

WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

PRESTON W BLEVINS
CFPIM, FBPICS, CIRM,
CSCP
APICS SOUTHWEST
DISTRICT DIRECTOR



SO CAL LEAN NETWORK

Learning and leaning through sharing

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

- **PERSONAL BACKGROUND**
- **CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SOUTHERN CAL**
- **THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING**
- **HOW TO GET INTO ALIGNMENT – WORK EFFECTIVELY**
- **Q&A**



PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- **MARRIED AN ENGLISH WOMAN**
- **EXTENDED UK ASSIGNMENT**
- **EXTENDED EUROPEAN ASSIGNMENT**
 - **DISCOVERED THE ROLE OF “CONTEXT” IN CULTURAL BEHAVIOR**
- **EXTENDED SCANDINAVIAN ASSIGNMENT**
- **ASIA-PACIFIC & INDIA**



CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

“No other state in the nation has the level of demographic diversity seen in California today.”

“California is by far the most populous state in the nation...this social change has occurred rapidly, most of it within a 20-year period.”

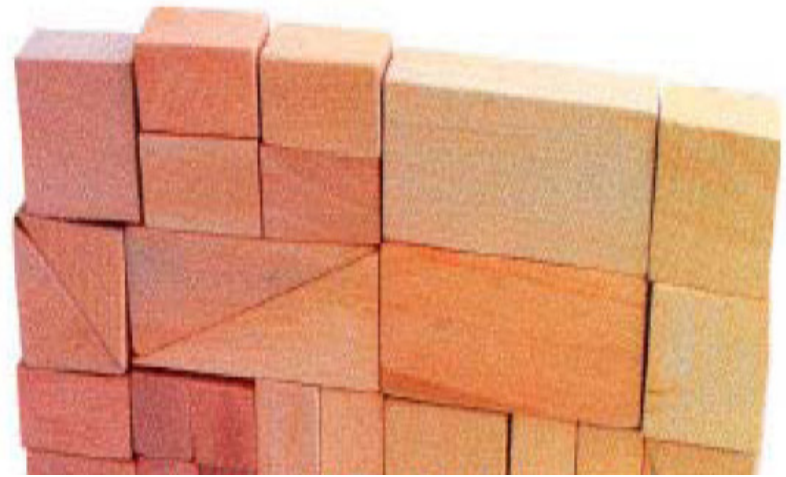
**- Mark Baldassare
California in the New Millennium**



