

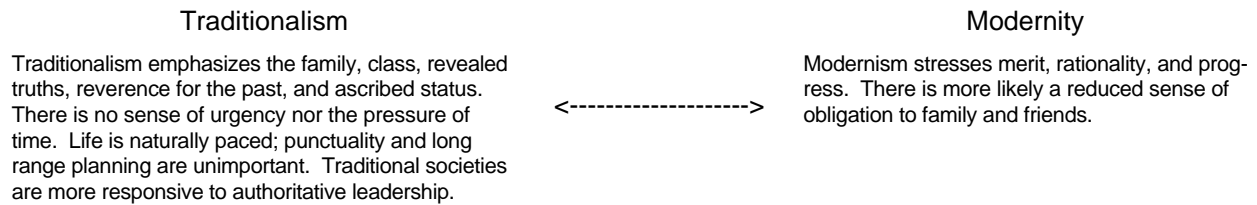
Issues in Planning for Growth

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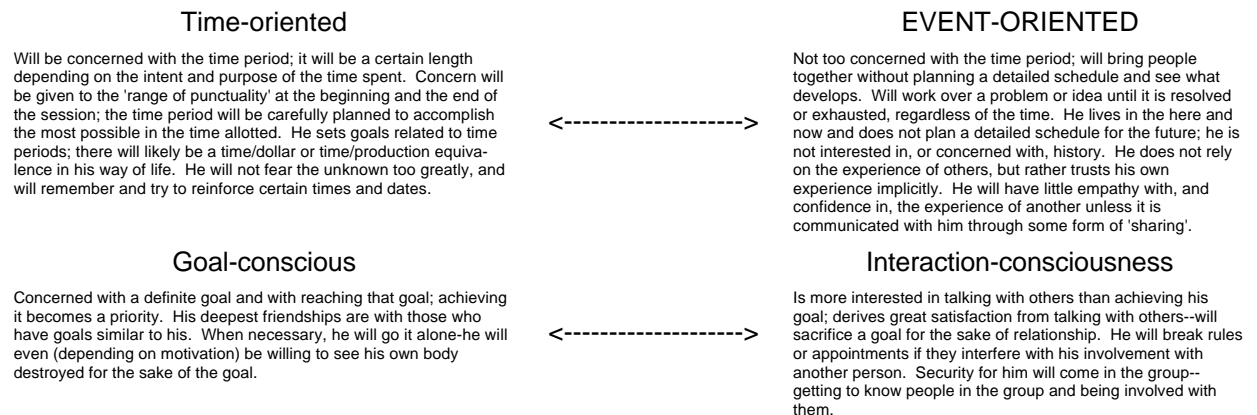
1. Our concept of planning arises out of our socialization, and our ideas of what "good" planning consists of will vary with the context. In the business world, the most effective planners in the cross-cultural setting are those who are aware of and utilize the cultural dynamics of planning (see Bass, Handbook of Leadership, chapter 34, "Leadership in Different Countries and Cultures").
2. Assumptions and values implicit in planning: Several paradigms of culture have appeared in the literature over the past 15 years. Many mention cultural concepts that are of significance to planning. Of great concern is the culture's view of time. Here we will present several intercultural approaches to values that will be helpful in understanding how the idea of planning will be viewed in an intercultural context.
 - a. One of the five questions have been identified as basic to all human cultures (Harris and Moran, Managing Cultural Differences, pp. 72-76) concerns our temporal orientation:

What is the temporal focus of life?			
Possible Answers:	To the past	To the present	To the future
Planning question: What goals should the church have?	The goals of the past are sufficient.	The goals should reflect present demands.	The goals should be directed towards trends and the situation of the future.

