr. Peter Chan of the Hong Kong Management Association made arrangements for the seminar and contribution useful suggestions to the planning of the sessions.

The rapporteur for the seminar and author of this paper is Lecturer in Sociology, United College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1971-72, and Research Associate at the Center for International Studies, M.I.T.

a conferences setting had never before happened in the experience of the participants. What took place during the two-day session therefore has significance in that mutual images of the Chinese and Western managers, and by implication, self perceptions also, were brought out in the open and discussed together. This kind of an exchange, when carried out in the proper spirit, could make a major contribution in improving working relations in a bi-cultural setting.

What is meant by the laboratory method of learning or the experiential method of group inquiry is that members of the seminar participate in structured group activities which generate data for observation and analysis. In this way, the seminar deals not with impersonal situations or case material, but primarily with data produced on the spot via group interactions. From these sessions, participants reveal the kinds of conflict which concern them, "live through" some of its dynamics, and "experience" their own styles of managing them. The goal was not to give "cookbook" solutions to conflict or to discover universal principles in its management, but rather to give participants insight into their own roles in selected types of conflict situations, and the groups' patterns of managing their resolution. The staff thus looked upon the seminar as a joint inquiry, a collaborative research venture.

The design for the seminar included case history, role play, group simulation and group discussion, and exercises, questionnaires as well as short lectures. The lectures, which are separately summarized, presented some of the current concepts and previous research in the field, and the exercises and ratings provided more information for group examination and discussion. It also called for maximum participation from members of the seminar, who provided managerial perspectives and personal attitudes for analysis and discussion. The staff made detailed plans for the structure of the seminar, but left the programme flexible and responsive to the emergent needs of the participants and trends of the sessions. Thus the seminar became in part the unfolding of a "natural" event created by the very people who took part in it. The program leaders periodically met together to take "readings" on the process and to re-arrange their designs as the sessions progressed.

A final word about the focus of this report and its implications. While the announced topic of the seminar was the general subject of the dynamics of conflict management in business organizations, a natural focus on Chinese-Western differences did evolve more or less naturally in the course of the two-day session. This came about partly because of the cultural mix of the participants (balanced roughly on an East-West basis), and partly because of the natural interests of the seminar members. Once this interest became evident, the staff deliberately selected from among the alternative designs prepared in advance those which were best suited to bring out data pertinent to this topic and contributory to a fruitful dialogue and discussion.

This report is thus organized on two levels. The main theme on East-West managerial styles is developed in the form of a narrative of the unfolding of the seminar group and by way of analysis and interpretation, while commentaries on the procedures are inserted here and there to call attention to special features of the method or noteworthy responses of the participants.

B. MANAGERS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

The morning session on the first day was a role play based on a prepared, written case of organizational conflict. The purpose of the role play was to lay out some of the potential human, non-technical issues underlying a conflict between two departmental managers so that participants could impose their own definitions of the situation upon the case. The seminar then examined the styles these departmental managers adopted in facing the conflict, and the approaches to conflict resolution available to the general manager. Role play was adopted as the first activity partly to warm up the group by asking them to enter into a hypothetical case, and partly to set the style and pace of experiential learning. The 19 seminar participants were arbitrarily divided into 3 groups representing the 3 managerial positions: the manager of the production department, Mr. Wong; the assistant to the manager of the marketing department, Mr. Law; and the General Manager, Mr. Daniels. The "conflict" revolved around the question of whether the company should remain a small-scale, handicrafted operation of quality products, or expand into a more highly mechanized, mass produced line of diversified products in order to capture a larger market.

Briefly, the background of the case as described to the participants was as follows.

Mr. Wong, the production manager, was a local-born carpenter and entrepreneur of the small, original craftshop making hand-tooled parts of pleasure boats for a foreign market. Two years ago, faced with the demands of managing an increasingly complex business organization, Mr. Wong decided to merge with a larger, U.S. based company manufacturing a broader line of leisure equipment. He remained as production manager of the new Hong Kong branch, a post which allowed him to continue his real interest in the craft and to retain most of his workmen.

Mr. Law, assistant to the Marketing Manager Mr. Walker of the Hong Kong office, comes from a Shanghai industrialist family, was university-educated and trained abroad in modern business management. He is considered a good prospect for succeeding Mr. Walker as Marketing

Manager, who is currently abroad on an extended trip. Mr. Law has just completed a marketing survey at the request of Mr. Walker, and is convinced that the Hong Kong production department should expand and diversify to take advantage of an expanding market for mass produced pleasure boats.

The General Manager, Mr. Daniels, is a former Vice President of Personnel from the U.S. company, and is in charge of the new Hong Kong division, which has completed a successful first year.

The emergence of issues

The three groups representing the three managerial positions were asked to talk among themselves, to assess their own positions, to gather information and come up with group strategies. Each group could send two scouts out to listen in on the conversations in the other groups. The information thus gathered helped each group in their diagnosis of the conflict situation and in the formulation of a strategy. For example, a scout from the managerial group heard the Wongs say that the managerial position was "weak." This influenced management in adopting a forthright style during the role play.

The Daniels group, after discussion among themselves and with others, came up with an assessment that Mr. Wong did not have the potentiality of one day becoming general manager, but that neither could he work under Mr. Law if the latter got the promotion. Mr. Law was seen by management as identifying himself with a more aggressive, forward-looking policy of the company, as being oriented toward technology and risk taking, and as being well qualified for higher positions. Because of differences between Wong and Law, management thought it unwise to promote Law as the future replacement for Daniels. Instead, an expatriate might be brought in to fill the post. Top management, after preliminary discussion, generally leaned toward approval of expansion and was prepared to back Law's position. Now Mr. Daniels wanted individual conferences with Wong and Law to learn of their views of the new policy and of themselves.

The Law group was convinced that marketing was the key to the future success of the company and that the survey it had just conducted provided solid ground for recommending expansion and diversification. They were also certain that quality could be kept sufficiently high to maintain the reputation of the company, but they foresaw difficulty in persuading Mr. Wong to this position. If necessary, they felt, Mr. Wong must make the sacrifice.

The Wong group spent their time analysing Mr. Law's and Mr. Daniel's positions. They themselves conceded the necessity for change but were in favor of slow expansion, lacking faith in results of market surveys. They saw a weakness in Mr. Law's inexperience in this line of product, and prepared to use it as argument against backing his recommendation.

After formulating a position, each group was then asked to elect a representative to enter into the role play.

Commentary: In the "role groups," members began to develop an identification with one another and opposition to the other role positions. A degree of in-group feeling and inter-group competition was developing.

At about this point, the staff observed the mounting involvement of the participants in the roles and the assigned tasks. The Daniels group chose to impose their own style of action upon the structure of the scene by requesting separate interviews with Wong and Law. The programme leader happily agreed to this innovation because it indicated a degree of involvement.

The role play

When the role play began, Mr. Daniels was having a conference with Mr. Wong. Mr. Daniels outlined to Mr. Wong the new policy of expansion, characterizing it as a company decision. Wong was asked to give his reactions and to comment on his working relations with the marketing group. Mr. Wong expressed his concern with maintaining quality, with insuring a steady profit for the company, and with reluctance of older craftsmen to make sudden changes. Yet, added Mr. Wong, he was also mindful of the needs of marketing. He proposed that he be sent on a trip to the U.S. to see new production techniques.

The idea of a trip was not part of the strategy of the Wong group, but Mr. Daniels seized upon it immediately as a useful device and a positive step toward meeting the conflict situation. He approved it on the spot and promised to make various arrangements to "broaden the outlook" of Mr. Wong. Mr. Wong then complained of not being adequately informed by the Marketing Department or consulted by Mr. Law, and Mr. Daniels agreed on the necessity of improving communications.

In Daniels' conference with Law, the General Manager indicated confidence in the marketing survey and the need for expansion, and asked Law for his opinion on how the company was going. Mr. Law presented a strong case for the company to go immediately for the new mechanized method of production as well as try new products in the line. Law then diplomatically expressed appreciation of Wong's expertise in the old product and thought he would still have a definite place under the new plan. He also saw Mr. Wong's assistant, a younger man trained in modern methods of production, as useful in the process of conversion. When asked about internal communications with the Production Department, Mr. Law replied that Wong was "easy to talk to but not receptive to my ideas," although modernization and expansion would, in the words of Law, "create new horizons" for Wong and help him "play a key role" in the growing organization.

The stage was now set for a 3-way meeting. Mr. Daniels expressed the hope that Law and Wong would exchange ideas, resolve their differences between themselves, and consult him whenever necessary. He then announced Wong's forthcoming trip and assured him that a small department of the "on order" type of business would be set aside for him. Mr. Wong responded by saying that he favored "maintaining contact with satisfied customers," and that it was premature to come to a decision before Walker returned. Mr. Law countered by saying that "the job of marketing is to educate people," and that the survey indicated potential for growth for the company. He then called Mr. Wong a "vital cog" in the machine, a "particularly valuable member of the company." Mr. Wong in turn remarked that he saw no real conflict between them: He himself had sunken money into the company, but Mr. Law was younger and more educated, though with less experience.

Wong then added the barbed remark that Law's previous experience had been in toothpaste. At this point, Mr. Daniels cut short the exchange and urged both to keep communication open.

The issues in the conflict emerged -- they were "chosen" by the groups via interactions between individuals and across groups. The issues revolved around two dimensions: the age, and degree of modernity of the two department heads.

Commentary: This case was carefully prepared to include many potential issues of conflict. The most obvious one was the manifest differences in business policy between the Production Department and Marketing and Sales Department. Some of the other issues contained in the case were: promotion and rivalry, Cantonese versus Shanghai backgrounds, and Chinese versus Western styles of leadership and control. It was the task of each of the three groups to define the nature of the conflict and develop a strategy to advance its own cause and work toward a resolution in its own interest.

In the course of separate discussions, each group reviewed the various facets of the conflict and rejected most of them as unimportant. The commonly agreed upon central issue was the manifest one: Production versus Marketing-Sales.

