

Becoming a leader when working with offshore and distributed teams

By Hans Eckman

<http://hanseckman.com>

hans@hanseckman.com

Ground Rules

- **This session is for you, so participate.**
 - **Shout-out exercise**
 - **Interrupt me for clarification**
 - **Save questions/discussion till end**

- **The views and opinions expressed in this presentation are the sole responsibility of Hans Eckman. SunTrust Banks, Inc. bares no responsibility for the content and in no way authorized this presentation.**
- **No animals were harmed during the creation of this presentation. Please support your local rescue groups.**
(like *Leftover Pets* - <http://www.leftoverpets.org>)

What to Expect from this Session

- **Why Outsource and Current Challenges**
- **Core Changes to Improve Results**

- **Tips for Project and Personal Success**
- **Questions and Discussion**

Offshore by the Numbers

- **More than half of Fortune 500 companies push some portion of their IT work offshore**
- **Offshore outsourcing of IT has grown 50% annually for the last 5 years**
- **75% of the cost of developing software is labor**
- **Companies spend more than 10% of their IT budgets recruiting and training staff**
- **Offshore savings estimated between 25-50%**
- **PwC - 68% of respondents report increased quality**
- **India represents 75% of offshore IT outsourcing revenue**

Source: 2009 Bamboo Software Solutions whitepaper:
"Offshore Outsourcing Topics and Approach", approach_to_outsourcing.pdf

Why Outsource?

Is outsourcing a good idea? Bad idea?