- b. Bass posits a similar spectrum (Handbook of Leadership, chapter 34, "Leadership in Different Countries and Cultures"):



- c. Marvin Meyers taxonomy brings out two spectra of values that are important in understanding a culture's view of planning (Basic Values Model; Christianity Confronts Culture, pp. 157-61):



- d. Geert Hofstede has developed a taxonomy of work-related values based on his study of people from 50 countries (116,000 questionnaires). Two of those values will have a direct

impact on planning are individualism-collectivism and uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, "The Cultural Relativity"):

Individualistic	INDIVIDUALISM-COLLECTIVISM	Collectivistic
Cultures with an individualistic orientation believe that people are only supposed to take care of themselves and, perhaps, their immediate families such that autonomy, independence, privacy, and an "I" consciousness are the ideal.	<i>The fundamental issue involved is the relation between the individual and his or her fellow individuals. The degree to which a culture relies upon and has allegiance to the self or the group. Generally, the wealthier the country, the more individualistic it is.</i>	Cultures with a collectivist orientation expect their ingroups to take care of them, in exchange for which they feel an absolute loyalty to the group. They believe in obligations to the group, dependence of the individual on organizations and institutions, a "we" consciousness, and an emphasis on belongingness. Collectivist countries always show large Power Distances.

Low Uncertainty Avoidance	UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE	High Uncertainty Avoidance
Cultures with low uncertainty avoidance believe in the reduction of rules, the acceptance of dissent, a willingness to take risks in life, and tolerance for deviation from expected behaviors. They accept the uncertainty of the future and are not bothered by it--they take each day as it comes. There is not as much of a need for absolute truth; religions are more relative and empirically based.	<i>The degree to which the culture feels threatened by ambiguous situations and tries to avoid uncertainty by establishing more structure. How society deals with the fact that time runs only one way--the future is uncertain and always will be.</i>	Cultures with high uncertainty avoidance want to 'beat the future'. Because the future is uncertain, they show high levels of anxiety and aggressiveness that create a strong inner urge to work hard, the need for extensive rules and regulations, a desire for consensus about goals, and a craving for certainty and security. Religions are authoritative and do not allow for other religious ideas.

3. One other cultural factor to be considered in planning across cultures is the rate of change present in the context (Harris and Moran, Managing Cultural Differences, pp. 118-120):

	Variability	
Low/stable Change Rate	The degree to which operations within a macroculture are at a low or high, stable, or unstable rate. The more turbulent the macroculture, for instance, the more unpredictable are business operations. The internal structure and processes in that situation requiring rapid adjustment to change, would demand open channels of communication, decentralized decision-making, and predominance of local expertise.	High/fluid Change Rate