The conference of the three managers was largely a ratification session -- Mr. Daniels announced the decision and worked out the implementation of it. He was working at system maintenance more than conflict diagnosis, though he did take human concerns into account -- the fallout of his solution. His diagnosis was in terms of the three individuals rather than their interaction. In the conference, he did not allow related issues come to the surface but preferred to offer a straightforward solution -- encouraging Mr. Wong to take an inspection tour in the States.

It became clear that Wong had conceded the need for change but argued for slow change. He advanced his position on the ideology of maintaining quality and a loyal, dependable market as well as stability in the work force. He also projected himself as open-minded by requesting a trip abroad to see mass production techniques for himself, while alluding to some weakness in the past experience of his opponent. Law, on the other hand, assumed that he was the better representative of company goals and modern business mentality, and probably would not hesitate to sacrifice Wong in pursuit of his and the

company's goals. The General Manager approached the conflict situation by immediately identifying with the overall position of Law, indicating confidence in the survey and implying that central office would endorse it and wish it implemented. The task he set himself was therefore one of assuring Wong that he had a place under the new policy. For this reason, Daniels eagerly responded to Wong's proposal of a trip abroad, seeing in this both a temporary cooling off device and a chance to win him over. Daniels was careful to keep the conflict from crystallizing around personal issues; hence he stopped the conversation when Wong alluded to Law's background in toothpaste. Daniels emphasized the importance of keeping lines of communications open, primarily between the two departmental heads, but also directly to himself. Throughout his handling of the conflict, he assumed that Wong was the "problem" to be dealt with, through persuasion and education if possible, and if not, through removal. Daniels was not interested in exposing deeper personal differences between the two men, and he was not in favor of open confrontation; thus he kept personal insinuations from coming into the role play, and held the opinion that neither should be considered for the post of General Manager in light of their unresolved differences.

Commentary: The three who took part in the role play did so with no hesitation and with considerable skill and involvement. Naturally they put their individual stamps upon the roles evolved in their respective groups. All three made contributions to sustain the conflict so that there would be material to use for learning. But once the forces were engaged, they provided their own impetus for the unfolding of the situation.

The audience was deeply interested in the dynamics of the role play. And though one person was designated by each group to be observer, in the feedback session after the role play, many joined in with the observers in making comments.

At the end of the individual conferences, the person playing Mr. Daniels asked the programme leader if each player could go back to his group for another consultation. In the interest to time and in order to crystallize what had already happened, the programme leader decided against the step. If the request had been granted a somewhat different outcome might have ensued: the other two groups might have hardened their stands, become more ego-involved, and escalated the conflict to a degree of complexity that would have taken more time to unravel. Upon retrospect, it might have been worth the extra time.

Open discussion

In the general discussion which followed, the Wong group expressed surprise and a little dismay that Daniels had already made up his mind and taken Law's side, and that he was not really interested in real discussion. Wong then pointed out that Daniels had portrayed a weak General Manager who did not command too much respect from him. Another member of the Wong group then asked the General Manager if he could take the view of both sides, adding that if there were two against one in a meeting, Wong would "feel beaten." Still another from the Wong group put the issue in more pessimistic terms: the basic conflict had been created when Wong merged his old craftshop with the modern company and that such a conflict would remain till the end.

When it came time for an observer from the Law group to comment, he summed up the Law position as "having no respect for Wong." After deciding that Wong had no interest in money or ambition, it remained a matter of "getting around an old guy with the mentality of a carpenter," or trying to educate him or "pacify" him. "Put him in quality control -- give him a meaningless job to keep him happy." Meanwhile, the Laws saw Wong's young assistant as someone "already hired to take Wong's job," as someone "really going to run the shop." In short, being committed to keeping up with the times, the Laws felt that it was "not really important to win Mr. Wong; instead they must win Mr. Daniels."

The General Manager's group during the discussion defended its prerogative to take a stand on policy but nevertheless raised the problem of how to come into a conference with an open mind and how to achieve a true compromise in a conflict situation. This group arrived at the conclusion that if one department head (Mr. Wong) kept creating difficulties, then that would be "another matter," implying some form of drastic action such as dismissal.

At this point, the programme leader interrupted to tap the state of mind of the three managers after the role play, revealing some of the psychological consequences of the exchanges during role play. To the question of what his thoughts would be on his way to the U.S., Wong replied that he would be "apprehensive" that he might be "phased out," "pushed to the back waters." His impression was that "quality isn't receiving much emphasis." The programme leader then asked Law how he felt. Law said that he was "pursuing success" but that he sensed competition from Walker for the post of manager because the latter was also "being groomed for the future." Law's private preoccupation was thus with Walker, not with Wong. Law did take note of Wong's reference to his background in toothpaste, but still hoped that change could result in "new horizons" for Wong.

Commentary: Some of the latent feelings are the very components of the conflict situation, others are "fallouts" of the particular way of handling the conflict. An example was the insecurity of Wong, a state of mind which could cause trouble later. Tapping these feelings which otherwise might not come to the surface increases the sensitivity of managers to the consequences of their action upon others -- facilitates "taking the role of the other." Such an ability is a great asset in a manager.

Rating of roles

After the role play, we asked all members of the seminar to fill in a short questionnaire indicating on a seven point scale (1) their agreement-disagreement with the managerial style portrayed in each of the roles, and (2) their preference-non-preference to work with such a person in their own organization. The information was intended to show patterns of identification as well as of perceived compatibility. For maximum utility, the collected data were immediately tabulated and presented to the group for inspection and discussion.

Of the three "managerial personalities", Law elicited the most clear-cut reaction. A majority of the participants either "agreed with" or "strongly agreed with" his managerial style, and expressed preference to work with such a person in his own organization.

On this Chinese and Westerners responded alike. As an interesting sidelight on role identification, the four persons who strongly agreed with Law's approach and preferred to work with him were all from the Law group, two Chinese and two Europeans, showing the phenomenon of role identification, while for the same reason, four from the Wong group, again two Chinese and two Westerners, were less than enthusiastic in working with such a man. The other noteworthy fact was that the only two votes which deviated from the dominant direction of "agreement" and "preference" came from two Chinese in the General Manager's group -- one "slightly disagreed" with Law's method while tolerating him as a co-worker, and the other feeling neutral about his approach but rating him "slightly not preferred" as co-worker. In other words, managers were not all of the same opinion about the style of Law or his compability with others. (This aspect was to come out more clearly in the replay later).

The portrait of Mr. Wong was more complex. There was also some role identification which cut across the Chinese-non-Chinese line: most of the Wong group "agreed with" him and "preferred" him, while most of those who disagreed or slightly disagreed, though feeling neutral or slightly favorably inclined toward working with him, were the managers. Several of the others who did not like to work with such a man came from the Law group. What was more interesting was that all the Chinese but two, whatever their assigned positions, showed varying degrees of agreement with Wong's approach, while all the European votes fell on the side of disagreement (including one neutral). On the dimension of liking to work with such a person, the expatriate votes clustered around the neutrality line while the Chinese ones were widely scattered. This pattern indicates that the Chinese tended to identify with Mr. Wong, but they were just as likely to regard him as a problem in a modern organization as to want to workmwith him, especially if they had to relate to him on a department-to-department basis or if they had to be a superior to him.

The profile for Mr. Daniels likewise revealed interesting patterns. Most agreed with the strong stand he was taking vis-a-vis Wong. Like Mr. Law, he was a popular fellow, being preferred by a majority of the participants. Of those who did not prefer to work with such a manager, a strange split occured: the Westerners disagreed with his approach and the Chinese did. Herein lies a Chinese ambivalence -- they sided with Wong but agreed with the approach of Daniels. Even those who did not like working with such a man approved of his methods.

Commentary: Each questionnaire was given a code number to protect the privacy of the information, but the group data was tabulated and posted for all to see. Thus each person could see his own profile in relation to the group pattern.

The decision was not to reveal individual ratings on managerial style, though in some other settings this might have been advisable and worthwhile. The individual ratings of preferences for the particular managers as portrayed in the role play were even more delicate a matter. This too remained a subject for private ruminations. During lunch time, some sharing of information took place in casual conversation.

While this role play was intended to bring out problems of management per se in a conflict situation involving human factors, in the course of discussion, a "Chinese viewpoint" and an "expatriate" viewpoint emerged. Several Chinese toward the end questioned the fairness of Daniels and pointed to the unresolved conflict, while most of the expatriates who spoke up identified with the aggressive Law and with Daniels' backing of him. The programme staff, being on the watch for East/West differences in management style, took notice of the early appearance of this and opted to carry out the second, Chinese phase of the role play* -- with a Chinese cast playing the roles in Cantonese. (There was a brief by-play when the choice between Shanghai dialect and Cantonese came up. Though native Shanghai speaking managers were in the majority, Cantonese was settled on because "We are in Hong Kong.")

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* This portion of the programme was led especially by Ambrose King.

Commentary: As was expected, the Chinese participants initially took a passive role during the early morning session. The expatriates did all, or almost all the talking in the beginning, and were chosen to do the first role play. But by mid-morning, the Chinese had "warmed up" and became as actively engaged as the rest. From then on, instead of letting the Westerners take all the initiative, with the Chinese merely reacting to the situation, the Chinese "held their own." As one of them remarked, "We tend to wait and go slow until we assess what the situation is all about." The relatively quick recovery and achievement of a balance vis-a-vis the verbal, articulate Westerners was somewhat of a surprise. This indicates a possibly new phenomenon which requires further observation, with the full realization that participants in this seminar are a highly select group.

The staff had originally planned a replay of the scene in the expectation that the very vocabulary for conflict would be different in the two languages. Also, it must be admitted, the replay was intended to give the Chinese participants "equal air time" and bring out their individual and collective views for a fuller comparision. As it turned out, perhaps the second ground for the replay might have been ill-founded, though the re-enactment undoubtedly speeded up the process of warming up.

