



AccliPhot Workshop – Delivering research in a multicultural setting

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Workshop aims

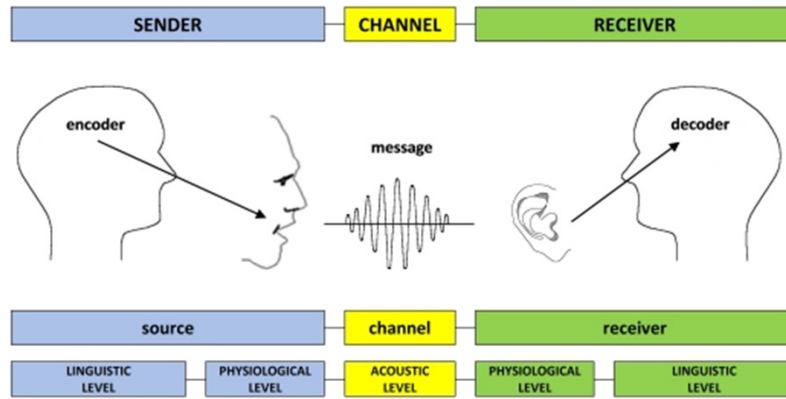
- Help you get to know each other.
- Explore communication processes with a particular focus on intercultural communication.
- Collaborating effectively.
- Planning and managing your research.



Introductions

Communication Exercise

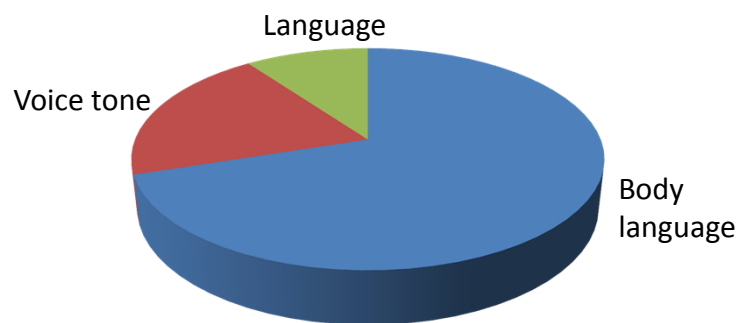
A model of communication



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What is received

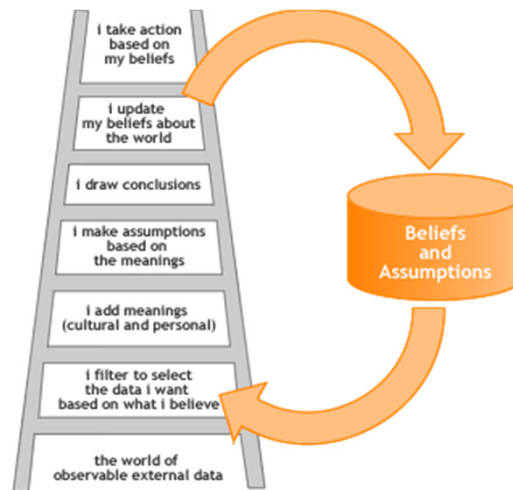
- **Emotive** response



Source: Mehrabian, Albert (1971). Silent Messages (1st ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. ISBN 0-534-00910-7

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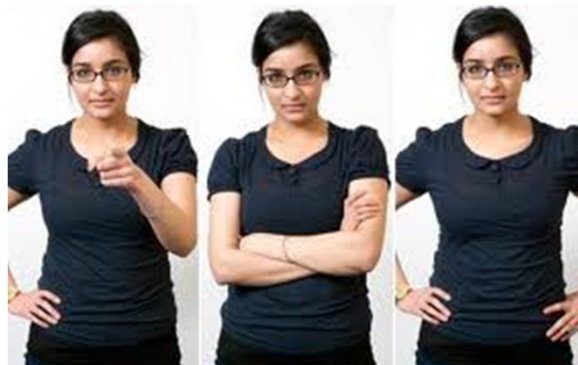
Ladder of inference



Source: Senge, "The fifth discipline fieldbook", 1994

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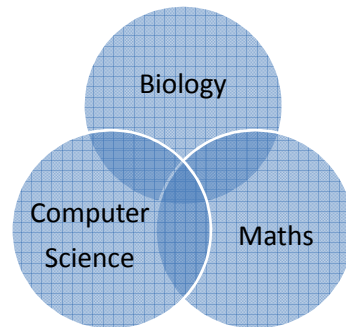
Body language



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Working in a collaboration

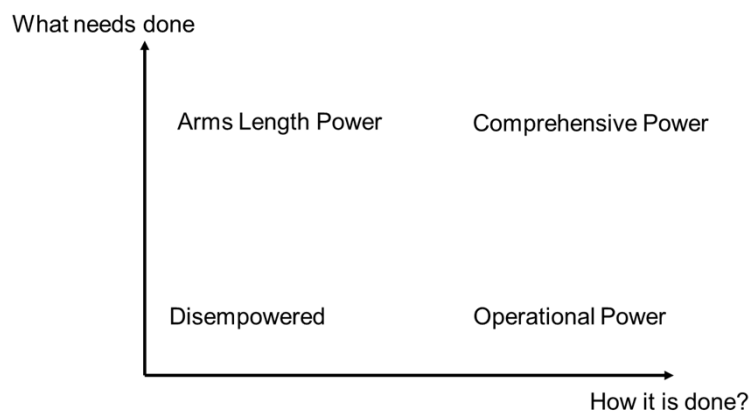
- What behaviours are essential for working in collaborations?



- What might you find difficult about working in a collaboration

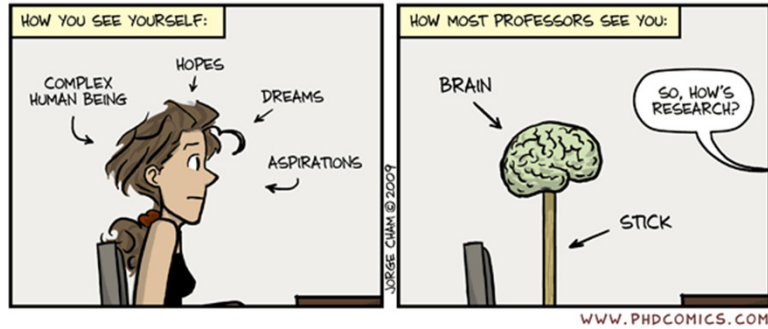
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Stakeholders



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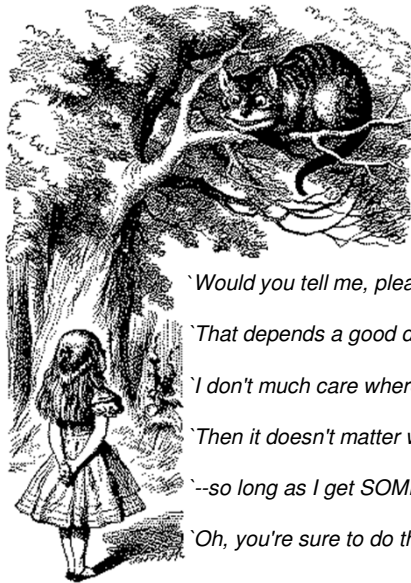
Implicit Contracts



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Collaboration Exercise

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'Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?'