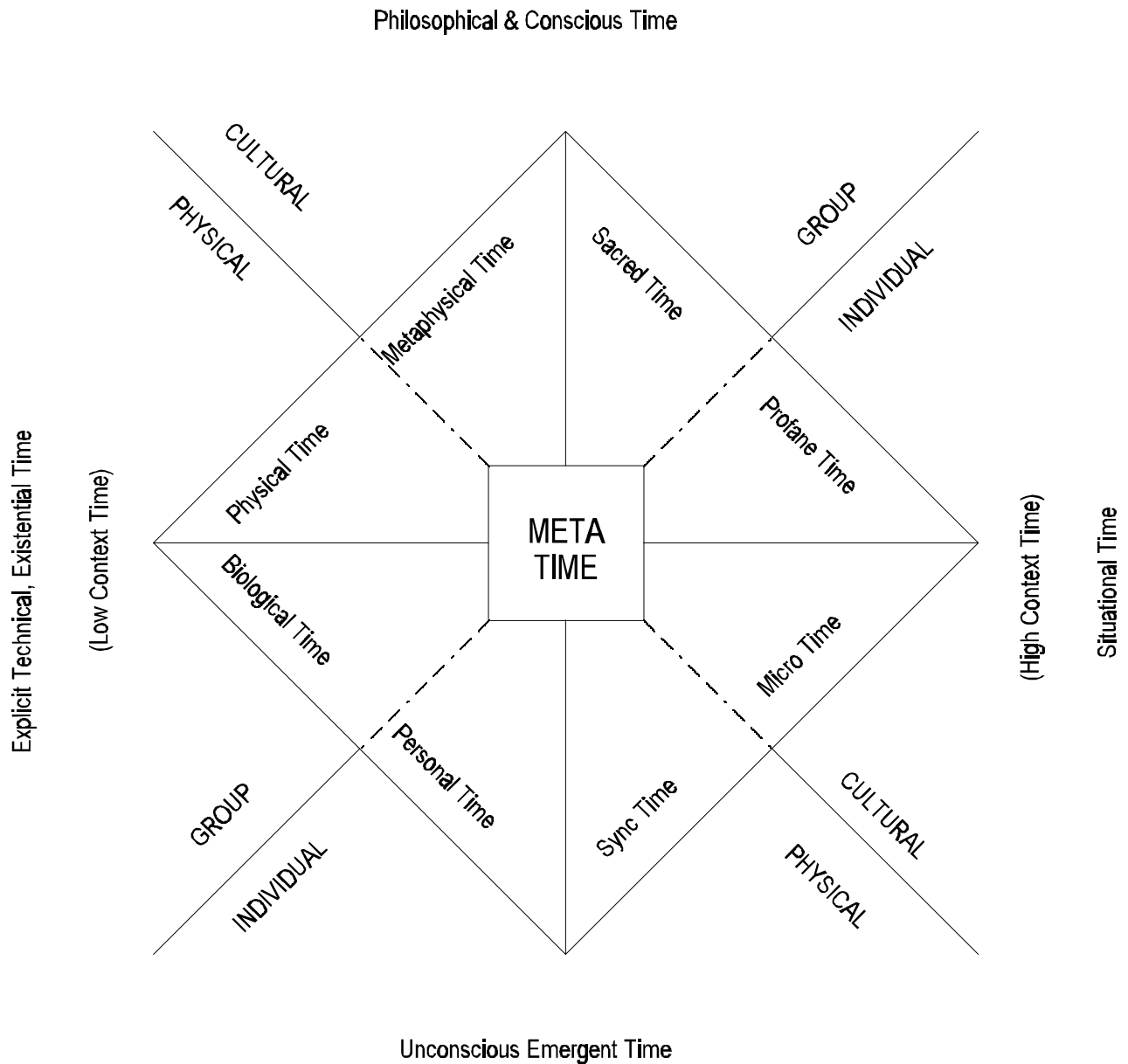
4. Contexting time: polychronic and monochronic orientations and their effect on communication

- a. Hall maintains (Understanding Cultural Differences, p. 179)

Time is one of the fundamental bases on which all cultures rest and around which all activities revolve. Understanding the difference between monochronic time and polychronic time is essential to success in international business. The American working in a foreign country must immediately determine whether the people are monochronic or polychronic [*N.B. "business" may be one orientation, and "home" or "social relations" another*] because this will affect *everything*:

- i. how business is organized,
- ii. whether schedules are adhered to,
- iii. how much lead time is needed, and

- iv. the basic orientation of the culture--past, present, or future.
- b. What are these orientations? The diagram and following chart may be noted (information extracted from Hall, The Dance of Life] and Hall, Understanding Cultural Differences, pp. 13-16)