By way of preparation, a Chinese from each group was asked to keep notes on the Daniels conference and to think of ways in which a Chinese manager might have acted differently.

The replay -- Chinese cast

The new General Manager, here renamed Mr. Tong, opened his meeting with the two department managers by addressing Wong as "uncle", a courtesy title, and introduced the matter of the market survey and the possibility of expansion. Tong then let Law present his case instead of implicitly endorsing the survey as Daniels had done. Wong asked Law to explain the meaning of the result and possible effects on production. Tong then persuaded Wong to consider expansion and got the latter to "agree in principle" to the new policy, saying that there "should not be any problem." Wong was then asked for an estimate of the production schedule and whether he foresaw any problem in proceeding with both old and new methods of production simultaneously.

Wong stated his hesitation in making a quick conversion by reminding Law of possible problems to be ebcountered, though he first paid a compliment to Law's college education and his inclination to play for big stakes. Law in return expressed his respect for Wong's experience. In concluding the meeting, the General Manager reiterated the importance of agreeing "in principle" to a policy of expansion.

Commentary: The non-Chinese speaking members of the audience were asked to observe and later comment upon the scene just by watching the non-verbal cues. It was impressive to all how much of the flavor of the exchanges was caught by the observers.

The replay of the three roles obviously brought out differences between the Chinese and Western styles of management. In fact, the contrast was so dramatic that when some of the dialogue was translated, one of the newer expatriates to Hong Kong exclaimed midway that what he witnessed was "unbelievable". He and many others were impressed, almost jolted by the difference. It was a revelation. Incredulously, he asked the role player if he as himself would have acted this way in the post of General Manager, and got an affirmative answer. Another Chinese spoke up and agreed that the portrayal was "very accurate."

What were the main differences which impressed the participants and brought out further comments? First of all, it seemed clear that Wong won his case, or at least did not lose to Law as in the original scene. A Western observer remarked that the Chinese General Manager was more of a mediator or a judge, yet he was decisive and took steps to give instructions to both Law and Wong. Law on his part did not seem to be "pacifying" Wong but was rather respectful of him. A Chinese observer pointed out that Law assumed a weaker role possibly because he remembered Wong as the previous owner of the craft shop. In fact, deference to seniority governed to some extent the behavior of all three Chinese managers. Mr. Tong explained that he made Mr. Wong happy by calling him "uncle" and was thus able to get him to agree to a shorter schedule for production. But when an expatriate asked Tong whether he got any commitment from Wong, "a yes or no answer," Tong replied that he asked several subsidiary questions before coming out with the final question. And since Wong had agreed

"in principle," Tong's request was not refused. Turning to Law, the Westerner asked why he had not stood behind the survey or pressed his point. "I am only on salary," replied Law, "I don't want to take the responsibility." "It is not that we don't care," someone added, "We do what we can do." Tong then expressed an attitude which perhaps summed up a Chinese philosophy of management, "Why worry about the survey? I made Wong agree to it in principle." As General Manager, he would first see if the various conditions of the expansion programme could be fulfilled; then and only then would be proceed fully and get Wong to commit himself to a schedule. If Wong was reluctant, Tong would "give him dinners, gifts, or pay his family a visit." By that time, Wong would have been "given face" and would he more eager to fulfill his role.

This was indeed a "revelation" to the Western managers. One of them pointed out that planning by headquarters would be impossible for such a branch; at best in could only be short-ranged. Another remarked that this kind of management would "shoot American policy to bits!" and that headquarters would regard this as "totally illogical." Still another exclaimed with exasperation, "If the entire management sees expansion as necessary, when are you going to stop treating Wong as a nice old man?" To these queries, the Chinese replied that since Wong was the previous owner, if he were forced to resign, the middle rank personnel and workers in his department would leave with him. Besides this, a practical consideration was mentioned: in Hong Kong, with so many family-run, small-scale businesses, one could not plan for five years because one might "get stuck with a bad policy or wrong people."

The conclusion drawn by some of the Western managers from this replay was, as one of them put it, that "arbitrary demands or pressures" would not work. "Give Wong face or stature, and Tong will probably get what he wants anyway."

Commentary: But what was involved in the Chinese case was more than just face-giving. Mr. Tong as the General Manager took the company policy and re-shaped it to make it fit the local situation. First, he broke up the decision-making process into parts so that the big assignment could be handled step by step. Then he put the request to the

> production manager not in terms of quick results but "as quick as possible." He also tried to get Wong on his side first by getting him to "agree in principle" to the change. After that, it was a matter of working out the schedule together, rather than imposing a schedule from above. Throughout the process, Tong did not relinquish authority, for he kept Wong from escalating the disagreement onto personal grounds. Like Daniels, he did not allow disparaging remarks about Law's background in toothpaste from gaining the upper hand. Such a process of decision-making, however, was unacceptable to the Western managers, for it required a constant readjustment of company priorities.

During the afternoon discussion designed for feedback, several issues, generated during the role play and replay, came into sharper focus. After making discoveries in the contrasting styles of management, the expatriates were generally at a loss as to how to meet the situation. The mood ranged from one of questioning to that of near-disbelief. Several Westerners said aloud: "How do we approach the Chinese staff?" One specific complaint: "It's hard to get the Chinese to say there is a problem. Sometimes you have to ask a friend -- it takes longer to find out." Or, "If I make a mistake, it would help me if he tells me -- but he wouldn't." Again: "Someone wants a small raise, why not ask? But he doesn't come till too late. They carry their problems with them, then they resign." Another complaint was against so-called favoritism -- what someone referred to as "the ma-ma-san system." "In my office, I couldn't just hire any new girl -- she would not be accepted by the other girls. Pretty soon she would resign in tears. Instead, you have to go to ma-ma-san and ask her to recommend a nice educated girl. That's okey. But when trouble comes, then all of them resign. You are victim of your own policy." The third and most important complaint was that Chinese lack a sense of responsibility.

To compensate for the above difficulties, one expatriate pointed out that he does enjoy advantages from his Chinese staff: they willingly and automatically work after hours when the need arises, whereas elsewhere he would have to pay someone extra to do so.

To the above points of frustration, the Chinese managers made the following responses: in a spirit of counter assertion, one Chinese manager said that if an expatriate relies on "friends" among the Chinese staff to "tell him things," or has a secretary who "carries tales," then he would be "sharing his confidences with a few," or "bribing a few with his friendship." These are harsh words to someone trying to cope with the fact of Chinese reticence. But by then, the airing of frustrations had reached the stage of a mild confrontation, and some deep feelings had been expressed. Somewhat on the defensive side was the Chinese remark that part of the blame for not being forthright and outspoken could be attributed to the "colonial mentality" of the Chinese plus the Hong Kong educational system. Then came a more thoughtful, introspective observation on the part of another Chinese: he pointed to shortcomings often found in young Chinese staff. Some of them, he said, were "lacking in some qualities;" they find it difficult to take disciplinary action over workers. How to train Chinese supervisors and develop leadership qualities and motivation in them became his concern.

A few expatriates also began to contemplate both sides of the picture. They stopped to ask themselves whether American standards of sales should be applied to the local Hong Kong situation, and indeed, whether non-Chinese standards of leadership are applicable to the Chinese.

While the East/West encounter brought out these various perceptions and experiences, frustrations and interpretations, no resolutions were arrived at, and perhaps none could have been. Some were better able to tolerate this state of affairs than others, being satisfied for the moment with a greater realization of the nature of the differences and the subleties of the two positions. A voice somewhat on the despairing side asked: "Can we learn or are people born with it -- this ability of being the peacemaker?" Or, if these cultural differences cannot be reduced to a common denominator, can the two management styles work together? Turning to conflicts in general, the question was raised: do conflicts have to be resolved? Or, if conflicts are to be avoided when possible, how can we recognized them early? Thus the old question of what to do came back.

A partial answer of the seminar was to offer help in 1. making a better diagnosis of the conflict situation, understanding the elements and the dynamics in it; 2. getting a clear realization of the perceptions and needs of the other person, especially someone with a different cultural background, different assumptions, different social constraints and personal disposition; 3. seeing the range of procedures and strategies; and 4. increasing sensitivity to oneself via the introspective questions of "who am I?" "What is confortable for me and authentic in me?" "And what kind of things bother me?"

Commentary: Preferences of managerial styles -- two questionnaires*

The last session of the first day was devoted to helping participants discover their personal managerial styles via questionnaires currently in use in organizational research. The first one was a typology of preferences based on reactions to proverbs (developed by Blake and Mouton and supplemented with a few Chinese proverbs by the present staff). "Confrontation," "smoothing," and "forcing" are the three categories for classifying proverbs as problem-solving. The second questionnaire was the "Least Preferred Coworker" (LPC) Scale for measuring types of orientation to interpersonal relations in organizations. Since these two questionnaires and their results are extensively reported by G. Evans, two points most relevant to the themes here developed will be mentioned.

1. It was found that of the three approaches to problem-solving the "forcing" mode was judged to be highly undesirable but frequently found in the experiences of all participants. As between Chinese and expatriate managers, Chinese found "forcing" or the authoritarian mode to be more frequent but expressed less strong objections to it than did the non-Chinese. This discrepancy could be due either to the realities of life which are faced by the Chinese in western-run organizations, or to Chinese-Western differences in culture-and-personality.
2. On the LPC score, the Chinese came out to have a higher preference for the task-orientation style of management than did Westerners, and the latter turned out to emphasize interpersonal relations more than did the Chinese. This finding appears contrary to expections, but one should keep in mind the possibility that task-oriented Chinese and inter-personal-relations-oriented Westerners

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* This part of the seminar was conducted by Dr. Gano Evans, who has also prepared a separate report.

would tend to be the ones in each respective group to come to such a seminar. It is also possible that Chinese may value a self-image of being task-oriented while expatriate may want the opposite, especially in Hong Kong.

Late on Tuesday night, the seminar leaders met to review the day's proceedings, assess the success of the programme designs so far, and discuss the trend of the meetings, the themes which emerged as dominant, and the pressing, unanswered needs of the participants.

