

Virtual collaboration: some HR concerns

URL	http://weko.wou.edu.my/?action=repository_uri&item_id=436
-----	---



Virtual Collaboration

Some HR Concerns

By
Ishan Abeywardena
Senior Lecturer, School of Science and Technology

MEF Meeting, Penang
25th November 2010

Talking Points

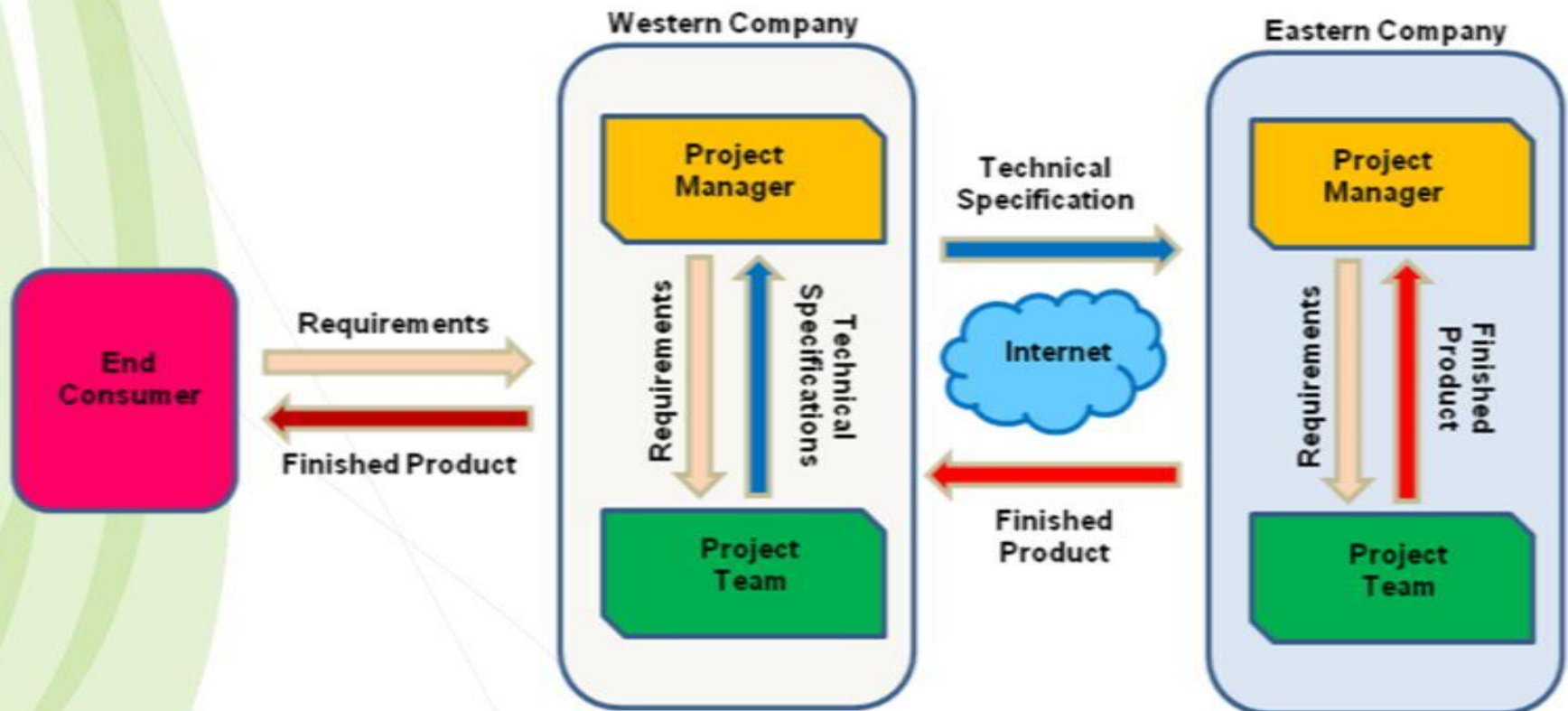
- Background
 - What do customers look for?
 - Outsourcing

- Why go virtual?
- What is Virtual Collaboration?
- Management of virtual collaboration
- Virtual collaborative teams
- Virtual collaborative team managers
- What to manage
- Implementation
- Some benefits

What do customers look for?