Facets	Temporal Orientation	
	Monochronic	Polychronic
Examples	United States, England, Switzerland, Germany, etc. (northern Europe)	Latin America, Africa, Asia, Middle East, Southern Europe
Definition	Paying attention to and doing only one thing at a time.	Being involved in many things at once. Stresses involvement of people and completion of transactions rather than adherence to preset schedules.
Experience of time	In a linear way--like a road extending toward the future. It is divided into segments; it is scheduled and compartmentalized, which makes it possible for a person to concentrate on one thing at a time.	Time is seen more as a point than a road--but that particular point is often sacred. Commitments are an objective to be achieved, if possible.
Appointments and schedules	Takes high priority; may even be viewed as sacred and unalterable. Can apply to business, social life--even sexual life.	Time commitments are an objective to be achieved, if possible.
View of time	It is almost tangible--it can be spent, saved, wasted, lost, made up, crawling, running out, and even killed!	Not as tangible. While important, it must be placed in the context of relationships, which take a higher priority.
Priorities	Commitment is to the job. Time serves as a classification system for ordering life and setting priorities in relation to the job ("I don't have time to see her.") The important things are scheduled in, the unimportant are scheduled out.	Commitment is to relationships, which are more important than time--they set the agenda, not the clock.
Interruptions	Not liked--they break the sealing off that occurs in a scheduled environment. We are concerned that we not disturb others, and follow rules of privacy and consideration built on this presupposition.	Accepted; not a problem; maintaining relations demands flexibility with interruptions. There is more concern with those who are closely related (family, friends, close business associates) than with privacy.
Ongoing contact	Fit into schedules according to priorities.	A compulsion to keep in touch because of immersion in relationships. Not scheduled, but very important.
Plans	Plans are seriously developed and are adhered to almost religiously	Plans are flexible and may be changed quickly
Bureaucracies	Can grow and proliferate, though consolidation into larger units maintains the growth possibilities. Tends to be blind to the humanity of its members. Theoretically will treat all people the same.	Kept small (there are only so many relationships which can be maintained at the same time), not really set up to handle the problems of outsiders. You must have an "insider" to make things happen. Dependent on gifted individuals at the top who ensure the organization functions. Weakness is overdependence on leaders to handle anything out of the ordinary and to keep on top of the whole framework.
Administration and control of people	Compartmentalized; their activities are scheduled, and the analysis of the activities of the job is left to the individual performing them.	More holistic; analysis of job role within the total system is the foundation. Leaders take each subordinate's job and identify the activities that go with it. These are labelled with elaborate charts to ensure they are being done--though "scheduling" how and when they will get done is left completely to the subordinate.
Private property	Show great respect for private property; seldom borrow or lend.	Borrow and lend things often and easily.
Privacy	Highly valued; not violated.	Not valued--people do not want to be alone, as they are missing the relationships by which they identify themselves.
Promptness	Defined by the clock.	Defined by the relationship.
Relationship longevity	Accustomed to short-term relationships (note importance of this for salesmen)	Have strong tendency to build life time relationships (note importance of this for salesmen)
Office space	Privacy is highly valued; soundproofing is also important. Appointments are private and not amenable to interruptions.	Meetings/appointments can take place in public settings; private offices with closed doors are not the ideal, as it removes those in the room from the total office context (and the flow of information that takes place in public areas).

5. Planning for growth: a suggested three-step process

a. **STEP ONE:** Within the framework of biblical revelation and the context of your culture, consider what things are essential for a church to grow (in all senses of the word).

i. What biblical essentials can be discerned? The following suggestions may be noted:

- (1) Dependence on God as the one who brings growth (1 Cor. 3:6-7)
- (2) Being firmly rooted in Christ: (Ephesians 3:16-19)
- (3) A leadership that is equipping the saints for service, which they do by the exercise of their spiritual gifts (Eph. 4:7-16)

- (4) Being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) so as to
 - (a) Produce the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22)
 - (b) Obey the "one another" commands (e.g., 1 John 4:7-8), and
 - (c) Walk in obedience to:
 - (i) The Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20, etc.);
 - (ii) The Greatest Commandment (Matthew 22:37);
 - (iii) The Great Commandment (love your neighbor as yourself; Matthew 22:39)
- b. **STEP TWO:** Come to grips with the cultural expectations of planning. On the basis of those expectations (and within the framework of biblical revelation), develop a planning approach that is appropriate for the context.
- c. **STEP THREE:** Using the outlook developed in Step Two, develop and implements plans to manage a church in its own cultural context to develop the essentials for growth proposed in Step One.