'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the Cat.

'I don't much care where--' said Alice.

'Then it doesn't matter which way you go,' said the Cat.

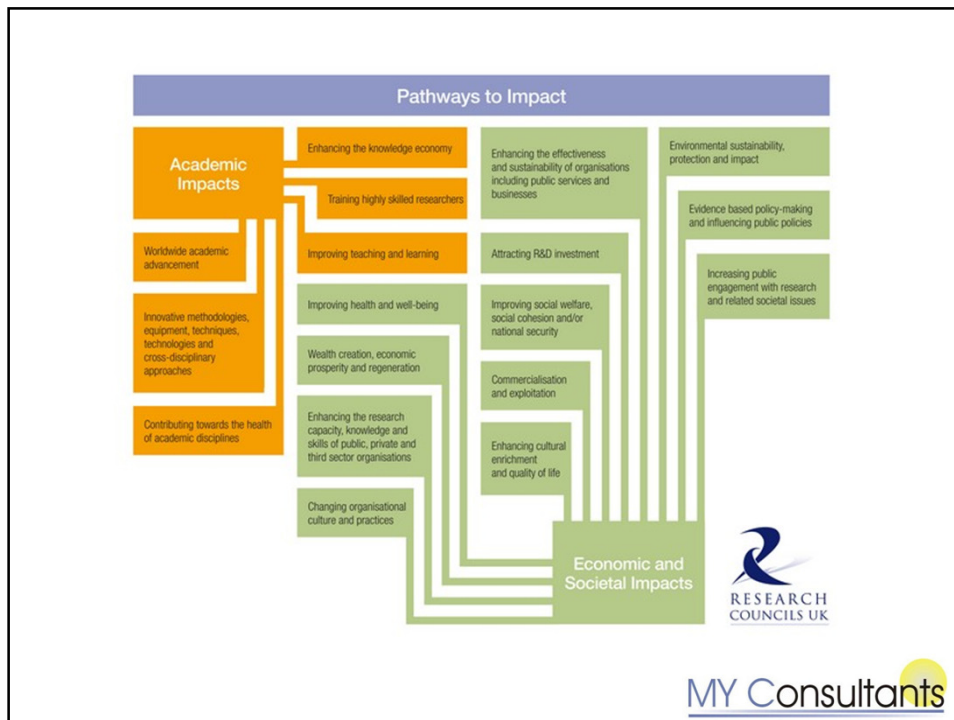
'--so long as I get SOMEWHERE,' Alice added as an explanation.

'Oh, you're sure to do that,' said the Cat, 'if you only walk long enough.'

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What does success look like for you?

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Setting goals

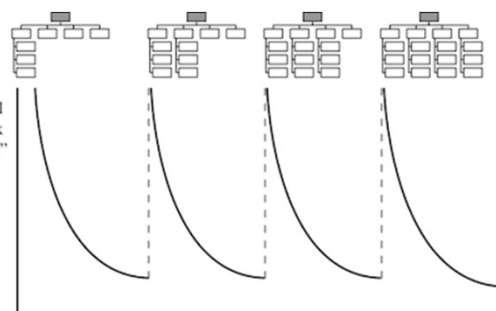
- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**greed
- **R**ealistic
- **T**imebound

PhD big picture plan

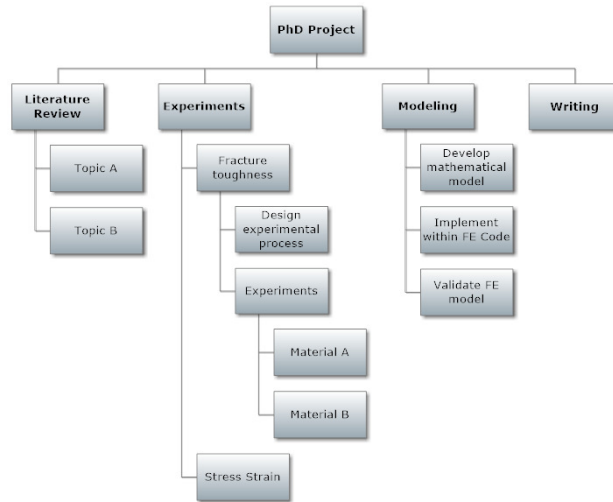
Rolling waves of planning



Amount of detail in "Open Work Packages"