- ❑ The **product must be tailored** to the **customers' exact needs and wants**
- ❑ The **quality** of the product must be **high**
- ❑ The **price** of the product must be **competitive**
- ❑ **Turnaround times** must be very **short**
- ❑ **Superior customers service** has to be offered **at all levels**

Outsourcing: Software Development Perspective



Drawbacks of outsourcing

- ❑ End product **not meeting the customers' exact needs and wants**
- ❑ **Quality** of the end product **not up to expectation**
- ❑ **Not that cheap**



- ❑ **Long project durations**
- ❑ **Customer service not up to expectation**

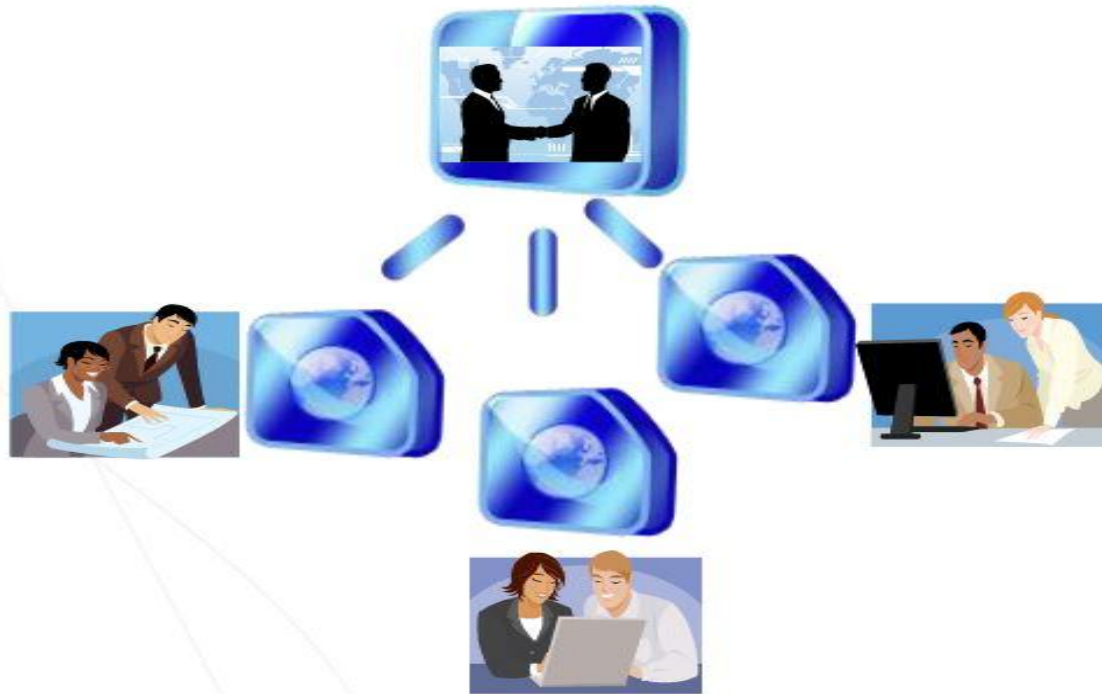
Why go virtual?

- To reduce real estate costs
- To increase productivity
- To re-engineer processes
- As an HR strategy
- By necessity
- For flexibility

