

- 0:00 [MUSIC] Hi, welcome back to class. Let's take some time to revisit your role and your interaction with your project stakeholders. We have looked at the different project organizations, and in many cases you are not officially in charge. You are the project manager, but you may or may not write performance appraisals or hire team members.
- 0:30 In the projectized organization you are the king or queen, so to speak, and the other organization, such as the matrix, you share your authority. You are responsible for the success of the project, but you do not have the authority of someone who is in charge.
- 0:44 Truthfully, even when you do have complete authority, you will not always choose to lead from a place of authority. Sometimes you will simply need to exert some influence in order to move people towards a goal or to resolve issues and conflicts. This is a good place to stop and consider the difference between authority and influence.
- 1:04 Authority means you have the right to apply resources, expend funds, make decisions and give approvals. Influence is your ability to persuade others to act on behalf of the project. You use influence to encourage team members to meet deadlines, to facilitate conflicts resolutions, and to try and resolve project issues and conflict. You influence through the relationships you have built. People who trust you are more likely to be open to your influence.
- 1:32 You influence through your ability to clearly communicate the pros and cons of different points. And through your ability to listen openly to the points of others. You influence by being open to other perspectives, and by setting a good example. It's inevitable that you and your stakeholders will face conflict as you work to meet project objectives. Conflict is not a bad thing. Conflict is a natural condition that occurs when it looks like one party believes their needs will not be met. You will use your influence to help resolve f conflict.
- 2:05 There are quite a few potential sources of conflict on your projects. Many of these you can manage through your planning and your communications. For example, a conflict around project priorities. You can help with this conflict by having priorities clearly defined and documented. You can state this in your charter, and mention it again in the scope, and reference it in your status. Doesn't mean everybody will agree. But if an official agreement has been reached, your communication around the priorities will serve as a reminder that this is the decision, and it has all ready been made.
- 2:38 Conflicts over resources can be managed by creating a plan showing the types of resources you need and when they are needed. Presenting this plan to the appropriate stakeholders. And securing their buy-in and approvals is going to help with this conflict.
- 2:53 Team members often face conflict over their roles and responsibilities. This can surface as either role conflict or role ambiguity.
- 3:02 An example of role conflict is when two people are trying to do the same job or complete the same task.
- 3:09 An example of role ambiguity is when someone does not know or understand what is expected of them.
- 3:16 You have a tool available to you that will help with role conflicts and role ambiguity. That tool is the responsibility assignment matrix or the RAM.
- 3:27 The RAM helps to show who is carrying out the completion of the project scope. You can create it at a different levels, you might do it all the way to the task or activity level. The idea is to show who is really responsible for the work, who needs to know about the work, who will provide assistance or consult.
- 3:46 The RAM can be created with your team and, in fact, this helps everyone to understand who is doing what. It helps to clear up role conflict and role ambiguity. When team members participate, it helps to build their commitment to the project.
- 4:01 You and your stakeholders will still face conflict. You seek to minimize unproductive conflict. This is the type of conflict where people launch personal attacks on one another. You want to encourage healthy or productive conflict. This is the type of conflict that helps solves issues and design approaches that provide the best ways to meet project objectives.

- 4:23 As you resolve conflicts, there are different approaches you can use. Each approach has its time and its place.
- 4:30 Confronting, which can also be referred to as problem solving or collaboration, is an approach where you encourage the parties in conflict to work together to conduct some research and analysis and come up with a resolution together. This is a good way to build relationships and develop a solution that is really the best for the project and not necessarily best for one party or another. If you opt to compromise, you are using an approach which involves taking ideas from each party so that the solution is a little bit of each. This can be effective when you don't have time for confronting or collaborating. It may not necessarily result in the best approach and it doesn't really produce what we call a win win.
- 5:12 Smoothing or accommodating means that you seek to remind the parties in conflict of their similarities. You appeal to their relationships, and you work to keep a friendly atmosphere. This will not help you take care of the root cause of a conflict, but it can be a relationship builder.
- 5:28 Now, forcing or competing means you simply tell people how it'll be. You or another party in the conflict dictates the solution. If you're coming from a place of expertise, this makes sense. If someone is clearly violating a regulation or policy, this approach makes sense. Often your sponsor will use this approach. He or she will provide a solution to you, and expect you to use it.
- 5:50 The last approach we are considering is avoiding or withdrawal. It's not a good permanent solution. But it's good if you believe that you or the other parties in conflict need some time to calm down. It's also good when you're outranked. When your sponsor tells you that he or she wants something and you know they're not causing any harm or doing something unethical, there's probably no reason for you to engage in conflict with them.
- 6:13 Which one is the best approach? See, trick question. Each one has its time and place. It takes practice. The first step is to understand and know the approaches that are available to you.
- 6:26 That concludes our lesson. Thanks for being here. [SOUND]