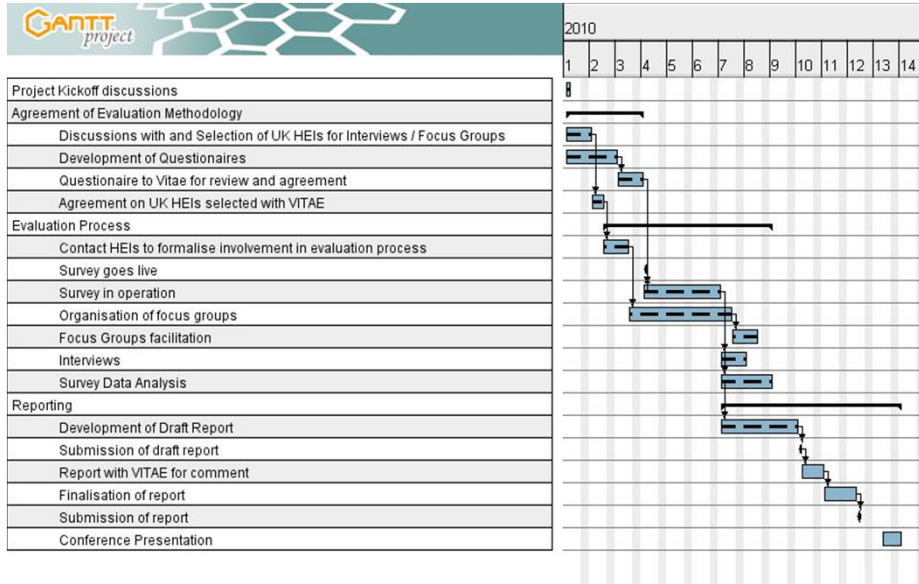


Develop the Work Breakdown Structure



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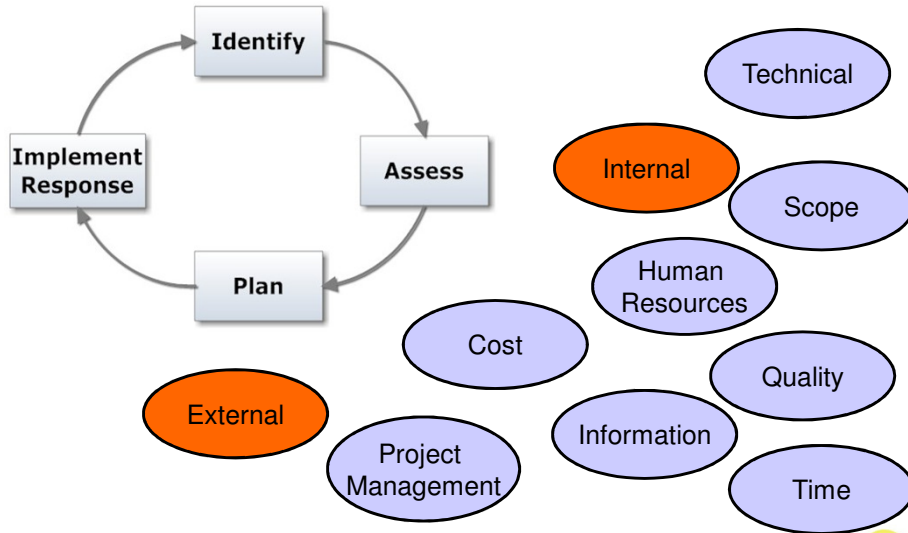
GANTT project



After completing Gantt Chart ensure resources are not over allocated.

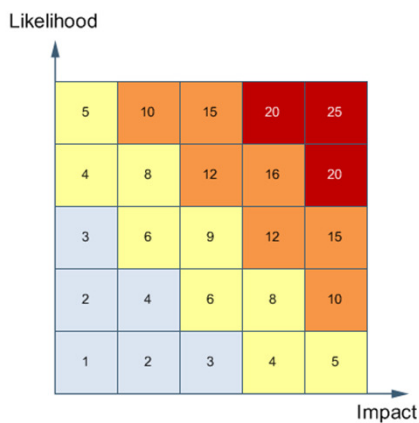
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Risk Management



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Risk Management




- Elimination
- Mitigation
- Acceptance
- Deflection

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Implementing your plan

Top tips for Managing Time

| | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Use the 80/20 Rule | Project manage the large tasks | Delegate | Build in time to think | Know your best time of day |
| The two minute rule | Context Lists | Leave work at work | Use your diary well | Manage interruptions |
| What is the next thing | Prioritise | Manage your environment | Those 10 minutes | Handle things once |
| BANJO | Awareness | Clear on your role | Manage meetings | Manage relationships |
| Time boxes | Be organised | Turn off email updates |  | |

Managing relationships

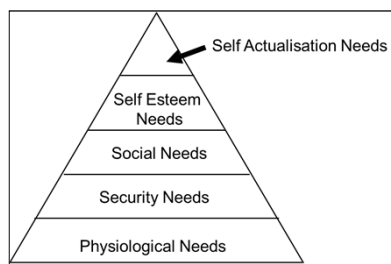


SAYING NO FEELS POSITIVELY EMPOWERING, EXCEPT FOR THE GUILT.

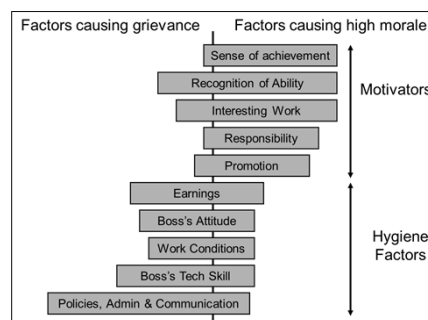


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Motivation Theories



Motivation =
 How much I want something
 X
 How much I believe that I can get better
 X
 How much I believe that getting better will give me what I want



Equity Theory

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“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.”

Einstein

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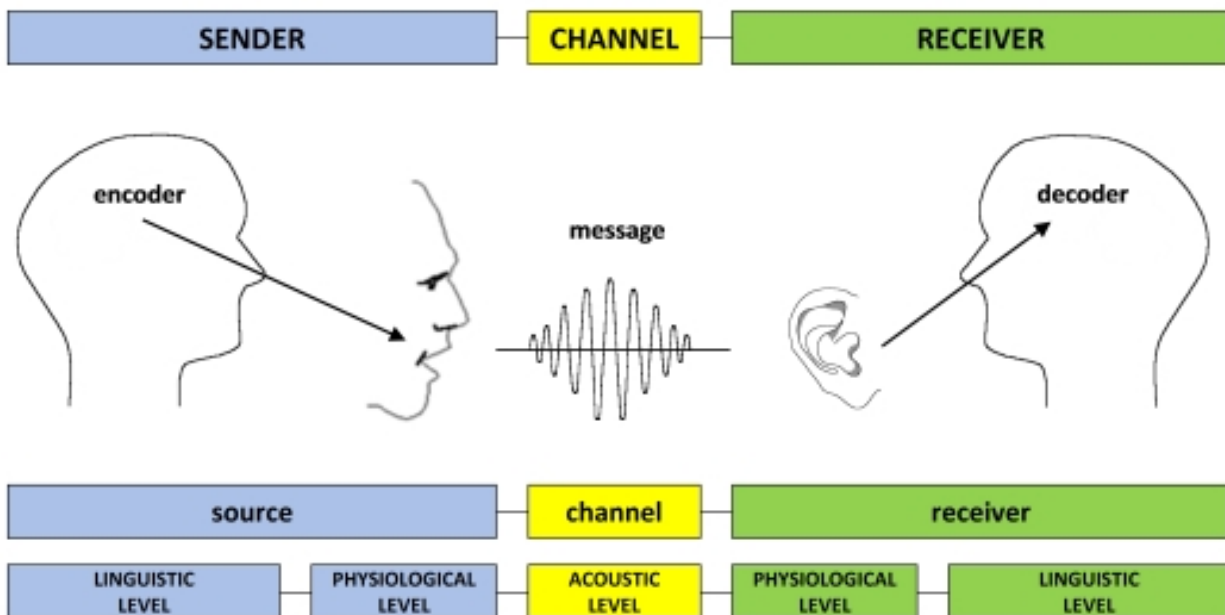


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Key Learning?

Communication Models

There are a wide number of models of communication which share many similarities. One of the most widely used of communication is the encode, transmit, decode model shown below which has been developed by a number of authors over the last 60 years. (For example see: Hall, 1980: 'Encoding/decoding'. In Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (Ed.): Culture, Media, Language: Working Papers in Cultural Studies, 1972-79 London: Hutchinson, pp. 128-38).



Within this model when we communicate we encode a message (based upon our understanding of the situation), transmit this message through a choice of media, and the person we are communicating with then decodes our message. Although not explicitly included in the original model, we also need to include the on-going feedback loop between the sender and receiver of the information.

