SPM
Project Communications Management

Day 10: Project Communications Management

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Last Class We Discussed

- What is Project Human Resource Management ?
- Project HR Management Processes
- Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs
- Herzberg's Two Factor Theory
- Mcclelland's Acquired Needs Theory
- Mcgregor's XY Theory and Theory Z
- Thamhain and Wilemon's ways to influence projects
- Covey's 7 Habits on improving Effectiveness
- Empathic Listening and Rapport
- PMI's Talent Triangle
- Responsibility Assignment Matrix(RAM) and RACI chart
- Resource Loading and Resource Leveling
- Social Style Profiles and DISC Profiles
- Conflict Handling Modes

Today's Learning Objectives

- What is Project Communications Management ?

- Project Communications Management Processes

- Plan Communications Management

- Manage Communications Management

- Control Communications Management

- 5Cs of communications management

- Number of communications channel and its impact

- Documents and Templates and their significance

Importance of Good Communications

↪ Misjudgments in regards to the triple constraints can often arise from a failure to communicate properly

↪ Our culture does not portray IT professionals as being good communicators

↪ Research shows communication to be one of the major contributing factors in success of IT professionals.

↪ Strong verbal and non-technical skills (soft skills) can become key factors in career advancement for IT professionals.

↪ A 2014 Study highlights that problem solving, teamwork and good listening as important non technical skills. Organizations have been found to hire individuals with acceptable technical skills as long as they demonstrate solid soft and business skills

Project Communications Management Processes

PLANNING COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT

Determining the information and communications needs of the stakeholders

MANAGING COMMUNICATIONS

Creating, distributing, storing, retrieving, and disposing of project communications based on the communications management plan

CONTROLLING COMMUNICATIONS

Monitoring and controlling project communications to ensure that stakeholder communication needs are met

Planning

Process: **Plan communications management**

Outputs: Communications management plan, project documents updates

→

Executing

Process: **Manage communications**

Outputs: Project communications, project documents updates, project management plan updates, and organizational process assets updates

→

Monitoring and Controlling

Process: **Control communications**

Outputs: Work performance information, change requests, project documents updates, and organizational process assets updates

→

Project Start   **Project Finish**

→

Keys to Good Communications

- Project managers say they spend roughly 90% of their time communicating

- Need to focus on group and individual communication needs

- Use formal and <u>informal methods</u> for communicating

- Distribute important information in an effective and timely manner

- Set the stage for communicating bad news

- Determine the number of communication channels

5 C's of communications management

Additionally a project manager must also follow the 5 C's of communication that will help in creating an uninterrupted and systematic communication throughout the project. These five C's are:

CLEAR

CONCISE

COHERENT

CORRECT

CONTROLLED

Understanding Group and Individual Communication Needs

People are not interchangeable parts

As illustrated in Brook's book *The Mythical Man-Month*, you cannot assume that a task originally scheduled to take two months of one person's time can be done in one month by two people

9 women cannot produce a baby in 1 month !!

Importance of Face-to-Face Communication

Research says that in a face-to-face interaction:

- 58% of communications is through body language

- 35% of communication is through how the words are said

- 7% of communication is through the content or words that are spoken

Pay attention to more than just the actual words someone is saying

A person's tone of voice and body language say a lot about how he or she really feels.

How personal preferences affect communication needs

Introverts like more private communications, while extroverts like to discuss things in public

Intuitive people like to understand the big picture, while sensing people need step-by-step details

Thinkers want to know the logic behind decisions, while feelers want to know how something affects them/others personally

Judging people are driven to meet deadlines while perceiving people need more help in developing and following plans.

Encourage More Face-to-Face Interactions

- Short frequent meetings are often very effective in IT projects

- Stand-up meeting force people to focus on what they really need to

  communicate

- Some companies have policies preventing the use of email between certain

  hours or even entire days of the week (abroad)

- Examples of miscommunication while teaching relating to OS differences

How to distribute information in an effective and timely manner

- Don't bury crucial information

- Don't be afraid to report bad information

- Oral communication via meeting and informal talks helps bring important information - good and bad - out into the open.

Few other considerations

Rarely does the receiver 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

Dear Mom and Dad, or should I say Grandma & Grandpa,

Yes, I am pregnant. No, I'm not married yet since Larry, my boyfriend, is out of a job. Larry's employers just don't seem to appreciate the skills he has learned since he quit high school. Larry looks much younger than you, Dad, even though he is three years older. I'm quitting college and getting a job so we can get an apartment before the baby is born. I found a beautiful apartment above a 24-hour auto repair garage with good insulation so the exhaust fumes and noise won't bother us.

I'm very happy. I thought you would be too.

Love, Ashley

P.S. There is no Larry. I'm not pregnant. I'm not getting married. I'm not quitting school, but I am getting a "D" in Chemistry. I just wanted you to have some perspective

Determining the no. of communications channels

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

Number of communications channels = $n(n-1)/2$

Where, n is the number of people involved.