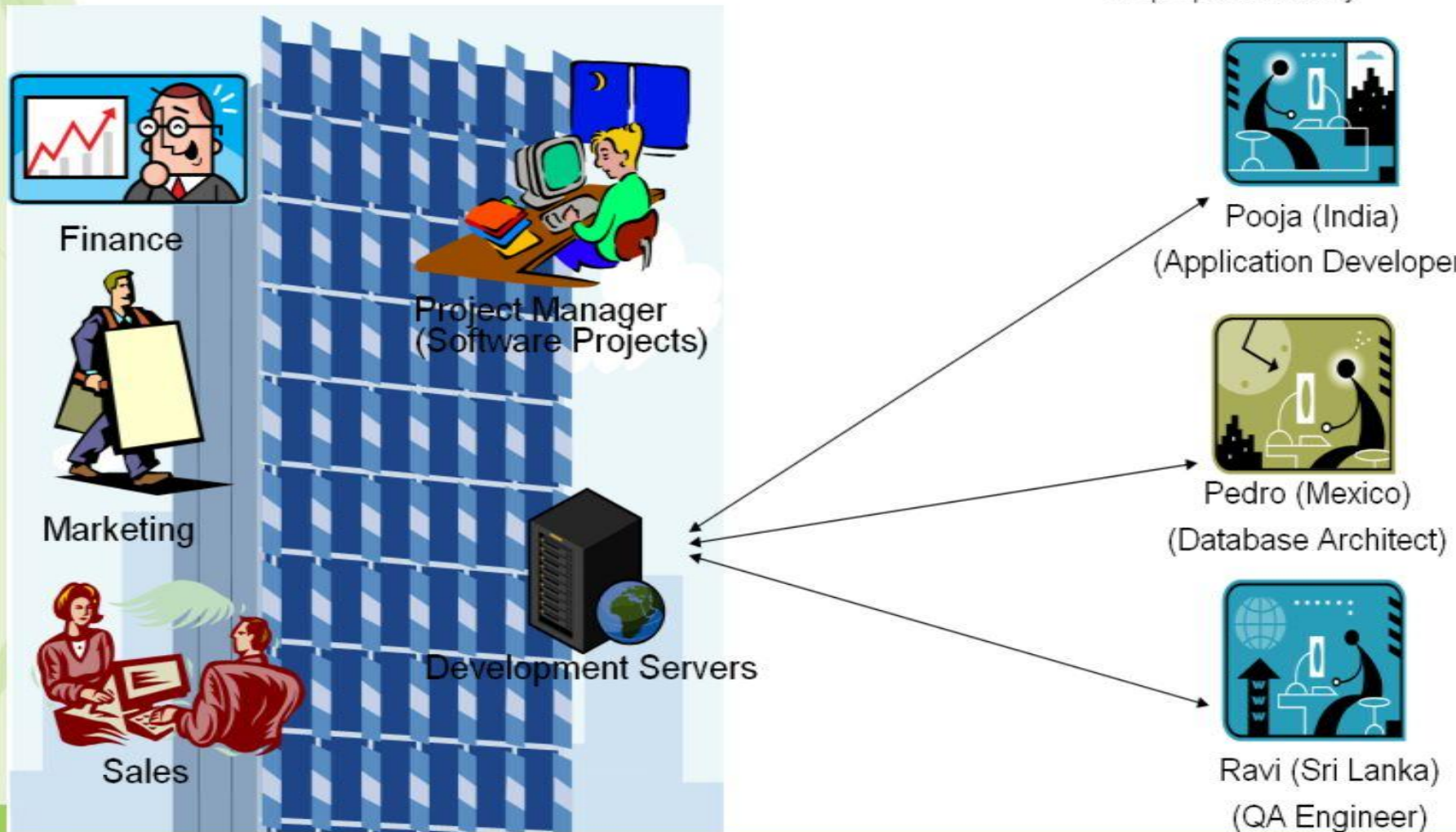


What is Virtual Collaboration?