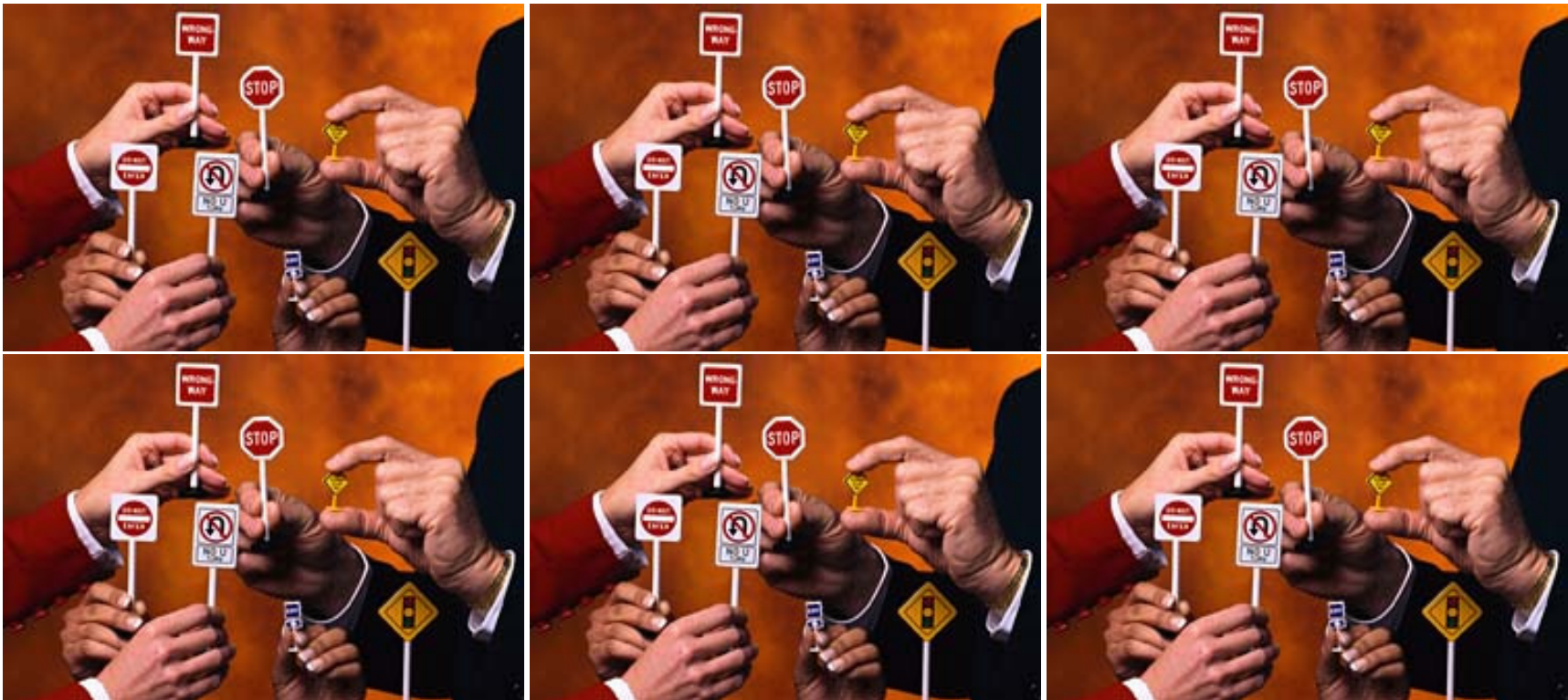
WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE



WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO ACHIEVE



WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO AVOID



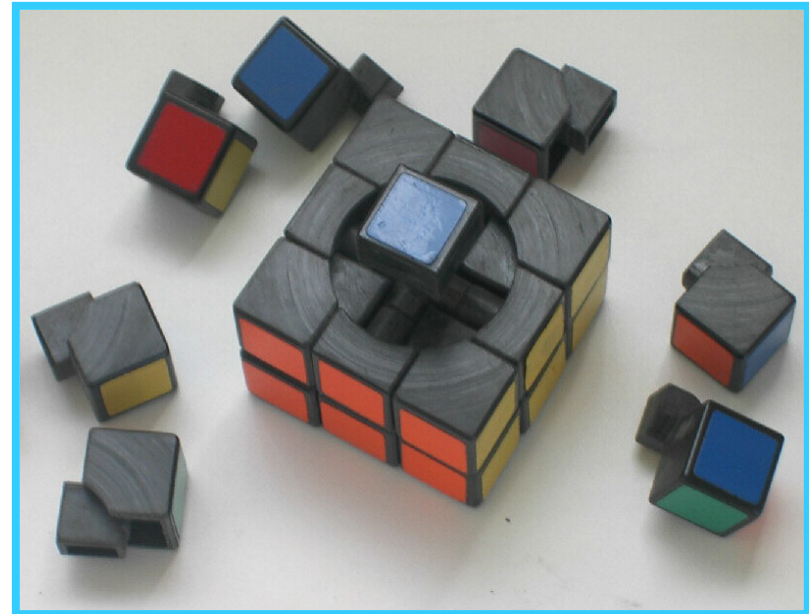
DISCUSSION OUTLINE

- ✓ PERSONAL BACKGROUND
- ✓ CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SOUTHERN CAL
- ▶ ***THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING***
 - HOW TO GET INTO ALIGNMENT – WORK EFFECTIVELY
 - Q&A



THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING

- **SIMPLE SCIENCE BASED CONCEPTS TO GUIDE**
 - **EDWARD T. HALL & MILDRED REED HALL**
- ***CONTEXT* & “THE INFORMATION THAT SURROUNDS AN EVENT”**



THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING

- **CONTEXT SPECTRUM:**
 - **LOW**
 - **HIGH**
- **CULTURAL TIME SYSTEMS:**
 - **MONOCHRONIC**
 - **POLYCHRONIC**
- **ENJOY THE DIFFERENCES –THERE IS NO INHERENTLY SUPERIOR SYSTEM**



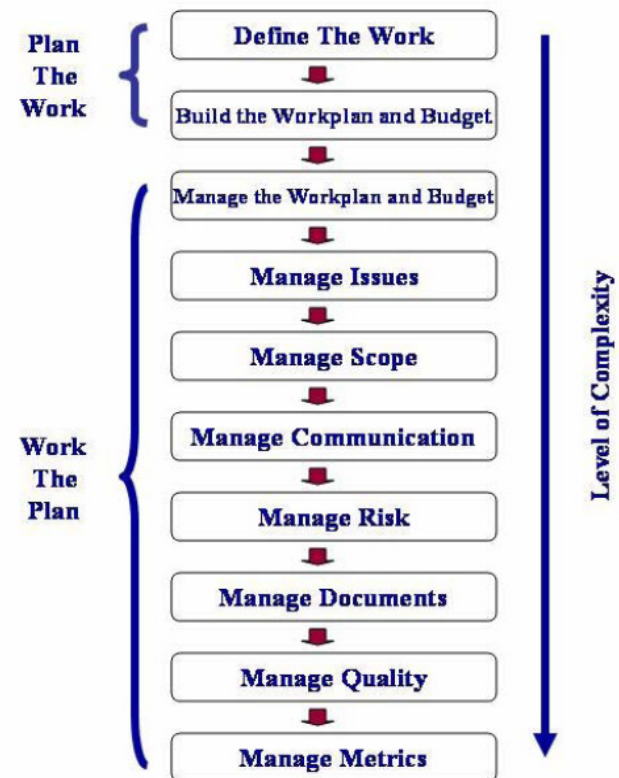
THE LOW CONTEXT CULTURE

- **MOST OF THE INFORMATION IS EMBEDDED IN THE COMMUNICATION**
- **RECIPIENT BREAKS IT DOWN INTO SUB-INFORMATION**
- **REQUIRES EXCEPTIONAL CONCENTRATION & DISCIPLINE**
- **EACH INTERACTION – NEED DETAILED INFORMATION**
- **INFORMATION SEGMENTED & COMPARTMENTALIZED**



THE LOW CONTEXT CULTURE

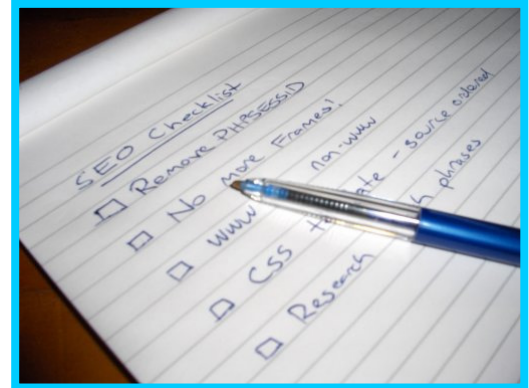
- **SEQUENTIAL FLOW**
- **ACTION CHAINS...NO SHORT CUTS**
- **DOING THE JOB CORRECTLY – EVEN IF IT TAKES MORE TIME**
- **AN EXAMPLE – QUESTION TO THE AUDIENCE**



GRAPHIC SOURCE: TenStep
Project Management Website

THE LOW CONTEXT CULTURE

- **MONOCHRONIC TIME**
- **TIME IS VIEWED AS TANGIBLE**
- **TIME HAS CONSIDERABLE VALUE**
- **CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM FOR ORDERING...**
- **THE SCHEDULE IS SACRED**