Impact of No. of comm channels

2 People   5 People   12 People

Planning Communications Management

Every project should include some type of communications management plan, a document that guides project communications

The communications management plan varies with the needs of the project but some type of written plan should always be prepared

For small projects,

the communications management plan can be part of the team contract

For large projects,

it should be a separate document.

Communication Management Plan Contents

1. Stakeholder communications requirements

2. Information to be communicated, including format, content, and level of detail

3. Who will receive the information and who will produce it

4. Suggested methods or technologies for conveying the information

5. Frequency of communication

6. Escalation procedures for resolving issues

7. Revision procedures for updating the communications management plan

8. A glossary of common terminology

Sample Stakeholder Analysis for Project Communications

Stakeholders	Document Name	Document Format	Contact Person	Due
Customer management	Monthly status report	Hard copy and meeting	Tina Erndt, Tom Silva	First of month
Customer business staff	Monthly status report	Hard copy	Julie Grant, Sergey Cristobal	First of month
Customer technical staff	Monthly status report	E-mail	Li Chau, Nancy Michaels	First of month
Internal management	Monthly status report	Hard copy and meeting	Bob Thomson	First of month
Internal business and technical staff	Monthly status report	Intranet	Angie Liu	First of month
Training subcontractor	Training plan	Hard copy	Jonathan Kraus	November 1
Software subcontractor	Software implementation plan	E-mail	Najwa Gates	June 1

Comments: Put the titles and dates of documents in e-mail headings and have recipients acknowledge receipt.

Management Communications

↪ Managing communications is a large part of a project manager's job

↪ Getting project information to the right people at the right time and in a useful manner/format is just as important as developing the information in the first place.

↪ Important considerations include the use of technology, the appropriate methods and media to use, and performance reporting

↪ Technology can facilitate the process of creating and distributing information when used properly.

Global Issues to Consider

Natural disasters and even bad weather can disrupt communications around the world. Eg: Japan's communications infrastructure was almost obliterated in March 2011 after a 9.0 magnitude earthquake. Thousands of NTT East employees worked around the clock to restore comm networks.

During April 2015 earthquake in Nepal, people turned to older technologies like ham radios to communicate

Danish researchers are working on a new device called Reachi to aid communications during natural disasters

Communications Methods Classifications

Interactive communication: Two or more people interact to exchange information via meetings, phone calls, or video conferencing. Most effective way to ensure common understanding

Push communication: Information is sent or pushed to recipients without their request via reports, emails, faxes, voice mails and other means. Ensures that the information is distributed but does not ensure that it was acknowledged or understood.

Pull communication: Information is sent to recipients at their request via web sites, bulletin boards, e-learning, knowledge repositories like blogs and other means

KEY: 1 = EXCELLENT		2 = ADEQUATE		3 = INAPPROPRIATE		
HOW WELL MEDIUM IS SUITED TO:	HARD COPY	TELEPHONE CALL	VOICE MAIL	E-MAIL	MEETING	WEB SITE
Assessing commitment	3	2	3	3	1	3
Building consensus	3	2	3	3	1	3
Mediating a conflict	3	2	3	3	1	3
Resolving a misunderstanding	3	1	3	3	2	3
Addressing negative behavior	3	2	3	2	1	3
Expressing support/appreciation	1	2	2	1	2	3
Encouraging creative thinking	2	3	3	1	3	3
Making an ironic statement	3	2	2	3	1	3
Conveying a reference document	1	3	3	3	3	1
Reinforcing one s authority	1	2	3	3	1	2
Providing a permanent record	1	3	3	1	3	1
Maintaining confidentiality	2	1	2	3	1	3
Conveying simple information	3	2	1	1	2	3
Asking an informational question	3	2	1	1	3	3
Making a simple request	3	3	1	1	3	3
Giving complex instructions	3	3	3	2	1	2
Addressing many people	2	3	3 or 1*	2	3	1

Galati, Tess. Email Composition and Communication (EmC2) Practical Communications, Inc. (www.praccom.com) (2001).
*Depends on system functionality

What could go wrong ?

- Collaboration is a key driver of overall performance of companies around the world (centipede)
- Of all the collaboration technologies that were studied, three were more commonly present in high-performing companies: web conferencing, audio conferencing and meeting-scheduler technologies
- The study also showed that there are regional differences in how people in various countries prefer to communicate with one another
- A follow up showed that the highest returns were in areas of sales performance and innovations and new product development

Reporting Performance

Performance reporting keeps stakeholders informed about how resources are being used to achieve project objectives

- Status reports describe where the project stands at a specific point in time
- Progress reports describe what the project team has accomplished during a certain period of time
- Forecasts predict future project status and progress based on past information and trends

Controlling Communications

Main goal is to ensure optimal flow of information throughout the entire project life cycle

PM and project team should use their various reporting systems, expert judgement, and meeting to assess how well communications are working. If problems exist, the PM and team need to take action, which often requires changes to the earlier processes of planning and managing project communications.

It is often beneficial to have a facilitator from outside the project team to assess how well communications are working.