The planners noted with satisfaction the general level of participation and involvement. The Chinese were slow in joining in at first, allowing Westerners to do most of the talking and the taking of roles. This was to be expected: Chinese reticence would have prevented anyone from stepping forward. In addition, Chinese would not nominate each other, at least not until they got better acquainted. However, as the day progressed, especially after the replay of roles, the Chinese members began to take full part in the discussions, arguing, defending or fighting back on expatriate "complaints" about the behavior of Chinese staff. By contrast, Westerners began the day with vigor, ready to speak up and eager to take up various roles.

On the program side, the planners decided that in view of the preoccupation of members with East/West differences, they would design a session on the "briefing of new expatriates." This was a slight modification of the original plan, and it meant either abandoning some original designs or holding them in reserve. Several sequences were reviewed and held as alternative plans to follow the "briefing" session in the morning.

Chinese-non-Chinese dialogue

Wednesday morning began with the "briefing" exercise: Chinese and Europeans were asked to form two separate group, each to arrive at a common list of 7 points to use to brief a new expatriate manager to Hong Kong about working with Chinese staff.

The Western group immediately set about their task in a crisp, business-like manner, selecting their spokesman and observer first before making individual lists and discussing them. Some of the cultural differences brought out on the first day re-emerged,

now couched in stronger language and accompanied by much feeling. "They (the Chinese) have to be taught to assume responsibility," said one member of the group. "You don't know what's going on -- they say 'yes' when they mean 'no'." "Don't take anything for granted," remarked another. "We have problems here," said a third. Some of the other phrases used to describe the Chinese were: "They show favoritism", "They are fanatical about seniority," and "They will never change." But a more moderate and more experienced voice pointed out the need for preparations before the expatriate arrivals -- the need to learn from books, the need to talk to people, and the need to constantly reap lessons from daily occurrences. The question was then raised as to what to do when an expatriate was placed under a Chinese "boss." A minor argument took place as to the possibility of such an arrangement: Some thought it seldom or never happened, others pointed to actual cases in which a young expatriate may be under several Chinese senior managers. This is itself was a small revelation to some.

The Chinese group approached its assigned task in an entirely different style. There was much laughter and much animated talking, as if a valve was let loose. "Seven warnings!" one of them gleefully dubbed the list. At times, several voices spoke up at once, apparently not making much advance on the task. Some who had not been heard from before contributed their opinions. The group also resisted making individual lists first as they were asked to do, but directly compiled a common one in the midst of seeming chaos. Some of the phrases which arose above the din were: "Tell him things he <u>ought</u> to do..." "... respect the Chinese," and "quitting at 5 p.m." Eventually 7 points in Chinese emerged from the sociable chatter.

The posted lists which originated from the two groups bore little resemblance to the discussions: they were stripped of the feeling tones and elevated onto an emasculated, impersonal plane.

Commentary: The contrast between these "official" lists and what came out "naturally" before illustrated some of the differences between the conventional style of rational discussion and the use of simulation, role play and small-group design.

> These are merely devices to provide acceptable, "legitimate" outlets for sentiments, which can then be brought forth for group examination. Such devices make the initial appearances of strong feelings seem only half-serious half-playful, as if one safe step removed from reality. Once the mood is set, the atmosphere is created, the expression of sentiments can quickly shift on to a "real" plane. Somehow, a more direct confrontation is made easier and less likely to be acrimonious.

The two groups posted their lists (the Chinese one was translated into English) on a newsheet before the total seminar, and each selected a representative to negotiate together to produce a common list.

BRIEFING OF THE NEW EXPATRIATE MANAGER: list constructed by Westerners

1. Communications
2. Reluctance to accept responsibility
3. Move slowly
4. Learn to know your staff
5. Avoid open criticism
6. Try to gain respect
7. Don't make assumptions

BRIEFING OF THE NEW EXPATRIATE MANAGER: list constructed by the Chinese

1. Avoid superiority
2. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do"

   Understanding:

   a. socially
   b. economically
   c. culturally

3. National (Chinese) characteristics:

   Chinese introvert

4. Expatriate vs. Local -- Employment objectives:

   Long term objective against <u>short term gain</u>

5. Should involve local employees in decision-making process
6. Is "<u>Old China Hand</u>" always <u>right</u>?
7. <u>You</u> are the one to initiate the action to overcome the differences

The Chinese and the European representatives then held a dialogue. Here and in the subsequent general discussion, a lengthy, meaningful encounter did take place. Much of the feeling unearthed when the two groups met separately came back in, sometimes in different words, different tones, different guises.

The Westerner, when invited by the Chinese to start, opened up by pointing to an item of Chinese communications behavior which most puzzled and exasperated expatriate managers like himself: "Often the Chinese says 'yes' when he doesn't understand, or when he means 'no.'" The Chinese responded by explaining that this was a "national characteristic": "The Chinese says 'yes' in order not to embarass anybody. They think that by saying 'yes' nothing can go wrong. But, in an office," he quickly admitted, "it is a completely different thing." This short "but" is key to a deeply ambivalent attitude -- it indicated that he was not prepared to defend this practice on all occasions, especially in the office. Turning around, he charged European managers with precipitating this kind of "yes" answer: "This happens usually because there is a gap. We feel a certain superiority in the style of the expatriate, preventing the Chinese from speaking directly." The Westerner, being task-oriented and matter-of-fact, either did not "hear" or did not respond to the reason behind the "yes" referred to by the Chinese: the sentiment of uneasiness before authority that led to the saying of "yes", but instead to the surface manifestation of the answer itself. "The Chinese is not solving any problem by saying 'yes'," he complained. The Chinese pursued the point on the unequal relationship by comparing the European's question to an "order" to which the subordinate did not dare say "no." "You come always on top of certain people. You may not show this superiority immediately, but eventually you'll all be spoiled." The European, feeling unjustly accused, retorted that it was the Chinese who thought the European was superior; the problem therefore lay with the Chinese. And turning back to the narrow requirements of the job, the expatriate reiterated the need for specific answers. The Chinese side then gave an illustration of the meaning of a "yes" answer: In negotiating a sale of ashtrays, the European seller might quote a price of $.65 and the Chinese buyer might come back with an offer of $.55. Instead of

pointing to the discrepancy and saying "no," the Chinese would say "Yes, we negotiate." "People will say 'yes' more often than 'no'," he added.

Picking up the note of superiority again, the European complained that the Chinese did not give the individual Westerner any chance, failing to "assess him for what he is." "The Chinese have preconceived ideas while the European takes things at face value," implying directness as a virtue and "superiority" as an unfairly imposed attribution. (It is as if he was saying, "I am me. I'm here to do a job. I may represent my company, but I don't represent the White man.") Then, shifting ground, the expatriate in effect appealed to the Chinese to be "modern." "Twenty years ago, this kind of discussion would never have happened. Now it has. Chinese now receive a Western education. That makes us equals. You'll have to show this (equality). How can Europeans eliminate this superiority if it lies in the minds of the Chinese?" The Chinese then countered with the argument which may be labelled "institutional superiority," (comparable to the current term of "institutional racism" in the U.S.) -- that is, the root of this "superiority" lies in institutional arrangements in which the individual is trapped, for which the individual should, according to the less powerful side, be held morally accountable. Said the Chinese, "You come in high; I come in as a clerk." To this, the expatriate gave no answer except to say cryptically that "the situation demands it," a return to the task-specific kind of reasoning.

Referring to an earlier point, the expatriate repeated: "We feel a reluctance by the Chinese to accept any kind of responsibility." To this the Chinese replied by pointing to a concrete solution: "If you involve the Chinese in decision-making, they won't avoid responsibility. In the old days, they did what they were told." Then he added that in a Chinese setting, a Chinese does fulfill his responsibility. The European pursued the question by asking for a "guarantee:" "You'd avoid making decision in any shape or form." The Chinese said, "You don't find the answer because he doesn't know the problem. If he likes the job he will do his part. If not, he'll ride it." Thus the basic inequality of the situation is invoked

again. Not satisfied with this explanation, the European followed with a second complaint: "If you delegate responsibility, he'll continue to refer back to you." The answer: "Give confidence," "leave the man alone," and "allow him to make some mistakes." In all this exchange, the Chinese did not really fully attend to the reality of decision-making, and the European, on the other hand, did not pick up the cues given for a new kind of relationship, i.e., alter the conditions and you may get a different kind of Chinese behavior. Somehow, the European returned to the earlier diagnosis and prescription: "It's basically pacification then." The dialogue came back full circle to the original point: lack of real understanding and real communication.

Commentary: The two sides were, in short, communicating on two different levels, each being unable or unwilling to really "listen" to the other and respond to the need of the other. Although much was revealed in feelings and mutual percpetions, deeper learning was not immediately apparent -- the communication did not spiral up to a new level of understanding or exchange. The dialogue remained a debate.

It therefore seemed advisable to design some exercises in listening skills, based on the theory that each piece of communication carries not only (1) a manifest content but also latent messages such as (2) feelings and emotions, (3) a portrait of the sender and (4) a portrait of the receiver, and (5) an image of the relationship. In addition, what the listener actually receives as the message goes through a filter of his own preconceptions, needs, and projections which further modified the message. The process is then repeated in the opposite direction. The nature of a two-way exchange therefore depends on the particular level of the message each side attends to. Communication bogs down, for example, when A persists in sending the unintended measage that he holds a low opinion of B, or that B, through needs of his own, feels and fears down-graded. Communication also cannot progress if one side pays no heed to signs of distress from the other.

A three-step listening exercise was designed to improve skills in listening to various levels of communication:

1. Maximizing the accuracy of the manifest content -- by asking the listener to first restate the message before making his own point.
2. Listening to the state of mind of the other -- by asking the listener to preface the remarks of the first speaker by first saying, "My impression is that you are feeling..."