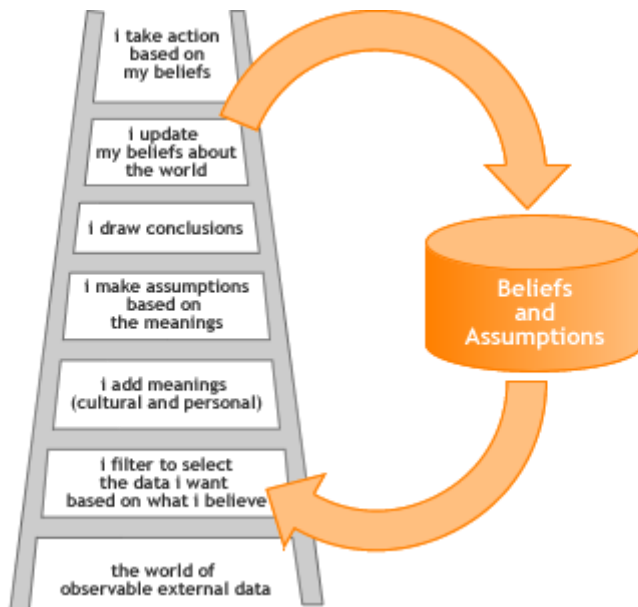
This model highlights a number of potential problems in the communication process:

- The encoding and decoding algorithms may not be the same for the sender and receiver of the message. One way of looking at the encoding / decoding problem is through the "*Ladder of inference*" developed by Argyris and popularised by Senge. This model is described in more detail later in this handout.
- The transmission process may be subject to noise and influence. This noise can influence what is received and may be generated by the chosen channel of communication (e.g. face to face versus email), the level of rapport between the individuals, cultural expectations, the environment in which the communication is taking place and the attitude of the individuals in the communication transaction.

This model therefore offers us two approaches to enhancing our communication – either through managing the encoding/decoding process more effectively, or through enhancing the quality of the transmission of the signal.

Ladder of Inference

One way of looking at the encoding/decoding problem in communication is through the *Ladder of Inference* - a model developed by Argyris and later highlighted in its usefulness by Senge (Senge, *Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, 1994). The model, which attempts to deconstruct the process by which we take information and process it to form meanings for ourselves, is illustrated below.



If we explore each stage of the model we can gain insights into how we develop knowledge and how this might influence our communication and leadership processes.

- **Observable data.** There is a vast amount of data which the human mind observes and this forms the pool of data. This can range from what you notice walking along a corridor to the words in this document. When we are communicating we select from our own pool of observable data which may be different from someone else's pool of observable data.
- **Filtering to select data.** Every individual will look for data from the pool of observable data. What each individual selects will depend to some extent on their personal style, and to a further extent their own interests – a process which could be regarded as filtering. It is therefore unlikely that two people will pull out the same piece of data from the same data pool on first pass. To see this at work next time you are sat with some friends ask them to select a single object which they can see. They will rarely pick the same object and what they select will to some extent reflect their personality. This has an impact on what we communicate as we may not select the most appropriate piece of data to communicate effectively.
- **Giving Meaning and Adding Assumptions.** The next stage of the process is that we look for meaning based upon the data we have selected – what does that piece of data tell us? Often this process of giving meaning is not hugely helpful as we need to place the information with a

context that is based upon our own assumptions and map of how the world operates. These assumptions could be based upon how you view the politics in your organisation through to assumptions about what exactly does the word “OK” mean? Inevitably we end up giving different meanings to a piece of data compared to other people as we use different assumptions.

- *Conclusions and Beliefs.* Based upon the initial meanings and the assumptions that we make, we then form our own conclusions which when reinforced with more data from the pool of data may form into beliefs. A problem at this stage is that we can develop unhelpful recursive loops within the belief forming process. For example we will often, based upon our beliefs, select more data from the pool that supports us in reinforcing our established beliefs rather than seeking contrary data to challenge those beliefs.
- The final stage in the process is that based upon these beliefs we then take action. At this stage we can again create an unhelpful recursive loop in that our actions may influence the pool of observable data that we experience and from this again reinforce incorrect beliefs.

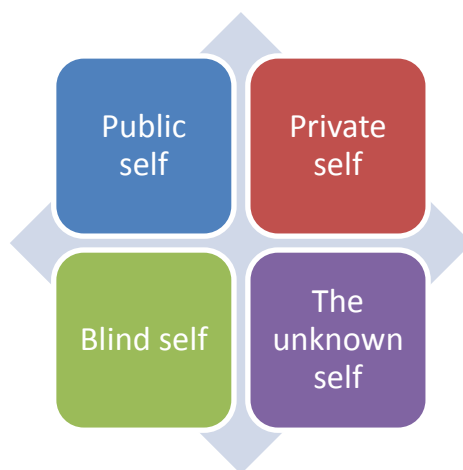
If we can keep this model in mind whilst we communicate we can certainly start to modify our own encoding processes and with careful listening and awareness may be able to modify the communication which we transmit to better fit the decoding algorithms of those whom we communicate with.

Managing the transmission – building rapport

In order to communicate effectively with someone it is desirable to build rapport (a strong connection which allows us to communicate effectively) with that individual (or group). Indeed it can be argued that “without rapport there is no communication”. If we do not manage to build rapport with someone then it is possible that our communication is not received in the way that we would like it to be received which can lead to ineffective communication and in some cases conflict. There are a wide number of techniques relating to rapport building but some of the more common ones are described below.

Shared experiences: Build empathy with the other person by finding issues where you share the same opinions or experiences. The classic British method of doing this is to talk about the weather! In order to build this empathy we need to choose a suitable level of openness (think back to the FIRO Element B psychometric) as if we are too closed people may struggle to find areas to connect with us. Conversely too high a degree of openness can often be uncomfortable for the individual whom we are communicating with.

A useful model for considering shared experiences is the “*Johari Window*” as shown below (Luft, J.; Ingham, H. (1950). “The Johari window, a graphic model of interpersonal awareness”. *Proceedings of the western training laboratory in group development*). The public self is that which is known to you and others – what you actively choose to disclose. The private self are the personal topics that you may not want to share with people. There are often behaviours that you are not yet aware of but others may notice – this is the blind self. Finally there are areas you and other people have yet to discover. In terms of rapport being aware of the size of your public self and choosing where appropriate to modify what you disclose you can often enhance your ability to build rapport, especially if you are naturally reserved.



Actively listening: Actively listening (eye contact, summarising what the other person is saying, nodding, encouraging) and gentle questioning the other person to find out more will ensure that they feel like you are interested in their opinion. In order to do this you may want to consider how you

quieten the internal chatter of your self-talk so that you are in the moment with that individual and not listening into your internal dialogue. One approach to managing your self-talk is through a process called voice mirroring where you repeat the words that are being said by the other person within your self-talk. You can develop your skills with voice mirroring by initially repeating the words on the radio out loud and as you become more adept do the repetition within your self-talk.

A particularly useful active listening skill is your ability to ask open questions (who, what, how, when, where and why) which allows people to give you the information that they choose rather than you confirming your viewpoints through closed questions. When asking questions unless you have a high degree of rapport the *why* question can sometimes elicit defensiveness and therefore its use should be limited in low rapport conversations.