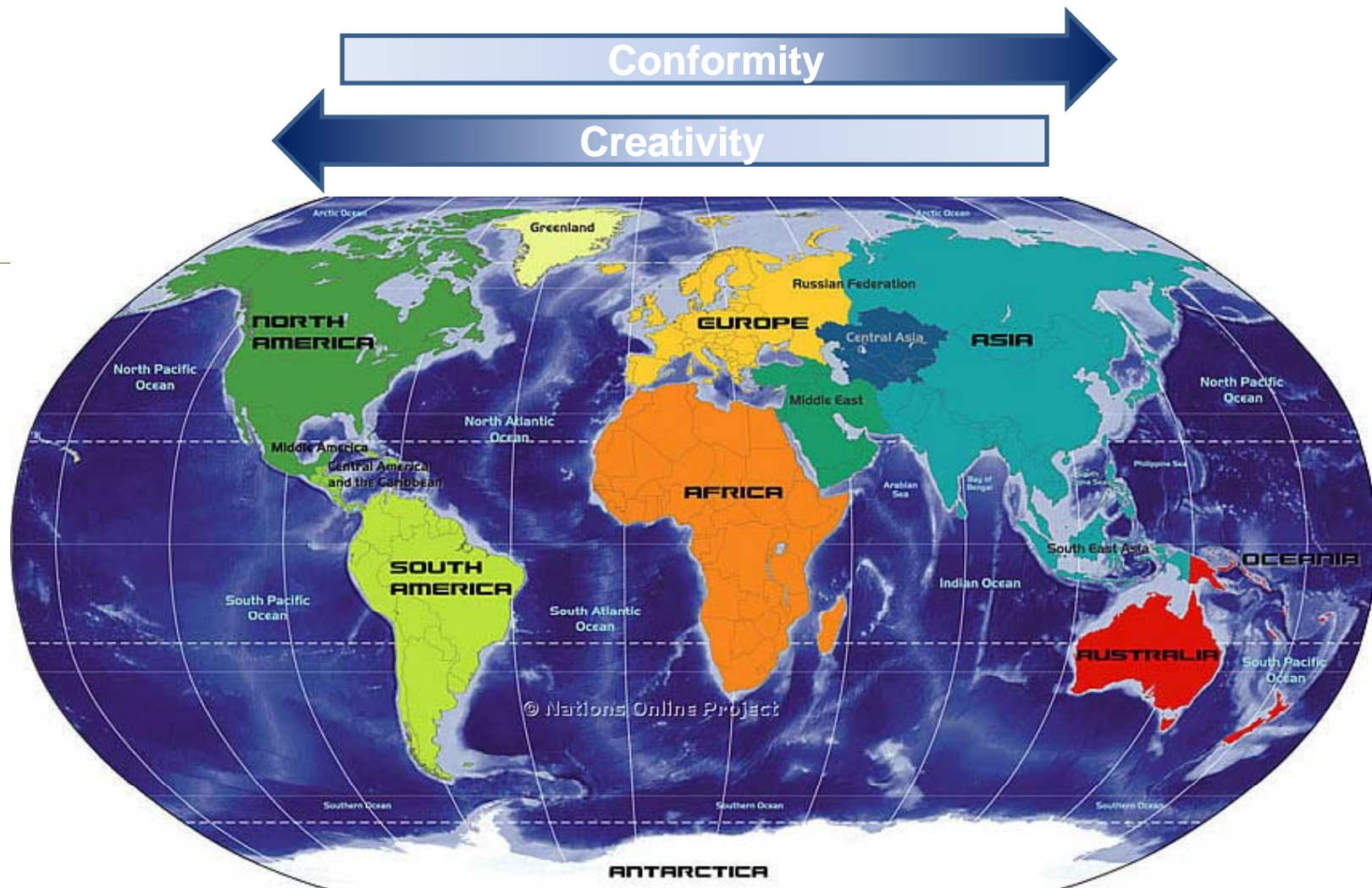
Our Perceptions

- Lower Cost
- Increase Workable Hours
- Idiocy/Ignorance
- Regulations, Taxes, Unions
- Work Ethic
- Remove Overhead
- Lack of Internal Skill
- Time to Market
- Scalability (Speed)

Best Reasons

- Better Value
- Greater Capacity
- Available Working Hours
- Missing Expertise
- Disaster Recovery
- Faster Onboarding

The Cultural Challenge - Approach



The Cultural Challenge – Key differences

- **Taught vs. Learned**
- **Literal Interpretation**

- **Little Tolerance for Inconsistencies**
- **English as a Second Language/Sarcasm**
- **Different Contextual Viewpoint**

The Context and Communication Challenge

Why are we doing this?