3. Learning to read the intention of the other -- by stating, "What he is really saying is ..."

Three-men groups were formed to practice these listening exercise, one group at a time in front of everyone. The participants at first found with amusement that they were concentrating so hard on listening that they lost the points they themselves were going to make! All enjoyed this simple but taxing assignment, and after a few rounds, they were able to incorporate this kind of concentrated listening into the flow of conversation.

The second and third exercises on interpreting the feeling and intention of the other person were only moderately successful. This was partly due to the fact that very few feelings were revealed in this phase of the dialogue. Most of the exchange dwelled on the dimensions of preference-non-preference.

It was difficult for participants to carry out these instructions while at the same time continuing discussion on a substantive basis. Perhaps too, the topic by this time was no longer fresh; each side seemed to be set in its position and convinced of its own interpretation of the other side, its own version of the "truth."

Stalemate or "resolution?"

In the comments and discussion which followed, the contrasting approaches and views of the Chinese and European managers went through another recycling: some of the cultural differences became further crystallized or hardened, but new insights, new perspectives were also brought out and articulated. The differences revolved around two issues: "responsibility" and "superiority."

What the Europeans said about Chinese managers' sense of responsibility in business organizations were reiterated as follows:

"Chinese will never answer directly; only enough to please the boss."

"Instead of taking responsibility, Chinese bow to authority."

"Chinese keep coming back for minor decisions."

"They won't make the simplist of decisions. They don't realize that they will only be reprimanded for mistakes, not fired."

To these remarks, the Chinese came back with two kinds of answers: 1. "It's a characteristic of the Chinese," and "You can't change people's reactions." These are forms of Chinese resistance to change. Chinese accept these characteristics as given and see no need for further discussion. 2. Chinese again replied by pointing to conditions of inequality: "Non-Chinese always get better pay. You can't pay a boy's wages and expect a man's job -- that's not fair," and, "Responsibility is always heavier on the Chinese. If things go wrong, Chinese get the sack, but the non-Chinese only gets transferred."

But besides the repetition of the themes by both sides, the discussion at times cycled up to a new level of mutual concern and mutual help. On the side of the Chinese, hints of advice were given to the expatriate manager. But first they offered an explanation: "We have only been given responsibility (in Western companies) for ten or so years." This was both an admission of a shortcoming and an implicit plea for understanding. Then, a two-fold warning: If one is not careful to give the Chinese manager a realistic target, approaching him "step by step", the following reaction may result: "When I feel the job is impossible, I say, 'let (the Europeans) run it.'" And, "Responsibility should go with authority -- genuine authority. If a European comes in the middle to check up on the Chinese -- to get information -- this will shake the authority of the Chinese." Lastly, a business-like, tough-minded rule to apply to the Chinese: "Force him to make decisions. If he doesn't accept responsibility, he is not qualified." These are points which the Chinese implicitly or explicitly offered the Europeans as a result of the two-day exchange.

On the side of the Westerners, there were also other reactions to the encounter than sheer frustration and recriminations. One expatriate drew this lesson for all Europeans: "You can't expect of the Chinese what we do." Another added: "We have to accept the fact that both are not the best -- Hong Kong is a compromise." But better still than a mere compromise is insight into the cultural reasons behind the differences in behavior. On this question of responsibility, one European arrived at this explanation: for the Western point of view the expatriate feels that "a wrong decision

is better than no decision," therefore he is impelled to give a definite answer of "yes" or "no" to a direct question. To a Chinese, he thought, a wrong decision would mean losing face; therefore he would wait until he is certain before making the decision. This explanation, without implying either side is "right" or "wrong," "justified" or "unjustified," elevated the topic of discussion from "a realization there is a problem" to an attempt at "an understanding of the problem." In other words, each side is faced by social constraints: the European, if he accepted an indefinite answer, would be judged by his company as being indecisive or undependable, while the Chinese, if he said a premature "yes," might be criticized by colleague for making the wrong decision. A step toward was being made toward a real appreciation of cultural differences.

Who feels superior?

The second major point of difference, one that largely remained unresolved, was the question of superiority. The Chinese complained that Westerners came in with feelings of superiority toward the local people. Westerners denied this and called it Chinese pre-conceptions. In fact, they saw Chinese as considering themselves superior, as inheritors of a "superior" civilization. "The Chinese forget that we have culture too, though we respect Chinese culture," remarked one expatriate. The Chinese, on their part, reminded the Westerners of the stereotyped uncomplimentary images of the Chinese as "gardeners and chauffeurs." Hinting at unconscious sources of bias in Europeans, the Chinese said, "Find out about yourself before you accept the job here."

Commentary: Some of this exchange of "superiority" was elicited by the programme director when he asked the group to reflect upon their previous discussion session and comment on any feelings of superiority they had observed or felt in the seminar setting. This device brought the discussion closer to home: instead of talking about feelings of superiority in organizational behavior in the abstract, participants had to point to actual behavior or feelings and confront the opposite party with something that occurred on the spot.

> One of the staff members, for example, pointed to some minor speech habit of expatriates which could prove irritating to the Chinese. Instead of "work with the Chinese," sometimes one hears the impersonal, condescending phrase "deal with." Again, some Westerners after some unpleasant experience with a particular Chinese would generalize by saying "those Chinese..."
>
> At one point, when the Westerners pointed out that the Chinese spokesman in a discussion "acted superior," the reply of the Chinese was that he was "deliberately trying to answer in a more aggressive way" on this occasion. What thism the conscious playing of a Chinese role, does to our observations of Chinese behavior is difficult to assess. In any case, deliberate or not, the rise of the Chinese manager to meet the challenge of Westerners is not without some significance.

An impasse was created. Neither side indicated readiness to examine his own perceptions with a view of correcting or refining them; neither side made an effort to understand the factors which lay behind the image he was creating about the other. Such a state of affairs certainly held little hope of change. What is behind this matter of "superiority?"

The Chinese, when placed in a East/West confrontation, remember the past hundred or so years of humiliating national history and see any Westerner as representative of the political and cultural imperialism. The young expatriate, however, is not conscious of any feeling of cultural superiority, and would not knowingly take advantage of the Chinese on the basis of superior Western political or military power. He sees himself as an individual, or as representative of a business firm which bases its policy on "rational" considerations. He sees HK as a businessman's world, in which his values as a businessman should find ready acceptance. He therefore expects the young Chinese businessmen with a modern education to more or less think as he himself does and to behave as he does. The Chinese, on the other hand, see the Westerner as coming under the sponsorship of the large, powerful, business organization, backed by powerful governments. The Westerner, in the minds of the Chinese therefore has to share the responsibility for this institutional superiority. Perhaps because of this, the Chinese did not give ground on the subject of Western superiority toward the Chinese. On the expatriate side, however,

a senior European manager offered his tried-and-proven method of counter-balancing this inherently more powerful position of the Westerner. He explained his basic view of the situation this way:

> "I don't think it's a question of 'yes' or 'no' or accepting responsibility at all. Superiroity is expecting everyone to speak English. The basic problem problem is that all Europeans come expecting that Hong Kong is Sydney or some other Western city ... You don't try to motivate or activate (the young Chinese managers). Instead, you increase the distance till you become useless."

Then he went on to describe the unique practice in his firm:

> "We ask senior Chinese to teach young Europeans. Adapt the young Europeans. Let them work under Chinese executives -- hand-picked ones. Teach Chinese executives how to answer young Europeans."

Summing up, he described how his company puts teeth into this policy: A young European who has trouble working under a Chinese would be fired!

Commentary: "Teaching Chinese how to answer the European" was one of the original objectives of the staff. It was thought that the lesson was usually drawn for the benefit of the Western: How to "deal with the locals." Adding such a design would, we thought, redress the imbalance and possibly move the Chinese a step beyond the usual defensive stance: "We are what we are."

C. TYPOLOGY

Here we offer further analysis of the encounter between Chinese and Western managers in terms of a typology of three Chinese patterns of attitudes and behavior and four expatriate ones. These are emergent categories and are only meant to be suggestive of types of response which may prove useful for future observation and checking. Of course these types do not represent concrete persons. They are constructs made up of elements of attitude and behavior falling into a syndrome which can be embodied in greater or lesser degree in many people.

Three Chinese Patterns

The data revealed in this seminar illustrate three types of Chinese attitudes toward East-West differences: the "traditionalist," the "ideologye," and the "apologist."

1. The Chinese "traditionalist" may be described as the kind of "person" who in this semi-modern, mixed cultural setting of Hong Kong remains faithful to traditional Chinese values (in modified form), chooses to perpetuate traditional styles of behavior or by personality type finds traditional modes of interaction congenial. He does not readily change in the face of contact with Westerners or in the context of a Western style organization.
2. The Chinese "ideologue" represents a type who is familiar with and knowledgeable about traditional values and behavior but who does not necessarily exemplify it in personal style. But when challenged on an intellectual level or when confronted by an actual situation vis-a-vis Westerners, he may rise to defend traditional values or modes of behavior, including personal exemplification. Such persons are not "insincere" or "inconsistent," -- rather they are "loyalists" and "realists" at the same time.
3. The Chinese "apologist" is one who is fundamentally more Westernized or modernized but who has not necessarily abandoned Chinese values or styles. His conviction in the viability of the Chinese way of life in modern business world is shaken sufficiently for

him to feel inadequate as a "Chinese." He is in other words more of a convinced "modern man" than the other two types, ready on occasion to admit to himself or others the necessity for change. This statement illustrates such a state of mind: "Chinese have to accept the fact that there is no Chinese management style -- only family style. We have to adopt the Western way."

