**COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT & STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT**

**video 1**

**communications management:**

* Planning communications management: determine the information and communications needs of stakeholders
* Managing communications: create, distribute, store, retrieve and dispose project communications based on communications management plan
* Controlling communications: monitor and control communications to ensure stakeholder communication needs are met

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**Keys to good communications:**

* Focus on group & individual communication needs
* Understand individual & group preferences for communications
  + Personal preferences affect communication needs
  + Personal differences can lead to miscommunication
  + Receiver may not interpret a message exactly as the sender intended
  + Geographic location and cultural background affect the complexity of project communications
    - Different working hours
    - Language barriers
    - Different cultural norms
* Use formal & informal methods for communicating
  + Different people respond positively to different levels/types of communication
  + Communication includes different dimensions (eg. writing, speaking, listening)
  + Encourage more face-to-face interactions
  + Short frequent meetings are often effective
  + Stand-up meetings force people to focus on what they really need to communicate
* Distribute important info in an effective and timely manner
  + Include detailed technical info that affects critical performance
  + Don’t bury crucial info
  + Don’t be afraid to report bad info
  + Oral communication via meetings & informal talks helps bring info out into the open
  + Info about project is disseminated to the right recipient at the right time using the right mode
* Set the stage for communicating bad news
* Determine the number of communication channels

**Communications channels:**

Number of channels:

**n\*(n-1)/2 (n: number of people)**

As number of people involved increases, the complexity of communications increases because there are more communications channels/pathways through which people can communicate

**Planning communications management:**

* Every project should include some type of communications management plan (a document that guides project communications)
* Communications plan should be part of the overall project management plan
* Vary with needs of project
* For small projects, communications management plan can be part of team contract
* For large projects, should be a separate document

**Communications management plan contents:**

* Stakeholder communications requirements
* Info to be communicated (including format, content, level of detail)
* Who will receive the info & who will produce it
* Suggested methods/technologies for conveying the info
* Frequency of communication
* Escalation procedures for resolving issues
* Revision procedures for updating communications management plan
* Glossary of common terminology

**video 2**

**managing communications**

* Managing communications is a large part of a project manager’s job
* Stakeholder communications analysis is a good starting point
* Getting project information to the right people at the right time and in a useful format is as important as developing the information in the first place
* Important considerations include use of technology, appropriate methods and media to use and performance reporting

**Communication methods**

* Interactive communication:
  + 2 or more people interact to exchange information
  + Meetings, phone calls, video conferencing
  + Most effective way to ensure common understanding
* Push communication:
  + Info is sent/pushed to recipients without their request
  + Reports, emails, faxes, voice mails..
  + Ensure info is distributed but not ensure it is received/understood
* Pull communication:
  + Info is sent to recipients at request
  + Website, bulletin boards, e-learning, knowledge repositories (eg. blog)

**Reporting performance:**

Keep stakeholders informed about how resources are being used to achieve project objectives

* Status reports: where project stands at a specific point in time (in terms of scope, time & cost)
* Progress reports: what project team has accomplished during a certain period of time
* Forecasts: predict future project status & progress based on past info & trends

**Controlling communications:**

* Main goal: ensure optimal flow of info throughout the entire project life cycle
* Use various reporting systems, expert judgement & meetings
* May require changes to earlier processes of planning and managing project communications if any problems exist
* Can use external facilitator to assess how well communications are working

**Improving project communications:**

* Develop better communication skills
  + As organisations become more global, they realise they must invest in ways to improve communication with people from different countries and cultures
  + Take leadership to improve communication
* Run effective meetings
  + Determine if a meeting can be avoided
  + Define purpose and intended outcome of the meeting
  + Determine who should attend meeting
  + Provide an agenda to participants before meeting
  + Prepare handouts & visual aids, make logistical arrangements ahead of time
  + Run meeting professionally
  + Set ground rules for meeting
  + Build relationships
* Use emails and other technologies effectively
  + SharePoint: create custom websites to access documents and applications stored on shared devices
  + Google Docs: allow users to create, share & edit documents, spreadsheets & presentations online
  + Wiki: website designed to enable anyone who accesses it to contribute/modify web page content
* Use templates for project communications: can develop own templates, use some provided by outside organisations or use sample from textbooks

**Lessons learned reports**

PM and team members should each prepare a lessons-learned report

* a reflective statement that documents important things an individual learned from working on project
* provide valuable reflections on what worked and what did not

PM often combines info from all lessons-learned reports into a project summary report

**Project archives & software:**

Project archives: a complete set of organised project records that provide an accurate history of project

Many project teams create a project website to store important product documents & other info

**STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT**

**video 3**

**stakeholder management:**

* identify all people or organisations affected by a project
* analyse stakeholder expectations
* effectively engage stakeholders

processes:

* identifying stakeholders: identify everyone involved in the project or affected by it & determine the best ways to manage relationships with them
* planning stakeholder management: determine strategies to effectively engage stakeholders
* managing stakeholder engagement: communicate and work with project stakeholders to satisfy their needs & expectations, resolve issues and foster engagement in project decisions and activities
* controlling stakeholder engagement: monitor stakeholder relationships and adjust plans and strategies for engaging stakeholders as needed

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**Identifying stakeholders:**

Project stakeholders: individuals, groups or organisations who may affect, be affected by or perceive themselves to be affected by a decision, activity or outcome of a project

* internal stakeholders:
  + project sponsor
  + project team
  + supporting staff
  + internal customers
  + top management
  + other functional managers
  + other project managers
* external stakeholders:
  + customers
  + competitors
  + suppliers
  + government officials
  + concerned citizens
* additional stakeholders:
  + program director
  + project manager’s family
  + labour union
  + potential customers

**stakeholder register:**

basic info on stakeholders

* identification info:
  + name
  + position
  + role
  + contact info
* assessment info:
  + major requirements & expectations
  + potential influences
  + phases of project in which stakeholders have most interest
* stakeholder classification:
  + internal/external?
  + supportive/resistant?

**Classify stakeholders:**

* power/interest grid:
  + power: level of authority
  + interest: level of concern
* engagement levels:
  + unaware: unaware of project and its potential impact
  + resistant: aware of project yet resistant to change
  + neutral
  + supportive: aware of project and supportive of changes
  + leading: aware of project

**video 4**

**stakeholder management plan:**

* current and desired engagement levels
* interrelationships between stakeholders
* communication requirements
* potential management strategies for each stakeholder
* methods for updating the stakeholder management plan

often include sensitive info, so should not be part of official project documents (available for all stakeholders review)

only PM and a few team members should prepare the plan

**issue log:**

a tool used to document, monitor and track issues that need resolution

**best practice:**

* be clear from start
* explain the consequences
* have a contingency plan
* avoid surprises
* take a stand

**ways to control engagement:**

engagement: a dialogue in which people seek understanding and solutions to issues of mutual concern

* key stakeholders should be invited to actively participate in a kick-off meeting rather than merely attending it
* PM emphasise a dialogue is expected at the meeting
* PM meet with important stakeholders before kick-off meeting
* Project schedule should include activities & deliverables related to stakeholder engagement, eg. surveys, reviews, demonstrations & sign-offs