THE HIGH CONTEXT CULTURE

- **INFORMATION IS FREE FLOWING & ABUNDANT**
- **MULTI – TASKING**
- **THE “UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION MODEL IS IN EACH INDIVIDUAL'S HEAD**
- **INCOMING COMMUNICATIONS HAVE LESS DETAIL...**



THE HIGH CONTEXT CULTURE

- POLYCHRONIC – TIME IS FLUID
- EMPHASIS ON COMPLETING HUMAN TRANSACTIONS
- POWER FIGURE – IN THE MIDDLE OF AN OPEN NETWORK
- EXAMPLES: JAPANESE, FRENCH & LATIN CULTURES



COMPARING THE LOW & HIGH CONTEXT CULTURES

LOW-CONTEXT MONOCHRONIC	HIGH-CONTEXT POLYCHRONIC
Do one thing at a time	Do many things at a time
Concentrate on the job	Are highly distractible and subject to interruptions
Take time commitments seriously	Consider time commitments an objective to be achieved, if possible
Are low-context and need information	Are high-context and already have information
Are committed to the job	Are committed to people and human relationships
Adhere religiously to plans	Change plans often and easily
Are concerned about not disturbing others; follow rules of privacy and consideration	Are more concerned with those who are closely related than privacy
Show great respect for private property; seldom borrow or lend	Borrow and lend things often and easily
Are accustomed to short-term relationships	Have a strong tendency to build lifetime relationships

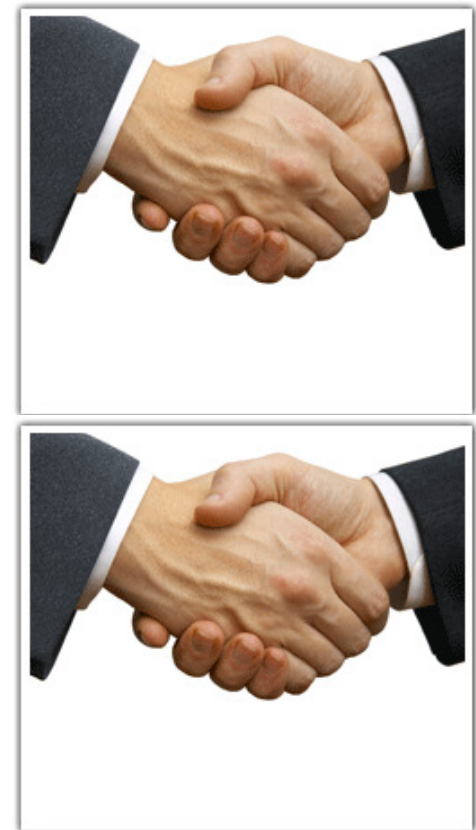
DISCUSSION OUTLINE

- √ PERSONAL BACKGROUND
- √ CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SOUTHERN CAL
- √ THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING
- ▶ ***HOW TO GET INTO ALIGNMENT – WORK EFFECTIVELY***
- Q&A



HOW TO GET INTO ALIGNMENT

- **READ THE PUBLICATION REFERENCED**
- **READ BOOKS ON THE COUNTRY OF EACH ASSOCIATE**
- **INTERNATIONAL NEWS ... MYPORTAL**
- **LOOK FOR THE POSITIVES**



HOW DOES THIS EFFECT APICS?

GROUP DISCUSSION

- **COURSEWARE DESIGN?**
 - **GLOBAL CONSIDERATIONS**
 - **A COLLAGE OF CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**
 - **TIME – LENGTH**
 - **LEVEL OF DETAIL**
- **DELIVERING KNOWLEDGE**
- **THE “SOFT SIDE” OF MEETINGS**



Q & A

- ✓ **PERSONAL BACKGROUND**
- ✓ **CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SOUTHERN CAL**
- ✓ **THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING**
- ✓ **HOW TO GET INTO ALIGNMENT – WORK EFFECTIVELY**



***THANKS FOR ATTENDING – ENJOY THE
REST OF THE MEETING***

**FUTURE CONTACT
INFORMATION:**

Preston W. Blevins

E-mail: pwblevins@earthlink.net

Phone: 562.708.9773