➤ **Business**

➤ **Market**

➤ **Audience**

Communication

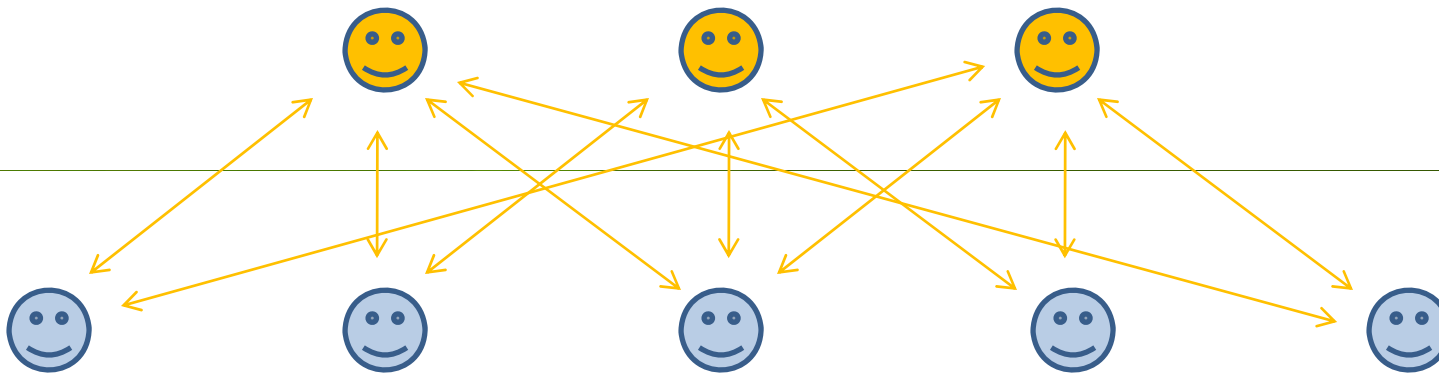
➤ **Asynchronous**

➤ **Fragmented/Incomplete**

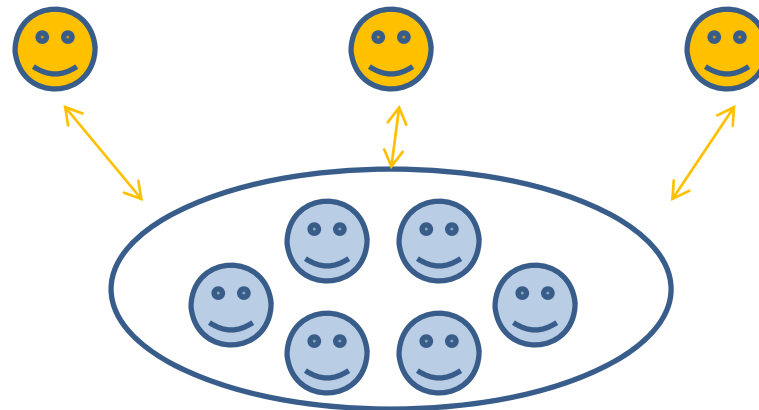
➤ **Intentional Only**

Current Engagement Approach

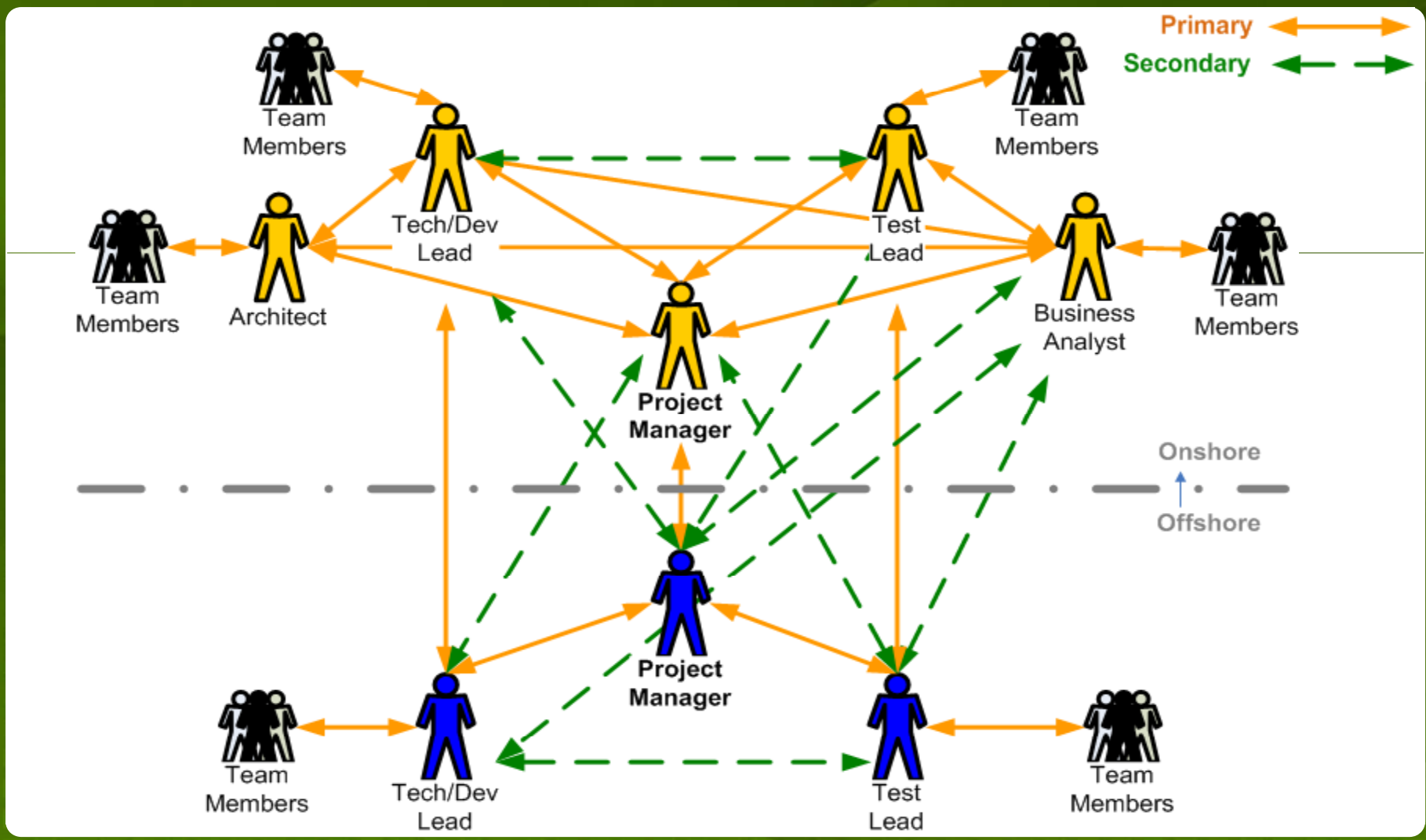
➤ Assign Tasks to Resources/Staff Augmentation



➤ Throw It Over the Fence



Recommended Project Team Structure



Project Approach Improvements

- **Maintain Understanding of the Business Context**
- **Establish Communication: Formal and Informal**
- **Engage Leads Early: Use Dev, QA, BA, and/or PM for Supporting Artifacts and Tasks**
- **Shift Work Hours – Virtual SCRUM**
- **Develop Detailed Documentation**
- **Validate Intermediate Deliverables (Catch mistakes early)**

Success Tips for Offshore Teams

- Create longer team member engagements/retain subject matter expertise
- Use modeling and examples
- Use clear, unambiguous language. Define your terms.
- Manage through short, actionable tasks
- If you *EXPECT, INSPECT*

Becoming a Leader – Personal Opportunities

- **Understand Your Team**
- **Provide Feedback, Especially Positive**

- **Be Open to Self-Criticism**
- **Volunteer**
- **Share Project Successes with Others – Become the Model**

Conclusions

- You must understand your audience to be effective.
- Develop strategies to turn differences and weaknesses into strengths.
- To lead, you must take action, not wait for direction.
- Download this presentation at:
 - PMI Atlanta –
<http://www.pmiatlanta.org>
 - HansEckman.com -
<http://hanseckman.com/support/>
- Questions?