Four expatriate patterns

1. The "colonizer" is the kind of Westerner who nurtures the idea that he has a special responsibility to help "run" the local situation to the best of his judgment. He does not necessarily impose Western ways on the "native" population, but believes that he "understands" them and works for their benefit as well as his own (or that of his government or company). He accepts on the whole the mode of unequal though symbiotic relationship worked out in the past and sees little need for change.
2. The "company man" is the loyal organization man abroad. He assumes full responsibility for furthering the goals of the organization which sends him to foreign branches. He may be alert to cultural differences but is reluctant to accommodate the locals for fear of jeopardizing company objectives. He may well have personal values at variance with values of the business organization, but hesitates to let personal preferences and ideologies interfere with the performance of his duty.
3. The "conciliator" is the man prepared to compromise. He knows there are irreducible cultural differences but he is willing to make trade-offs, realizing each side is making concessions rather than committing to basic changes.
4. The "humanist" is one whose values transcend national boundaries and who is constantly looking for imperfections in the status quo and in the establishment. He is ready "to take the other's point of view," often at the risk of bringing discomfort to his compatriates and embarrassment to the organization he represents. Ambivalence characterizes many of his attitudes and actions in the colonial setting. It is relatively difficult, though possible, for a "humanist" to be decisive as an executive.

D. AN OVERVIEW

This seminar-workshop may be a single event, or a sequence of events around related themes, but it is not altogether a unique event. Many of the attitudes, perceptions, and modes of interaction which evolved during the course of the two days are congruent with what we know of the Western man in a Chinese setting, and the modern Chinese face-to-face with the challenge of the West. From such an event we can discern two patterns which have general implications: Chinese ambivalence about westernization, and Western dilemma about organizational superiority.

Modern Chinese realize the necessity of changing their own behavior and that of organizations in order to meet the challenge of the West, but in some contexts they also value Chinese ways (much modified, of course) of doing things. Often these two elements co-exist in the same person, perhaps one or the other aspect becoming more dominant according to circumstances. In this seminar, the "modern" orientation of the Chinese managers manifested itself particularly on three occasions: 1. greater Chinese approval than Westerners' of the managerial style of Mr. Law, and backing of the point of view of Mr. Daniels; 2. relatively milder objections to the mode of "forcing" as revealed in their rating of proverbs; and 3. greater preference for task-orientation in management as compared to Westerners. Yet, Chinese support and defense of the more Chinese manner of handling interpersonal relations is also clear and unmistakable. Both are integral aspects of the modern Chinese, though often one or the other is not readily evident in a particular person.

The Westerner's dilemma is that between his conviction of his superior method of conducting business and his commitment to a basic equality between peoples. When he is functioning in a more or less modern Chinese setting, he expects the Chinese to live up to Western standards of organizational behavior, but is sensitive to being described as acting superior. His self-image is that of a democratic man while he is dedicated to the Western mode of organizational behavior.

Now a word about the process of intergroup relations during the two day meeting. Process of course depends on the inputs of various individuals and groups during the sessions, including that of the seminar staff. There was nothing inevitable about the particular way the individuals or groups interacted, yet given similar impetus, people of similar backgrounds and circumstances might well have displayed similar patterns. After the first role play, the impact of the Westerners' style of portraying the roles and the request by the seminar staff to give a Chinese interpretation undoubtedly brought out the "Chineseness" in the Chinese participants and made them consciously aware of cultural differences. The Chinese version of the role play in turn made a strong impact on the Western managers and highlighted their sense of frustration in having to cope with Chinese behavior in a modern business organization. Their remarks about Chinese lack of responsibility and respect for seniority together with Chinese reactions to these statements highlighted group differences and blurred individual variations. And finally, the entire process of interaction led to each side concluding that the other side harbours feelings of superiority.

The patterns described in this paper are thus in part unique to this particular occasion and in part general in significance. The essense of East/West relations in the context of modern management as revealed in this seminar is undoubtedly a crucial element in Hong Kong business circles while the nuances described in this paper may add to our understanding of the intricate texture of human relations.

"YOU AND YOUR MANAGERIAL STYLE"

by

Session Leader: Gano Evans

INTRODUCTION

In our original planning of the seminar, this segment was intended to be longer with group analysis and discussion related to desired and actual modes of conflict resolution and leadership style. The original plan was as follows:

1. 5:00 - 5:30: Participant completion of questionnaires
2. 5:30 - 7:00: Scoring of questionnaires
3. 7:00 - 8:00: Dinner
4. 8:00 -10:30: Lecturette, analysis of individual questionnaire results, group work, panel discussion reflecting each groups results, summation lecturette on Contingency Organization Theory and Continuum of Leadership Behavior

We were later informed that even though the programme time schedule started 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily, that we should really plan to adjourn by 9:00 p.m. So, the group work and panel discussion segments (which were designed to reinforce this new material) had to be deleted.

> Personal Note: As a matter of "hindsight," I was very aware of the consequences resulting from this lack of reinforcement activity the following day. The session which I lead prior to dinner on the second day was addressed to the problem of "Determining Possible Pragmatic Approaches to the Management of Conflict." The fact that little or none of this material was used by the groups indicated the need for reinforcement.

The following material might be considered as "fleshed out" lecture notes which summarize the intended content of this session.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Intergroup conflict is a natural phenonemon of any formal organization due to the need for joint decision making and differences in the perception of goals. From analysis of an organization's methods

of resolving conflict, it is possible to compare the relative effectiveness of management.

Organizational Reaction to Conflict

Typology A (March & Simon, 1958)	Typology B (Blake & Mouton, 1964)
1. Problem solving	1. Confrontation
2. Persuasion	2. Smoothing
3. Bargaining	3. Forcing
4. "Politics"	

In Typology A, "problem solving" refers to the fact that goals are shared and each of the parties to the conflict will contribute to the solution by the satisfaction of shared criteria. "Persuasion" assumes that goals differ but are not fixed. In "bargaining" the disagreement over goals is taken as fixed. In "politics" the arena for bargaining is expanded to include potential allies or other influential parties to shift the balance or power to one of the factions directly involved in the conflict.

Typology B, developed by Blake & Mouton (1964)aand refined for use in this seminar, was the framework used to collect data on the modes of conflict resolution.

Usually, the most effective way to resolve conflict is through the "Problem-solving" or "Confrontation" approach. If the parties to the disagreement openly exchange information about the facts of the problem and work through their differences, there is a higher probability of reaching a solution that best meets the goals of the organization. The "Smoothing" mode of conflict resolution is that the real problems tend to be compromised causing parties to the disagreement to focus on the maintenance of interpersonal relationships rather than the task that has to be accomplished.

The "Forcing" mode of resolving conflict is accomplished by means of a more authoritarian use of power or positional authority to force a solution that is satisfactory to one party's point of view. (Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969).

Modes of Conflict Resolution

The following questionnaire was used to determine modes of conflict resolution:

a. Question: You are asked to indicate how desirable, in your opinion, each of the proverbs listed below is as a way of resolving disagreements between members of different groups or areas of specialty. Please use the following scores in evaluating the desirability of each proverb.

(1) Very desirable
(2) Desirable
(3) Neither desirable nor undesirable
(4) Undesirable
(5) Completely undesirable

Indicate your evaluation in the spaces below:

1. "Soft words win hard hearts." (Smoothing)*
2. "A gentleman refrains from shaming his opponent." ("Chinese")[a]
3. "Come now and let us reason together." (Confrontation)
4. "Don't interfere with the natural flow of events." ("Chinese")
5. "The question must be decided by knowledge and not by numbers if it is to have a right decision." (Confrontation)
6. "When one hits you with a stone, hit him with a piece of cotton." (Smoothing)
7. "The arguments of the strongest always have the most weight." (Forcing)
8. "Disputes begin with too much talking, troubles start from over ambition." ("Chinese")
9. "By digging and digging, the truth is discovered." (Confrontation)
10. "Smooth words make smooth ways." (Smoothing)
11. "If you cannot make a man think as you do, make him do as you think." (Forcing)
12. "Avoid extremes, stop just in time." ("Chinese")
13. "He who fights and runs away lives to run another day." (Forcing)
14. "Might overcomes right." (Forcing)
15. "Seek till you find, and you will not lose your labor." (Confrontation)
16. "Kill your enemies with kindness." (Smoothing)

* Identification of mode not included in actual questionnaire
[a] "Chinese" statements developed by Drs. Chin, King, & Chin

b. In answering this question, you are asked to shift from what is desirable to what actually happens in your organization. As you read the proverbs below, please indicate using the following scale, to what extent these proverbs describe behavior in your business.

(1) Describes very typical behavior which usually occurs.
(2) Describes typical behavior which occurs frequently.
(3) Describes behavior which occurs sometimes.
(4) Describes untypical behavior which seldom occurs.
(5) Describes behavior which never occurs.

(List of proverbs was repeated.)

The analysis of desired versus actual modes of conflict resolution for participants is shown in Table 1 and Figure A.

The research and literature dealing with conflict predicts that a majority of organizational members desire the "Confrontation" mode of conflict resolution. This prediction held true for members of the seminar. However, Chinese participants felt that confrontation was the most typical mode employed in their organizations. This is not often the case in most firms.

The "Forcing" mode was least desired by all participants, which is predicted in most organizations. Once again, significant differences were exhibited between the Chinese and Non-Chinese. In most companies, Forcing is least desired, but most often used.

"Smoothing" was desired to a higher degree by this group than is normally the case in the U.S. environment, but was ranked last by both Chinese and Non-Chinese in actual use. This is also true in the U.S. My own guess is, and it's only a guess, that organizational members in Hong Kong firms are sensitive to the "Cultural-mix" phenomenon and want to maintain better interpersonal relationships. However, the requirements of organizational decisions will often preclude this mode as a viable alternative.