Reflecting: You can aid rapport by mirroring the other person. You can mirror the language (i.e. types of words), body language, and voice tone to help build rapport. If you do this badly (i.e. very obviously and mimicking) it can be seen to be patronising so use with care (practise on people who you know and have agreed for you to practise before trying it out on people for real!). Within the mirroring techniques the general aim is to get the general feel (overall posture, overall rate of speech, overall voice tone, and overall energy) of the other person's state, whilst not mimicking their actions.

Representational systems

An approach to mirroring is through the matching of language and representational systems – the sensory systems which someone is using in a particular interaction. In order to reflect language it is useful to listen carefully to the types of words people are using as most people will in a particular context use a specific type of language which can be categorised into visual (images), auditory (sounds), kinaesthetic (feelings) or digital language (where there is no suggestion of a sensory attachment). This has been well recognised as an approach to presenting and teaching for some time with a key element being that when communicating with large groups you need to use all four representational systems within the communication.

At an individual level it is possible to identify words and phrases which can give you an insight into the representational systems that individuals are using within a particular context when you are communicating with them. This can be particularly helpful when trying to influence people. For example if an individual has kinaesthetic representational system it is unlikely that you will influence them solely with facts and figures.

Some of the words and phrases attached to each of these systems are in the table below.

| | |
|--------------|--|
| Visual | I see what you mean. This will shed some light on the matter. It appears to me. Show me the data your idea is based upon. |
| Auditory | Rings a bell. Unheard of. Loud and clear. There are undertones to that remark. |
| Kinaesthetic | I will get in touch with you. Thick skinned. I feel under pressure. Stuck in the problem. |
| Digital | Change, Condition, Know, Learn, Remember, Result, Process, Program, Theory, Evaluate. |

Meta Model – what the words people say mean

The *Meta Model* (Bandler and Grindler, *The Structure of Magic*, 1975) helps us to interpret the language patterns that people use. Through the greater understanding we can develop by listening for these patterns, we are able to ask more effective questions which can challenge people's perceptions and views and as a result help us to influence them. It also lets us into the individual's inner world and can help us identify how we might encourage them to change their behaviour, or to motivate them more effectively. For example an individual who uses the words *can't* or *won't* may not be as confident as we might imagine at specific tasks and therefore by listening carefully we can ask the right question to influence the person's viewpoint. A number of the language patterns that the Meta Model describes are outlined below with an example of each and an example of the type of question you could ask to challenge the individual.

| Meta Model terminology | Description | Example/Question |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Cause and effect | Our feelings are caused by someone or something over which we have no control. | That irritated me. |
| | | How did that cause you to feel irritated? |
| Complex equivalent | We equate two experiences and attach some meaning to an event of behaviour. | He's frowning – he must be unhappy. |
| | | Have you ever frowned even though you were happy? |
| Lost performative | Make a value judgement without saying who owns the belief. | Laughing is healthy. |
| | | Who says so? |
| Mind reading | We make a guess or assumption about what someone else is thinking or feeling. | She could tell he liked her. |
| | | How did she know? |
| Nominalisations | Replacing verbs with nouns makes the situation seem like it is static and that there is no room for movement. | You have an attitude problem. |
| | | What is it about the way I go about things that you do not like? |
| Operators of necessity | We impose a set of rules to govern our or another person's behaviour (have to/must/should). | We must do it this way. |
| | | What would happen if we did it a different way? |
| Operators of possibility | An action is beyond someone's ability (impossible, can't, couldn't, cannot, won't). | I can't cope with all this trouble. |
| | | What would happen if you did? |

| <i>Meta Model terminology</i> | <i>Description</i> | <i>Example/Question</i> |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Universal quantifiers | Where we apply a belief set in a global way using words such as all, always, every, never, no-one. | All students are lazy! |
| | | Can you think of a student who isn't lazy? |
| Deletions | Where we don't specify all the information/choose to ignore some information. | He is better at the job now. |
| | | In what way is he better? |

Culture and communication

Many researchers have explored the issues surrounding international and organisational culture. Some of the most accessible work on this topic is that of Trompenaars (Riding the Waves of Culture), Hofstede (Cultures and Organisations) and Lewis (When Cultures Collide). Each of these authors propose models, which have many similarities between them in terms of dimensions, which attempt to provide a mental model to manage the complexity of cultures. Trompenaars's cultural dimensions (illustrated below) are briefly discussed below with an indication of the impacts on leadership and communication.



Universalism versus particularism - The first dimension defines how people judge the behaviours of their colleagues. People from universalistic cultures focus more on rules, are more precise when defining contracts and tend to define global standards for company policies and human resources practices. Within more particularistic national cultures, the focus is more on the relationships; contracts can be adapted to satisfy new requirements in specific situations and local variations of company and human resources policies are created to adapt to different requirements.

Individualism versus communitarianism - This dimension classifies countries according to the balance between the individual and group interests. Generally, team members with individualist mindsets see the improvements to their groups as the means to achieve their own objectives. By contrast, the team members from communitarian cultures see the improvements to individual capacities as a step towards the group prosperity.

Neutral versus affective - According to Trompenaars, people from neutral cultures admire cool and self-possessed conducts and control their feelings, which can suddenly explode during stressful periods. When working with stakeholders from neutral countries you may consider avoiding warm, expressive or enthusiastic behaviours, prepare beforehand, concentrate on the topics being discussed and look carefully for small cues showing that the person is angry or pleased. People from cultures high on affectivity use all forms of gesturing, smiling and body language to openly voice their feelings, and admire heated, vital and animated expressions.

Specific versus diffuse - Trompenaars researched differences in how people engage colleagues in specific or multiple areas of their lives, classifying the results into two groups: people from more specific-oriented cultures tend to keep private and business agendas separate, having a completely different relation of authority in each social group. In diffuse-oriented countries, the authority level at work can reflect into social areas, and employees can adopt a subordinated attitude when meeting their managers outside office hours.

Achievement versus ascription - This dimension, presented in Trompenaars studies, is very similar to Hofstede's power distance concept. People from achievement-oriented countries respect their colleagues based on previous achievements and the demonstration of knowledge, and show their job titles only when relevant. On the other hand, people from ascription-oriented cultures use their titles extensively and usually respect their superiors in hierarchy.

Human-nature relationship (internal vs external control) - Trompenaars shows how people from different countries relate to their natural environment and changes. Global project stakeholders from internal-oriented cultures may show a more dominant attitude, focus on their own functions and groups and be uncomfortable in change situations. Stakeholders from external-oriented cultures are generally more flexible and willing to compromise, valuing harmony and focusing on their colleagues, being more comfortable with change.

Human-time relationship - Trompenaars identified that different cultures assign diverse meanings to the past, present and future. People in past-oriented cultures tend to show respect for ancestors and older people and frequently put things in a traditional or historic context. People in present-oriented cultures enjoy the activities of the moment and present relationships. People from future-oriented cultures enjoy discussing prospects, potentials and future achievement.

