Virtual reality: Observations and learning on online working

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Structure of the talk

- Experiential task
- Our experience of work in this area
- What we found from our experience
- What this means
1. Experiential learning
Reflections on the task

- What stood out to you?
2. Our backgrounds
Coreene Archer

- Worked for 13 years at TIHR
- Consultant, coach and member of MT
- Drawn to virtual groups by how people use technology
- Masters focused on does basic assumption activity manifest in virtual groups?
David Drabble

- Worked for 11 years at TIHR
- Commonly work on European teams
- PhD on misunderstandings in virtual teams
- Developed and co-ran workshop with Coreene on working virtually
Virtual simulations festival workshop

- Tavistock Institute 70th anniversary
- Intergroup event at high speed
- Task of group: propose a new Olympic event

- ....which has developed
3. Stories from virtual reality
Stories from virtual reality

Sharing learning from running workshops and experiencing virtual team dynamics
Knowledge of the Other

Bank holidays

Where are you????
Leadership roles

Giving away leadership in workshops

I'm a lone wolf
Enactment of power dynamics

Chile and Spain

What do we do? What do we tell them?
Communicating from afar

Silence in virtual meetings

Explosive face to face meetings

I was annoyed the way they were communicating in Italian
Siloed working

Working alone in large international teams

I didn’t get what I needed to do
4.
Making sense of our experiences
Knowledge and trust

- When you work virtually, how often are you surprised when you then meet people face to face?
- Lack of communication and individual working (Yeow, 2014)
- Language differences: shame at poor English, non-native speakers
- Trust online: swift trust (Panteli and Duncan, 2004), building rapport
- Diversity can lead to splits in low trust teams: less affect and more instrumental ties (Manev and Stevenson, 2001)
Who am I talking to?

- The differences in reality and imagined reality
- Suspicion
- Projective space
- Chatroom protocols
- Giddens (1983) Time space distanciation
Presence and connections

- Silence – does not mean disconnection
- McKenna and Green – dehumanisation and deindividuation
- How virtual space is used?
- Noel Edmonds
Forming a new social order

- What's the identity of a group that never meet?

- Social order (Goffman, 1971) concerns routines associated with ground rules

- Collective alignment in a diverse group

- Setting group rules takes time – most difficulties arise early in a virtual team
Why virtual?

- Cost effective
- Collaboration opportunities
- Attend to culture to resolve dysfunctions in a team
- Boundaries take a new form
- Mutual adjustment
Any thoughts or questions?