SUGGESTIONS

- Develop better communication skills
- Run effective meetings
- Use email and other technologies effectively
- Use templates for project communications
- Most companies spend money on technical training even when employees might benefit more from communications training
- At employee level too, employees are more inclined to attend technical skill upgrade classes more than soft skills
- As organizations become more global, they realize they must invest in communication improvement across people of diff domain and cultures
- It takes leadership to improve communication

MEDIA SNAPSHOT

93% of recruiters check out social media profiles of prospective hires.

A 2014 article in Money magazine provides a list of social media blunders that cost millennial a job or something even worse, such as:

- Posting something embarrassing on the corporate Twitter feed

- Sexual oversharing or harrassments towards others

- Revealing company secrets

- Making fun of your team or boss

- Posting while you're supposed to be working

How to run effective meetings ?

- Determine if it can be avoided
- Define purpose and intended outcome of a meeting
- Determine who should attend the meeting
- Provide an agenda to participants before the meeting
- Prepare handouts and visual aids, and make logistical arrangements ahead of time
- Run the meeting professionally
- Set the ground rules
- Build relationships

Using email, instant messaging and collaborative tools effectively

- Be sure the medium is acceptable

- Be sure to send the information to the right people

- Use meaningful subject lines and limit the content of emails to one main subject and be as clear and concise as possible

- Be sure to authorize the right people to share and edit your collaborative documents.

- It is a good idea to add a email signature so proper signatories go through every email you compose.

Quick Question

Do you find any correlation between Kanban Board and

Communications Management ?

Using Templates for project communications

Many technical people are afraid to ask for help

Providing examples and templates for project communications saves time and money

Organizations can develop their own templates, use some provided by outside organization or use samples from textbooks

Research support that companies excelling in project management make effective use of templates
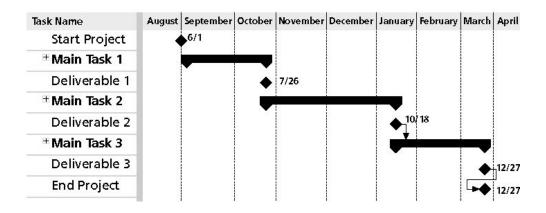
Project X Descripton

Objective: Describe the objective of the project in one or two sentences. Focus on the business benefits of doing the project.

Scope: Briefly describe the scope of the project. What business functions are involved, and what are the main products the project will produce?

Assumptions: Summarize the most critical assumptions for the project.

Cost: Provide the total estimated cost of the project. If desired, list the total cost each year.

Schedule: Provide summary information from the project's Gantt chart, as shown. Focus on summary tasks and milestones.

Task Name	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	April
Start Project	◆6/1								
+ Main Task 1		▬▬▬▬							
Deliverable 1			◆ 7/26						
+ Main Task 2				▬▬▬▬▬▬					
Deliverable 2						◆ 10/18			
+ Main Task 3							▬▬▬▬▬		
Deliverable 3								◆ 12/27	
End Project								◆ 12/27	

Project Description Template

I. **Accomplishments for Month of January (or appropriate month):**

- Describe most important accomplishments. Relate to project's Gantt chart.
- Describe other important accomplishments, one bullet for each. If any issues were resolved from the previous month, list them as accomplishments.

II. **Plans for February (or following month):**

- Describe most important items to be accomplished in the next month. Again, relate tothe project's Gantt chart.
- Describe other important items to accomplish, one bullet for each.

III. **Issues:** Briefly list important issues that surfaced or are still important. Managers hate surprises and want to help the project succeed, so be sure to list issues.

IV. **Project Changes (Date and Description):** List any approved or requested changes to the project. Include the date of the change and a brief description.

Monthly Progress Report Template

Final Project Documentation Items

I.	Project description
II.	Project proposal and backup data (request for proposal, statement of work, proposal correspondence, and so on)
III.	Original and revised contract information and client acceptance documents
IV.	Original and revised project plans and schedules (WBS, Gantt charts and network diagrams, cost estimates, communications management plan, etc.)
V.	Design documents
VI.	Final project report
VII.	Deliverables, as appropriate
VIII.	Audit reports
IX.	Lessons-learned reports
X.	Copies of all status reports, meeting minutes, change notices, and other written and electronic communications

Lessons Learned Reports

The PM and project team members should prepare a lessons learned report

- A reflective statement that documents important things an individual learned from working on the project

The PM often combines information from all of the lessons learned reports into a project summary report

It is also important to prepare and organize project archives

Project Archives are complete set of organized project records that provide an accurate history of the project, they can often provide valuable information for future projects as well

Project Web Sites

Online record keeping of the project

Online portfolio for the project team and the organization itself

An acceptable alumni for involved stakeholders

Easy access and referral for future projects

Technical aspects - frameworks, CMS, responsive, platform independent

Softwares used for project communications

Post test notice regarding PRE-TEST

Marking will initiate and grades/feedback will likely be circulated by next class.

Please,

Focus on finishing your group assignment report as its deadline might be near now.

THANK YOU

Prepare well & Do well !