Research Project Management Key Concepts

The successful management of a research project depends upon the researcher's ability to plan, coordinate and perform the research. Many researchers do not formally manage their research and whilst this does not necessarily mean that the research will not be completed successfully this approach has impacts on the staff are involved in the project. For example an unplanned approach can often lead to stress in members of the research team, crisis management when deadlines are not effectively managed and the lack of time within the research to deliver effective outcomes for all the staff involved in the project.

Clearly understanding what success means for your project.

The starting point for managing a project effectively is to have a clear understanding of what you are trying to achieve. A simple model to start to explore this is to distinguish between outputs and outcomes.

- Outputs are the physical deliverables of the project (e.g. research papers, drugs, data)
- Outcomes are what happen as a result of the outputs (e.g. what happens as a result of the outcomes). Some research funders including the UK Research Councils and EU refer to outcomes as impact.

For example in a clinical based trial the output could be a paper with the related outcome being the changes in clinical practise. The starting point for a project is to define what the desired outcomes are and from this the outputs can be defined. In effect you are "starting with the end in mind" and by doing this you should be able to focus the research effort.

Stakeholder planning and management.

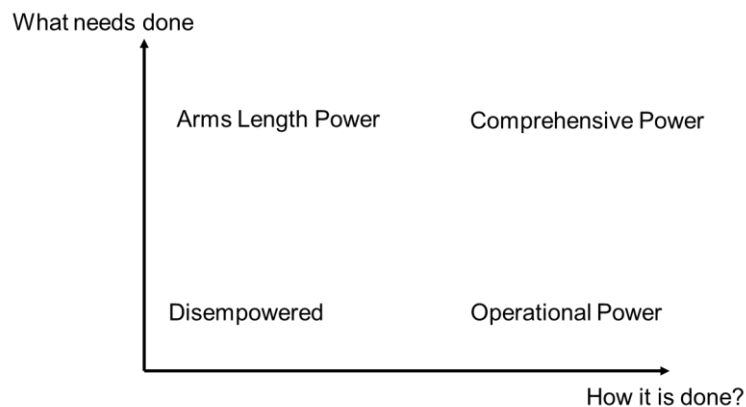
Stakeholders can be defined as "people who have an interest and involvement in the project". Poor management of stakeholders can lead to communication issues within the project and conflict between stakeholders especially when the individual stakeholder's objectives are competing for priority within the project.

One approach to exploring stakeholder interactions in projects is to use the Winstanley stakeholder model (1995). This approach allows us to examine who the stakeholders are and the relationships between the stakeholders. In order to do this the key steps are:

- Identify the key stakeholders. In doing this try to break the stakeholders into small groups as large groupings can impact on the value of the information gained from the process. For example the research team could be regarded as a single stakeholder. However, the power of the PI is likely to be very different from that of the research associate on the project.
- Understand the transactions which are involved in the interaction with the stakeholders. For example what is the funder providing and what do they expect in return for this investment. Ensuring that transactions are clearly understood at the start of the project is important as it can avoid tension and conflict later in the project. It should be noted that it is often useful to ensure that implicit expectations are discussed as well as the more formal contractual elements of the transaction.

- Having completed the stakeholder identification process the next step is to map them to understand the relationships between, and groupings of, the stakeholders. The mapping process involves examining the power of the stakeholders in two dimensions:
 - The ability of the stakeholder to influence the outcomes of the project. For example the funders (during the application stage) have a large impact on the outcomes of the project as if they do not agree with the outcomes of the project they are unlikely to fund the work.
 - The stakeholder's ability to influence how the outcomes will be met. For example the technical and administration staff are unlikely to have an impact on the outcomes of the project but are likely to have a significant impact on how the outcomes are achieved.

Once this process has been completed it is possible to create a stakeholder map as shown below.



Having mapped the stakeholders in the project the next stage is to understand the results of the mapping process and to devise strategies for how to best to interact, manage relationships and expectations with each of the stakeholders. Each stakeholder group will require some consideration of how you are going to communicate with them and on larger projects using the stakeholder analysis to create a formal communication plan can pay dividends in the long term. For example operational power stakeholders should have the overview of the project communicated to them, whilst criteria power stakeholders may need the detail explained.

The key outcomes of the stakeholder analysis process are:

- An understanding of how the stakeholders will impact on the project.
- An understanding of the dynamics of the stakeholders so that this can be taken into account when determining the project scope.

The stakeholder process is obviously dynamic and it is a good idea to revisit this process at times through the project to identify if there are additional issues which need to be managed.

Developing timelines – a rolling wave approach to planning

In traditional project management the approach taken to planning would be to try and plan as much of the project at the start as possible. However, in a research environment this is much more difficult as the project will evolve significantly as the research progresses. One approach to managing this is to develop a rolling wave plan. In order to do this:

- You develop an understanding of the overall project without much detail.
- You then on a rolling basis fill in the detail.

For example, it is possible to put together a generic plan for a PhD project which will describe at a high level what is expected within the project. For example a typical PhD plan might look like:

| | |
|--------|--|
| Year 1 | Define research question Read literature Write Literature review Develop required research skills Pilot studies Plan Fieldwork and Experiments Organize access to research sources Write end of year report |
| Year 2 | Continue to read literature and write up as you go along Developing a research network Data collection and analysis Fieldwork Attend conferences / present at seminars Start to think about publication |
| Year 3 | Check data for gaps and collect any final information Write papers/present at conferences Look for funding for research? Write Thesis Look for a Job |

It should then be possible to fill in the detail on a rolling basis – perhaps putting together a more detailed plan every 3 months.

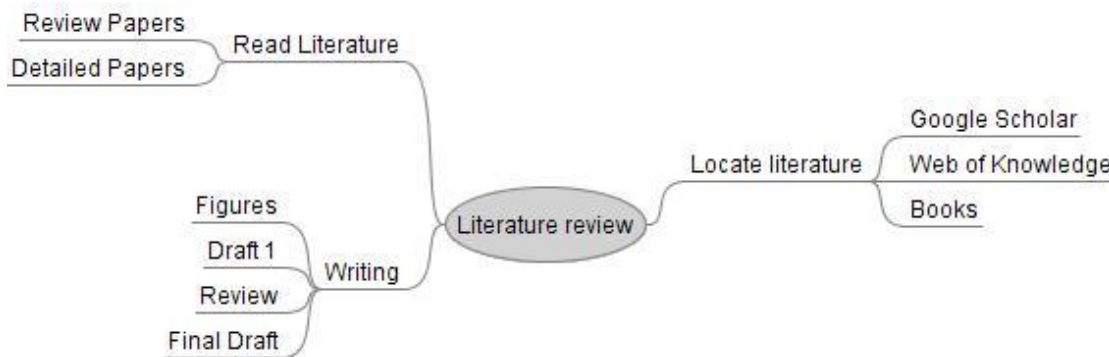
The work breakdown structure (WBS) is the basis for creating the timeline. The WBS is simply created by taking the project and splitting it down into some smaller tasks. Once you have these smaller tasks you can then split the tasks into even smaller chunks and you keep doing this until the chunks will require between 8 and 80 hours of work to complete. This level of detail allows you to manage the project without running the risk of micromanagement and endlessly long to-do lists.