Working on the same project from various locations via electronic communication

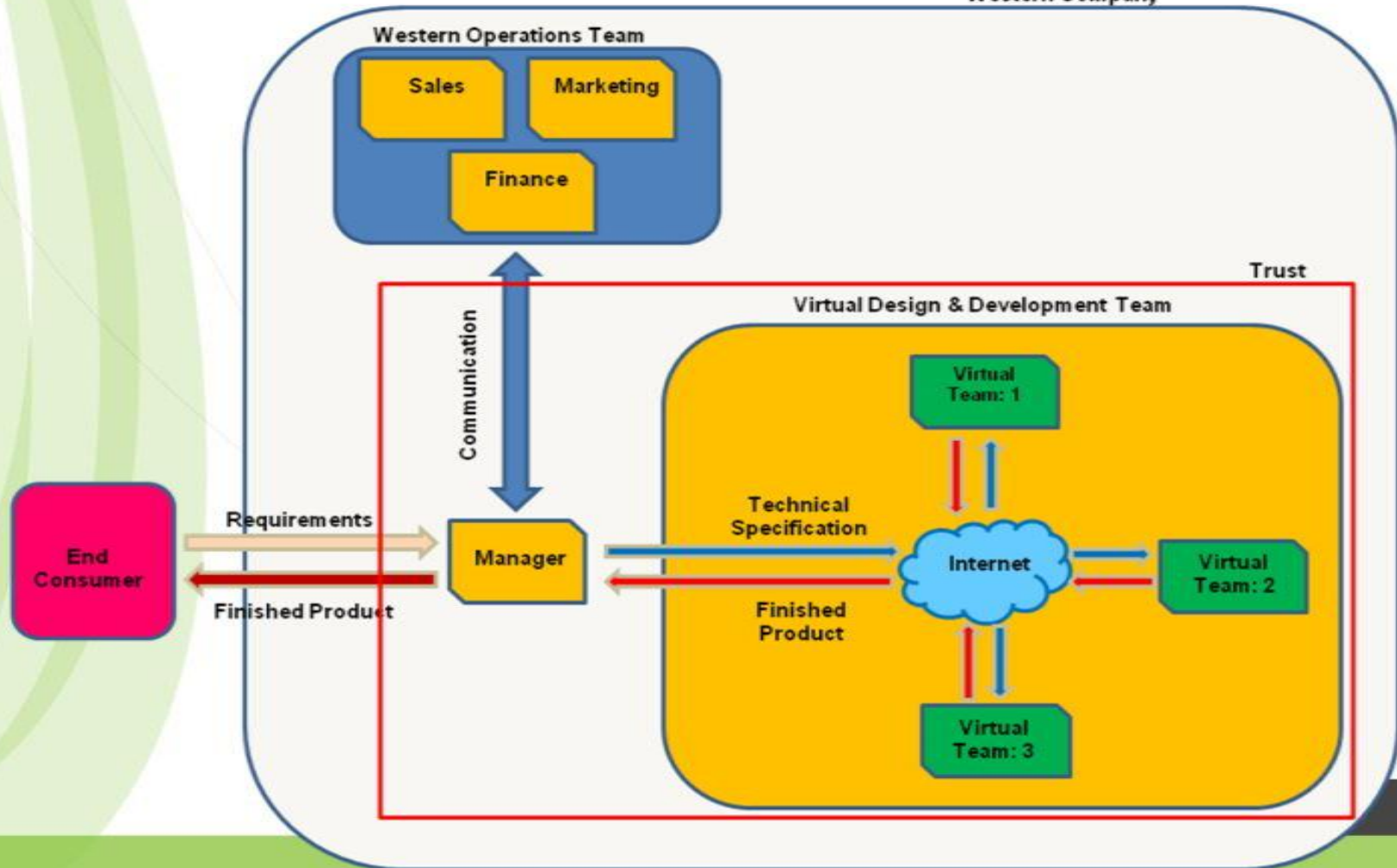


Virtual collaborative software company (Model)



Virtual collaboration: Software Development Perspective

Western Company



24 x 7 Operation

Project name: Student information database

Project Duration: 24 hours

Stages:

- A. Database architecture development (8 hours)
- B. Interface and business class development (8 hours)
- C. Testing and QA (8 hours)

	Day 1			Day 2			Day 3			Day 4		
	12am – 8am	8am – 4pm	4pm – 12am	12am – 8am	8am – 4pm	4pm – 12am	12am – 8am	8am – 4pm	4pm – 12am	12am – 8am	8am – 4pm	4pm – 12am
In-house		A			B			C		Delivery		
Outsourced		A			B			C		Delivery		
Freelance		A			B			C		Delivery		
Virtual Collaborative		A	B	C	Delivery							

Management of virtual collaboration

- Technology Management
- People Management**
- Information Management
- Team Management**
- Processes Management
- Facilities Management



Virtual collaborative teams

Type	Time Zone		Geo Location		Work Culture		Example
	Same	Different	Same	Different	Same	Different	
01	✓			✓	✓		A team of local students of WOU working from home
02		✓		✓	✓		A team of local students of WOU working from other countries
03	✓			✓		✓	A team of students from different countries working from their homes in Malaysia
04		✓		✓		✓	A team of students from different countries working from their homes in their own countries
05	✓		✓		✓		In-house teams
06	✓		✓			✓	

Selecting virtual collaborative team members

- Inclusion of friends and known colleagues in project team
- Multi cultural awareness of team members
- Communication skills
- Communication/meetings during traditional working hours
- Flexible work locations & Flexible working hours



Selecting virtual collaborative team managers

What is expected:

- ❑ Motivation and commitment of employees
- ❑ Improvement of efficiency and success rate
- ❑ Good grasp of tools and technologies needed
- ❑ Understanding of barriers and obstacles faced
- ❑ The customer perspective with respect to virtual teams
- ❑ Empowerment, interdependence and accountability
- ❑ Understanding of behavioural, social and cultural patterns



What to manage

- Communication
- Usage of native language
- Reporting
- Direct communication with customers
- Trust



What to manage

- Technology infrastructure
- Project Kick-off meetings
- Usage of detailed specifications
- Constant availability of project manager



What to manage

- Legalities & Formalities
- Training
- Celebrations
- Feedback & Continuous improvement



Project Implementation

- ❑ Strong professional relationship amongst project team members and managers
- ❑ High levels of communication
- ❑ High levels of trust among team members and managers
- ❑ Technological infrastructure
- ❑ Unorthodox operational practices
- ❑ High levels of team motivation and commitment

Some benefits of VC

- ❑ The end product is more tailored to the customers' exact needs and wants
- ❑ The quality of the end product is high
- ❑ The price of the end product is competitive
- ❑ Turnaround times are shorter
- ❑ Superior customer service can be offered

Thank you

Questions?

Ishan Abeywardena: ishansa@wou.edu.my
www.ishantalks.com

www.wou.edu.my