

- :13 Hi there. Do you remember this. A project manager spends 90% of his or her time communicating. The documents you create, the presentations you give, the meetings you facilitate, all of these are forms of communication. Each should exist to help explain the project.
- 0:31 Each communication has the potential to remind others of the importance of the project. To remind her there's of the scope of the project. To bring issues to light. To educate others about the risks.
- 0:43 To celebrate accomplishments.
- 0:46 Despite this, some people miss out on the opportunity to really leverage their communications. They do not think ahead before they give status updates. They do not see that their documentation can be used strategically and that's too bad. Well planned communications can make the difference between a good project and a great project. When you communicate from a proactive stance, as opposed to a reactive stance, your stakeholders will better understand what is expected from them and when. They will not be surprised by project events. And they will have more confidence in you as a leader.
- 1:23 Don't think that planning your communications means that you can't have ad hoc or spur-of-the-moment communications with your stakeholders. Of course you can. You don't have to follow a script every time you talk to someone.
- 1:36 Planning your communications helps you to prevent missed opportunities. For example, if you have a monthly executive status briefing, planning what you wish to emphasize during the briefing helps you to teach your executive team about the projects. You can share with them about challenges. Give credit to team members who are doing outstanding work and let the executive team know what you need from them. It's not just about reporting status.
- 2:00 Your communications plan is a natural fit to your stakeholder management plan. Previously we discussed identifying your stakeholders, getting to know them, understanding who is involved and how they're involved, and what type of information they need.
- 2:14 This feeds into your project communications management plan. The basic plan includes with whom to communicate, what they need to know, when they need to know it, how often, the best medium, the response expected from the stakeholder.
- 2:34 Notice that there is an area to discuss the purpose of the communication. If you cannot think of a good purpose for communication, you probably do not need that specific communication or perhaps that communication has not been well thought out.
- 2:49 Everyone receives more than enough information from many sources, and in many formats. Emails, texts, instant messages, videos, etc. You definitely want to be respectful of people's time and attention.
- 3:03 In terms of who is responsible for the communications in your plan, as a project manager, you're responsible for project communications. That doesn't mean that you personally create and distribute every single project communication. You may have a communication specialist. Depending on the audience for your communication, you might work with a department or organizational communications team. This group may need to review and approve your messages, and in fact this group may need to be in charge of releasing the messages. You want to include them as early as possible, and understand their requirements and constraints.
- 3:40 You can do well with a basic template. You might also add to your template. Perhaps add some discussion about the overall communication strategy for this project. What if your project is bringing about some significant change? If this is the case, you are going to want to include quite a few communications, which really helped to announce the fact that change is coming, discuss the nature of the change, the possible benefits of the change, acknowledging maybe the change can be difficult, and even show how to become comfortable with the upcoming change. Your stakeholder register that's that list of your stakeholders and their information. Your stakeholder analysis and your stakeholder management plan all feed into your communications plan.
- 4:25 If you are leading a long and challenging project, it would be a really good idea to include some events that mark milestones and celebrate their completions, these events are part of your communications. And also

help to keep your stakeholders engaged.

- 4:40 You can also have some communications evaluations. Some method or tool that allows you to gather feedback to see if a specific communication or a series of communications has been successful.
- 4:54 Keep in mind, that you might prepare a similar communication for different groups of people. You might think of these as channels. You have upward communication to senior management. You have downward communication to subordinates, and you have lateral communications to peers or other functional groups, and you have lateral communications to friends and social groups and other organizations.
- 5:17 You would most likely present status differently to each of these groups. To senior management, you would probably be more formal and focus on some very special areas of their concern. For your subordinates, you may or may not be less formal, but you may provide much more information in a status discussion. After all, your subordinates are carrying out the work and they need more detail.
- 5:40 The way in which you share information with your peers is probably different than the way in which you share information with your friends.
- 5:48 As you prepare communications you want to keep in mind your various channels so that you can prepare the most effective communication possible for each group. One more tip.
- 6:01 Significant communications should be included in your project schedule. In fact, include them as deliverables and get them into your work breakdown structure so that they can be estimated. Some forms of communication involve budget and other resources.
- 6:16 Don't let them slip through the cracks. In discussing communications channels a minute ago, the example we used was status. Reporting status involves measuring and reporting project scope, schedule, and cost performance. For each element, you develop a baseline, and this baseline reflects the scope, schedule, and budget that you agreed upon with your sponsor or sponsors, it's like a contract or a promise.
- 6:42 When you are reporting schedule and you learn that you are three days ahead of schedule, how do you know?
- 6:49 You know because you have a baseline schedule that shows that you were supposed to reach the specific milestone on a specific date, and your current information shows that you're gonna meet that milestone three days earlier than anticipated.
- 7:02 In addition to reporting your actual performance compared to your baselines, you will also discuss key issues and risks. Your status report is an opportunity to show how hard the team is working and what has been accomplished.
- 7:15 Your status is a place to bring to light any issues that you and the team are not able to resolve on your own or discuss how you successfully navigated an issue.
- 7:27 It is possible that your organization already has a status report template. If so, you wanna use it as that's how your stakeholders expect you to communicate status. If not, you want to develop something that is simple and effective. A format that's easy to read and understand at a glance. So that your stakeholders can determine the true nature of the project. They can read more for details, or they can contact you for more information as needed.
- 7:55 The Project Management Institute favors an approach called, earned value. Earned value integrates scope, schedule, and budget, and uses monetary values to assess the true status of your project. Using earned value helps you to compare what you planned to complete versus what you actually completed. Well, other approaches can lead you to believe that if you spent less money you must be under budget. Using earned value will help you determine if you really spent less money or if you spent less money because you did not complete the planned amount of work. You will have the opportunity to learn more about earned value in another course. Where does all of this information come from?
- 8:39 You receive information from your team as to the work that has been completed and the work that is still outstanding. Your team also appraises you of any issues that have come up, or they should.
- 8:51 You should have access to financial reports and data to determine how you are performing against the

budget.

9:00 You have a schedule that you use to reflect where you plan to be at a specific point in time. You're using your planning data in order to track the status of your project. You have a risk register and you keep an issue log, too.

9:13 Speaking of risk registers, it's time to transition to our next topic. Managing risks on projects.