Some of the benefits of using a WBS include:

- Understanding exactly what is involved in the project
- Identifying key tasks
- Provides a framework for delegation and resource identification
- Provides a method to manage and measure progress
- Provides a basis for developing cost estimates
- Drives delivery of the project by having many deadlines

- Ensures that the research team can see the progress being achieved and identify problems with task elements early on in the project.
- You have more flexibility in how you arrange the activities in the project.

One approach to developing WBS is to view it as a mind-map of the tasks involved in the project as shown below for the WBS of a literature review.



In the rolling wave approach to the planning process the details on the WBS will be expanded as the project progresses and we have a more detailed understanding of what is required. For example in the literature review WBS we might choose to expand the task “*Detailed Papers*” into a couple of key topic areas once it is clear what these topics are.

After the WBS has been developed you can then start to think about how you estimate the duration of the tasks. In order to do this you should bear in mind:

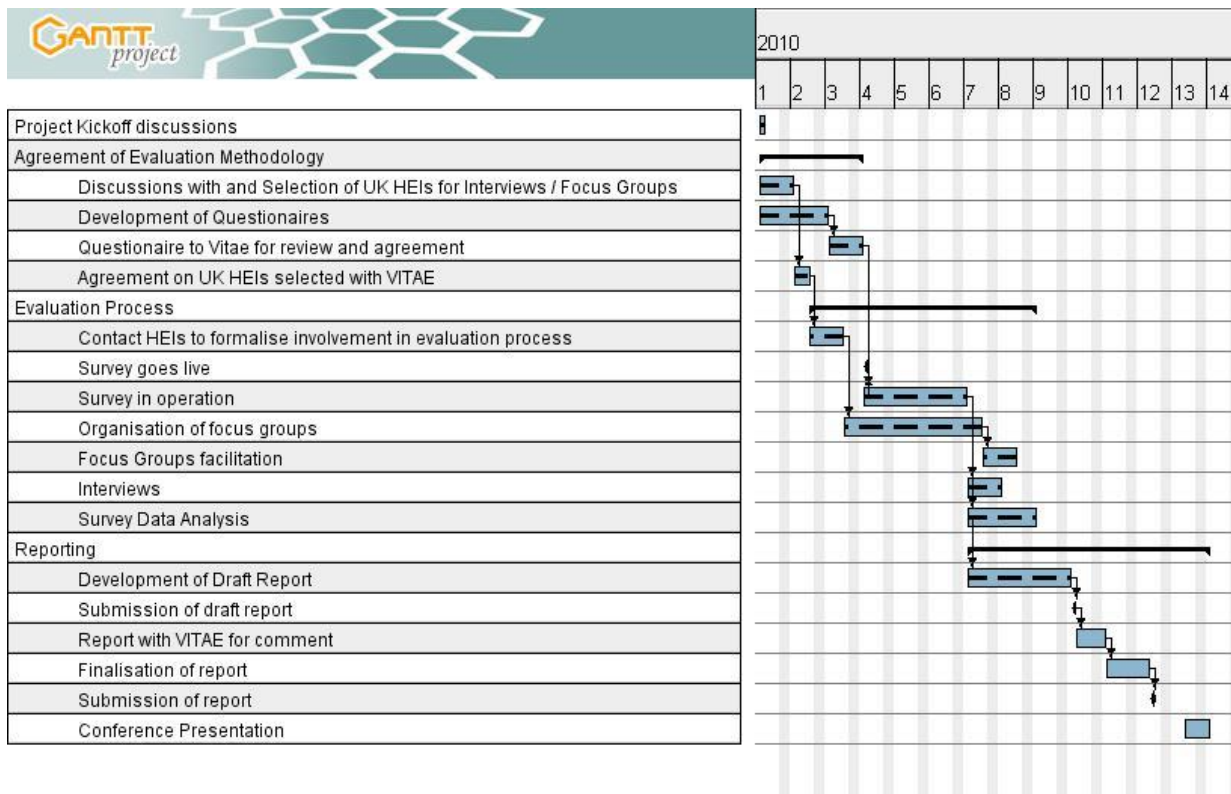
- A task which takes you little time may take a new researcher a significantly longer period of time.
- If you have repetitive tasks in your research (e.g. writing up transcripts / performing a specific experiment) you may want to time of a typical instance in order to develop a realistic time scale for the whole task.
- You often get better results when you are working with people if you get them to indicate how long the task may take to complete. You should however do a reality check when asking someone – the biggest problem is people underestimating how long something will take to complete and then not delivering on time.

Once you have the WBS and durations of the tasks you can then start to develop the Gantt chart for the project. In developing the Gantt chart you will want to:

- Think about how you can design your project so that activities can run concurrently.
- Put in place the constraints between tasks that describe the logical order in which you should do the activities. At times these may be forced upon you (for example gaining ethical approval before starting the data collection) but at other times it is likely that you will have to use your own judgement to decide upon the logic.

There are a number of software packages available to help with Gantt Chart development – one of the best of the freeware packages is Gantt Project which can be downloaded at www.ganttproject.biz whilst Microsoft Project provides a comprehensive tool for the management on larger projects. Once

you have developed your Gantt chart the final stage in the process of developing the timeline for the project is to check it makes sense and that the resources are in place to complete the work. One common mistake is to assume that many tasks can be overlapped and the plan does then not reflect the constraint on the resources.



Once you have the Gantt chart you can then identify the critical path activities. These are the activities which if they do not start and finish on time will have an adverse effect on the duration of the project (most project management software packages will do this for you). Often in research projects these activities seem less immediately important than others (and often include items linked to career development) but if they are not managed properly can have a negative impact on both the project and the researcher's career. For example you may need to think about completing abstracts for application to a conference many months before the date of the conference.

Managing Risk within the Project

Within every project there are risks which if they occur would impact on the success of the project.

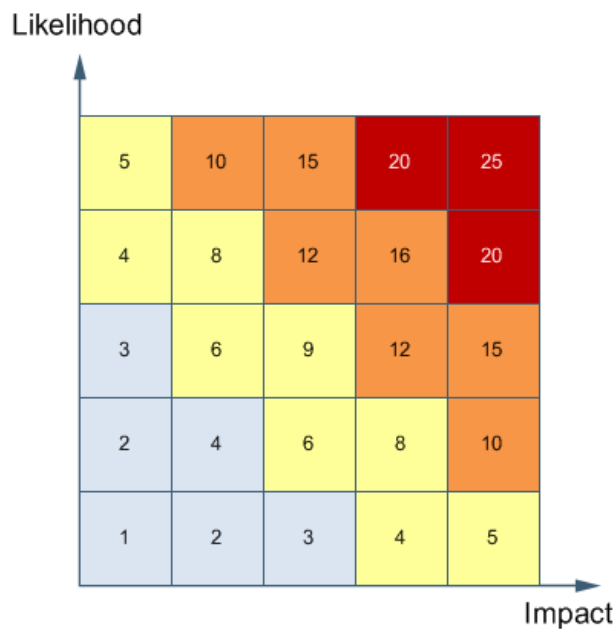
For example in the research environment some of the risks which you might face include:

- One of the research team leaving before their contract finishes.
- Poor quality data is obtained.
- Key pieces of equipment breakdown.
- Research misconduct / ethical issues.
- Someone else publishes work very similar to your before you publish your work.