TABLE 1

Analysis of Desired Versus Actual Modes of Conflict Resolution; Forcing, Smoothing, "Chinese" and Confrontation

Mode	Chinese Desired-Rank		Non-Chinese Desired-Rank		Chinese Actual-Rank		Non-Chinese Actual-Rank	
Forcing	3.25	4	4.14	4s[a]	2.56	2	3.01	3 s
Smoothing	2.50	2	2.77	3s	2.90	4	3.41	4 s
"Chinese"	2.80	3	2.51	2s	2.84	3	2.58	1 s
Confrontation	1.75	1	1.74	1ns	2.25	1	2.64	2 s

Chinese	C	S	"Ch"	F	
Non-Chinese	C	"Ch"	S		F

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Very Desirable	Desirable	Neither Desirable nor Undesirable	Undesirable	Completely Undesirable

Chinese	C	F	"Ch"	S	
Non-Chinese		"Ch"	C	F	S

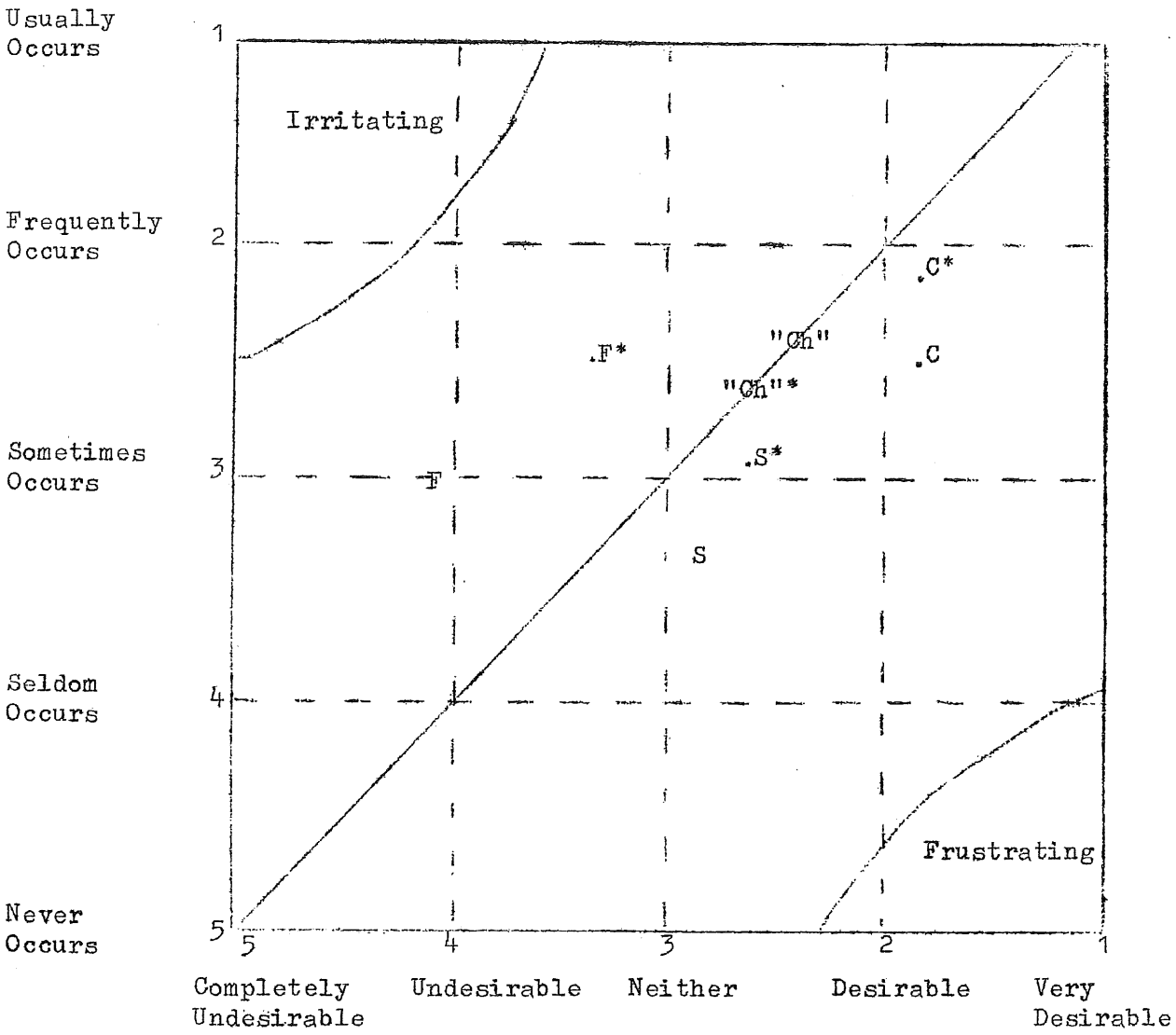
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Very Typical Behavior	Typical Behavior	Sometimes Typical Behavior	Untypical Behavior	Very Untypical Behavior

Code: F = Forcing; S = Smoothing; "Ch" = Chinese; C = Confrontation

Mode Mode	Chinese Desired-Rank		Chinese Actual-Rank		Non-Chinese Desired-Rank		Non-Chinese Actual-Rank	
Forcing	3.25	4	2.56	2 s	4.14	4	3.01	3 s
Smoothing	2.50	2	2.90	4 s	2.77	3	3.41	4 s
"Chinese"	2.80	3	2.84	3 ns	2.51	2	2.58	1 ns
Confrontation	1.75	1	2.25	1 s	1.74	1	2.64	2 s

[a] s = Significant
ns = Non-significant
i.e. t-test statistically significant at the 5% level between: Chinese - Non-Chinese, desired and actual; Chinese, desired and actual; Non-Chinese, desired and actual.

Figure A.



APPROACHES TO CONFLICT

1,1 Congruent
5,1 Extremely Irritating

Code: F = Forcing
S = Smoothing
C = Confrontation
"Ch" = Chinese

* Chinese participants

The "Chinese" mode was developed by Drs. Chin, King, and Chin for specific use in this seminar. At first reading, one may interpret the Chinese proverbs as being the same as smoothing. However, there are subtle differences. Several interesting, if not conclusive, results occured. Chinese members rated the "Chinese" mode less desirable than confrontation or smoothing while the non-Chinese rated it as 2nd most desribale after confrontation. What would happen if te the Chinese and Non-Chinese scores for desired-smoothing and "Chinese"; were analyzed as follows?

Mode	Chinese Desired	Non-Chinese Desired
Smoothing	2.50	2.77
"Chinese"	2.80	2.51

Would this indicate that non-Chinese viewed the "Chinese" proverbs as smoothing? and/or, did the Chinese view the "smoothing" proverbs as "Chinese"? In other words our addition of close meaning related Chinese proverbs may have also confounded the issue.

If only the standardized modes of Forcing, Smoothing and Confrontation were used, Table 1 would have looked like this:

Mode	Chinese Desired-Rank		Non-Chinese Desired-Rank		Chinese Actual-Rank		Non-Chinese Actual-Rank	
Forcing	3.25	3	4.14	3	2.56	2	3.01	2
Smoothing	2.50	2	2.77	2	2.90	3	3.40	3
Confrontation	1.75	1	1.74	1	2.25	1	2.64	1

Although there are differences in degree between Chinese and Non-Chinese rankings would be the same.

This is all "what if" so let us return to the data used.

One of the most interesting results was that the Non-Chinese members thought that the "Chinese" mode was most common in resolving conflict in their own organizations.

Regardless of culture, significant differences are to be expected between desired and actual modes, but the statistical comparison of Chinese and Non-Chinese, the Chinese and Non-Chinese desired and actual ratings implies culturally-derived differences. Further analysis of Table 1 revealed the following range of scores for each classification:

Desirability	(1: very desirable to 5: completely undesirable)
Chinese:	1.75 - 3.25 = 1.50 range
Non-Chinese:	1.74 - 4.14 = 2.40 range
Behavior	(1: very typical to 5: very untypical)
Chinese:	2.25 - 2.90 = .65 range
Non-Chinese:	2.58 - 3.41 = .83 range

The Chinese range of scores is narrower in both cases which indicates that they desire and expect more of a mix of resolution modes. For example, Forcing was not patently undesirable and was expected to be used in actual practice. I would guess this follows from the Chinese view of authority.

To further illustrate the Chinese "mode-mix," let us recall the Chinese role-play of the RELE Co., Ltd. case.

The Chinese Mr. Daniels (Henry Cheng) repeatedly reminded Mr. Wong (Michael Van) and Mr. Law (B.H. Chow) that it was necessary to concentrate on the major problem or goal of the company - i.e. Confrontation. The effort to compromise the desired time of implementation from Wong's 2 years and Law's 8 months to 18 months was a smoothing approach. A play to Wong's age, rank, & status might be likened to a Chinese-oriented Forcing mode or a recognition of personal power instead of positional authority.

The Non-Chinese Mr. Daniels (D.B. Miller) mostly exhibited a Forcing mode based on his own positional authority with some smoothing and an attempt at use of Confrontation.

In summary of this section, it should be pointed out that conflict is often essential to the continued viability of organizations. The manager's task is the effective resolution, not elimination, of conflict. Conflict fundamentally contributes to change by calling attention to a problem and generating a search for solutions. The dysfunction occurs when people or groups spend their energies plotting defense-and-attack strategies which deflect attention from the organization's prime mission. (Litterer, 1965).

In addition to the encouragement of functional conflict, the understanding, practice, and reinforcement of the "Confrontation" mode of resolution will often enable management to more effectively solve the problems brought about by a difficult task within uncertain environments.

LEADERSHIP

It is clear that successful conflict resolution is also a function of a manager's leadership ability.

The "Least Preferred Coworker" (LPC) Scale

Fieldler's (1967) "Least Preferred Coworker" scale (LPC) was used to measure and compare the dimension of interpersonal orientation. Briefly, the LPC scores indicate the individual's tendency to be primarily oriented toward accomplishment of the task or maintenance of interpersonal relationships.

The LPC scores of Chinese and Non-Chinese participants were compared. A lower score predicts a leadership style which will be primarily oriented to the task or goal. Whereas, a high score predicts interpersonal (group maintenance) orientation.

Interpretation of LPC Scores

The high LPC leader says in effect that the person with whom he is least able to work with on a task is reasonably nice, intelligent, and confident. It is as if he were saying that he is distinguishing

between the person and the way he works. The low LPC leader who describes his least-preferred co-worker in a very negative rejecting manner says that the person with whom he cannot work is uncooperative, unintelligent, and incompetent. The implicit personality theory of the high LPC person separates work performance and personality, while the implicit personality theory of the low LPC person links an individual's poor performance on a joint task with undesirable personality characteristics.