The secret to managing risk well is to have thought through what might go wrong and on the basis of this develop strategies to manage the key risks. In order to identify the key risks:

- Have a brainstorming session in which you identify all the risks which you can think of.
- Decide upon how much impact these risks might have on your project. In order to assess the impact you will want to think about reputation, cost and schedule impacts. Give each risk a score for impact between 1(low) and 5(very high).
- Decide how likely the risks are to happen. You should note that if something is certain to happen then it should not be treated as a risk but placed in the main plan with tasks allocated to it. Give each risk a score for likelihood between 1 and 5.

You are now in a position to prioritise the risks using a risk matrix as shown below.



For any risk in your risk matrix which scores 10 and above you need to think about how you could manage the risk. For the risks we identified previously some of the methods are outlined in the table below.

| Risk | Mitigation Approach |
|---------------------|--|
| Staff Leave | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular project reports ● Training of other project staff in techniques |
| Poor quality data | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pilot experiments ● Review data frequently ● Build in redundancy to the data collection process |
| Equipment Breakdown | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintenance and Spares ● Identify alternative locations (i.e. Can you borrow the equipment) ● Develop more than one stream of work |

Managing the project

Once you have gone through the planning process you need to think about how you are going to actively manage the project. Within this there are two key elements:

- Understanding how the project is progressing
- Decision making to get the project back on track

In order to understand how the project is progressing it is useful to think about the methods you utilise to gain information about how the project is progressing. Typically most people use a combination of reports and meetings, each of which has its pros and cons. The secret is to think about what you are trying to achieve by the method of progress measurement that you use and then plan the use accordingly. For example reports are good at focusing the minds of the staff working on the project whilst meetings give a space for discussing the progress of the project and for the research manager to assess the mood within the staff working on the project.

If you identify through the progress reporting that the project is not progressing as planned then you will need to take action.

- The first thing to do is to avoid blaming individuals for the problems that are being experienced in the project. If you do blame individuals they are less likely to report problems in future and can lead to researchers hiding mistakes or research misconduct.
- The second thing to do is to take a decision about the course of action. If we let the problem sit without some sort of action they are likely to escalate (problems rarely disappear).
- In order to take the correct action it is imperative that we take action at the cause level and not the symptom level (the classic example of this is working harder to solve a problem and discovering that no matter how hard we work the problem does not go away). In order to do this asks the question “Why?” several times till you get to the root cause of the problem and then take action at this level.

Managing the Project Budget

In research projects the rules governing exactly how you should manage your budget will depend upon your funder but some basic concepts apply to all budget management.

- Understand your commitments. Commitments are the items of spend which you know you will need to make in the future. For example if you were to employ an individual on a one year contract then all the monies related to paying that individual (including pension and NI costs) are committed from the time the offer of employment is made. Similarly if you have to pay a license cost for access to data, and you know you will need this for the duration of the project, your budget should reflect what you have committed for this cost.
- Understand which budgets are yours to manage. After you have employed someone on a research contract the likelihood is that you will not need to directly manage the budget attached to that salary once the contract has been put in place. However, you will need to manage tightly the budgets related to travel, consumables, equipment and other costs (such as printing costs). So find out which budgets you need to manage and focus on these.
- Track your spend. The monthly budget reports will tell you what you have charged that month to each of the main budget headings. For each budget heading keep track of:
 - what you were awarded (A)

- what you have already committed to spend on that budget (B)
- what you have already spent on that budget (C)
- how much you have left to play with = $A - B - C$

The real success to managing the project budget is about understanding the commitments which you have made as this will give you a realistic available budget.

Finding time to manage the project

One of the challenges that people face when trying to manage research is that they might feel that the management elements (especially project planning) are not doing work. The reality is that if an activity adds value to the project then it is useful work and certainly an element of planning is likely to move the research project towards a successful outcome. The challenge for you as the research manager is to find a balance of project management that works within the context of your research without over planning.

Resources

Communication models

- Mehrabian, Albert (1971). *Silent Messages* (1st ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Encode, Transmit. Decode: <http://www.speech-therapy-information-and-resources.com/the-encode-decode-model-of-communication.html>
- Ladder of inference: <http://bit.ly/TtOnys>
- Ladder of inference: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9nFhs5W8o8>
- Logical Levels: http://www.nlp-now.co.uk/nlp_logical_levels.htm

Rapport techniques

- Voice mirroring: <http://ronniburns.wordpress.com/2009/11/06/voice-mirroring-whats-that/>
- NLP & Rapport: <http://www.nlp-now.co.uk/rapport.htm>

Voice Techniques

- The knowing body - meaning and method in Yat Malmgren's actor training technique: <http://arrow.uws.edu.au:8080/vital/access/manager/Repository/uws:7042>
- Movement Psychology in Voice: <http://www.island41articles.blogspot.co.uk/2011/07/movement-psychology-in-voice.html>

Language

- Meta model: <https://www.box.com/shared/y1o71yg5ne>
- RSA Animate - Language as a Window into Human Nature: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3-son3EJTrU>
- Representational systems: http://www.brefigroup.co.uk/acrobat/nlp_representational_systems.pdf

Culture

- R.D.Lewis : *When Cultures Collide: Leading, Teamworking and Managing Across the Globe.*
- F.Trompenaars & C. Hampden-Turner: *Riding the Waves of Culture: Understanding Cultural Diversity in Business*
- Geert Hofstede: <http://www.geert-hofstede.com/>
- <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/country-profiles.html>

Project Management

- PhD Researcher resources: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/researchers/1220/Managing-your-research-project.html>
- PI Resources: <http://www.vitae.ac.uk/policy-practice/273651/Project-management.html>
- PRINCE II: <http://www.prince2.com/prince2-process-model.asp>
- Starting out in Project Management, Murray-Webster and Simon, APM, 2006
- NLP for Project Managers: Make Things Happen with Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Parkes, BCS, 2011

Time Management Resources

- http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_91.htm
- <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/why-lists-dont-work-and-how-change-that.html>
- <http://www.forbes.com/sites/kenkroque/2013/01/01/level-5-time-management-beyond-stephen-r-covey-and-ben-franklin/>
- <http://www.businessballs.com/sevenhabitssteven Covey.htm>
- <http://libweb.surrey.ac.uk/library/skills/Time%20Management/index.htm>