A few general trends are apparent. High LPC leaders tend to be more concerned with establishing interpersonal relations. They are generally described as more considerate than low LPC leaders; the members of their groups tend to be lower in anxiety; they get along better; and they are more satisfied to be in the group. The low LPC leaders tend to be more concerned with the task. They are "more task-than relationship-oriented". They are seen as more efficient and goal-oriented in their leadership behavior. However, even more important are the repeated findings that relaxed, pleasant group climates call out quite different types of behaviors in high and low LPC leaders than do group climates which are tense, stressful, or which present difficult leadership situations.

In brief, the high LPC individual is a person who derives his major satisfaction from interpersonal relationships, while the low LPC person derives major satisfaction from task performance. (Fiedler, 1967)

Table 2 shows that 50% of the Chinese participants gain their major satisfaction from task performance while only 29% of the Non-Chinese fall in this category.

In contrast 42% of the Non-Chinese derive major satisfaction from interpersonal relationships.

TABLE 2

Participant Scores on "Least Preferred Coworker" (LPC) Scale

Range: 1.2 - 31. Low
3.2 - 4.0 Average
4.1 - 5.7 High

Scores		
1.9	1	
2.3	1*	50% of the Chinese
2.4	1*	29% of the Non-Chinese
2.5	1*	↑
2.9	1*	↑
3.1	1* 1* 1	Low - High Task
3.3	1*	↕
3.6	1* 1	Mid-Range — 25% of the Chinese
3.9	1* 1	↕ — 29% of the Non-Chinese
		High - High Interpersonal
4.7	1*	↓
5.1	1	↓
5.3	1	25% of the Chinese
5.5	1* 1	42% of the Non-Chinese
6.5	1*	

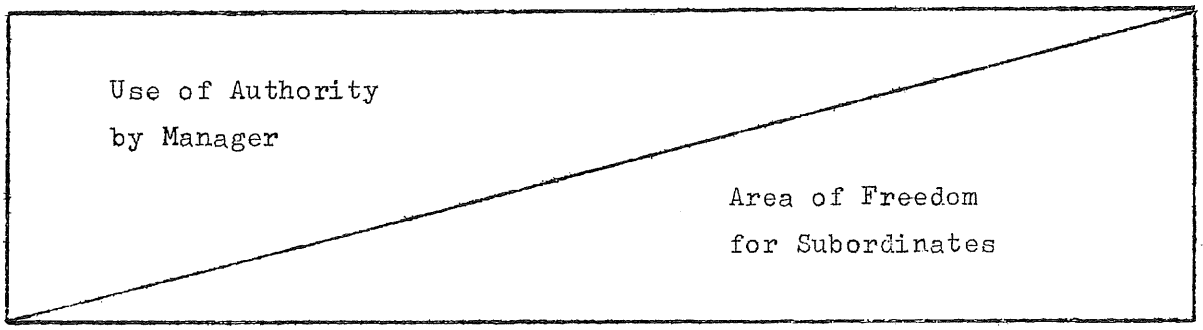
Mean Score: Chinese = 3.39
Non-Chinese = 4.057

Overall Mean: 3.65

* Chinese Participants

Most leadership studies, and there have been many, have found that the most successful leaders are "Situational" in their approach. Generally people tend to be more authoritarian or more democratic depending on the make-up of their own personality. However, managers can be trained to analyze the specific situation calling for a decision or resolution of conflict and adapt the type o of leadership style which will best solve the problem. In other words, the same manager may use several styles in the same day. Tannenbeum and Schmidt's "Continuum of Leadership Behavior" illustrates the situational approach:

Boss Centered Leadership ⟵ Subordinate Centered Leadership



Manager makes decision & Announces it	Manager "Sells" Decision	Manager Presents Ideas & Invites Questions	Manager Presents Tentative Decision Subject to Change	Manager Presents Problem gets Suggestions Makes Decision	Manager Defines Limits; Asks Group to Make A Decision	Manager Permits Subordinates to Function Within Limits Defined by Superior

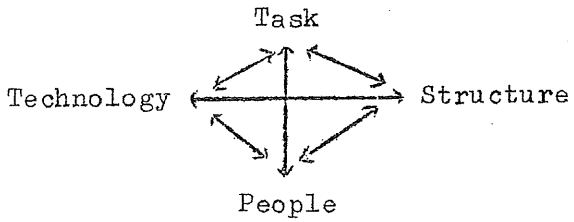
Successful conflict resolution also depends upon analysis of the specific situation. The astute manager is able to recognize when a Forcing, Smoothing or Confrontation approach is needed for successful resolution.

ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN AND ANALYSIS

As managers, before you can make decisions about needed modes of conflict resolution and leadership style, it is necessary that you understand the inherent nature and assumptions underlying your own organization.

As an example, confrontation and a participative leadership style may be successful in a research and development laboratory, but totally unsuccessful in a godown.

A simple interactive model which takes account of the major dimensions of any organization is as follows: (Leavitt, 1965)



The key variable here is the task or mission of the organization. In order to achieve the task, the appropriate mix of structural, technological and people variables must be obtained.

During the seminar, I mentioned McGregor's classic Theory X and Theory Y organizational assumptions. Many of the participants were very familiar with these concepts, but several were unaware of them. Very simply, Theory X and Theory Y are assumptions about the nature of man and work:

Theory X - Authoritarian Approach

1. Man dislikes work and will avoid if possible
2. People must be coerced, controlled, directed and threatened with punishment in order to achieve the objectives of the organization
3. The average human prefers to be directed, wishes to avoid responsibility, has little ambition, wants security

Theory Y - Participative Approach

1. Work is satisfying
2. Man will exercise self-direction and - self control toward objectives to which he is committed
3. Commitment is a function of rewards associated with achievement - ego & self actualization rewards
4. Acceptance and seeking of responsibility is learned
5. Creative capacity is widely distributed in the population
6. Intellectual capacities are only partially utilized in organizations

To use our earlier example, assume you studied the organizational and performance characteristics of 2 industries with differing task, structure, technology, and people requirements. e.g. Godowns and research & development laboratories. Then, in terms of real performance indices - profit, R.O.I., etc. - you were able to classify companies within each industry as successful and unsuccessful. Your analysis may lead to the following conclusions:

	Industry	
Performance	Godowns	R & D Laboratories
Successful	Theory X Principal mode of conflict resolution: "Forcing"	Theory Y Principal mode of conflict resolution: "Confrontation"
Unsuccessful	Theory Y Principal mode of conflict resolution: "Confrontation"	Theory X Principal mode of conflict resolution: "Forcing"

Lawrence E. Fouraker (reported in Lawrence and Lorsch, 1969) deduced how two polar organizational types would respond to different alternatives posed by their environments.

These polar types were identified as the "L" organization, with highly independent management motivated by their own aspirations and dependent members and the "T" organization made up of responsible management and independent members.

The following are assumptions of the "L" organization:

The prospect (usually threatening) of a test with another group, or with nature, provided the common purpose of the original organization. They unity of interest implies that conflict within the group is dangerous and should be suppressed. . .

The "L" organization is authoritarian. It does not generate the social mechanism or management skill to tolerate or contain internal conflict. Discipline is a necessity to insure harmony of interest and outlook. . .

The requirement for simplicity or stability stems from the leader's role: The responsibility for choosing objectives is assigned to him, and no person can adjust to many simultaneous demands.

The "L" organization seems to be a very effective response to an institutional environment that is:

1. Fairly stable, or not complex;
2. Basically threatening (Lawrence E Fouraker, appearing in Organization and Environment, Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969) P. 192.

The "L" organization is based upon the classical bureaucratic from (used in many types of "predictable task" organizations) in that conflict should be repressed and discipline is necessary to maintain conformity and stability.

The "T" organization, by contrast, has members who are technical specialists in several dimensions; and the output of these specialists must be coordinated toward the goals of the organization. To pursue his specialty effectively, the member must be independent and highly task-oriented. Loyalty to the discipline and to others who pursue it, is stronger than loyalty to the organization. The need for numerous channels of communication to achieve coordination causes the "T" organization to be unconcerned with hierarchial principles. Status distinctions between management and members are not great. The committee is the key institutional structure used to gain commitment among members to a common goal. The successful "T" organization must have an environment which encourages and rewards creativity.

The use of a simple continuum summarizes findings from several studies and offers an expanded model for analysis of organizational needs.

ENVIRONMENTALLY IMPOSED ALTERNATIVES

TO ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN

THE "L" ORGANIZATION — L ——————————— T — THE "T" ORGANIZATION

(L-T Continuum)

Assumptions:

1. Stable Environment
2. Positional Authority
3. Hierarchial
4. Conflict Repressed
5. Conflict Resolved by "Forcing"
6. Manager's Decision
7. Creativity Stifled
8. Loyalty to Organization
9. Few Channels of Communication

Assumptions:

1. Uncertain Environment
2. Colleague Influence
3. Non-Hierarchial
4. Conflict Encouraged
5. Conflict Resolved by "Confrontation"
6. Committee Decision
7. Creativity Rewarded
8. Loyalty to Discipline
9. Many Channels of Communication

Conclusion

Certainly, few organizations would be considered to be totally "L" or "T". However, from your knowledge of your own organization you should be able to make an assessment as to the relative position of your firm on the L-T continuum.

As we mentioned early in the seminar, our purpose was not to give you right answers; (This would be impossible) but to increase your awareness of the problem and point out alternatives available for the management of conflictual situations. A "Bag of tools" if you will.

Therefore, you must attempt to analyze each conflict situation from the viewpoint of the parties to the disagreement and the needs and environment of the organization.

In other words, do not use a participative managerial style which assumes Theory Y and "T" organizational concepts if the nature of the particular organizational problem requires a more authoritarian approach in that instance.