Project Communications Management

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In this module, we will cover:

- Key Concepts of Communication management

- Plan Communication Management

- Communication Technology , Method , Model and Channels

- Components of Communication Management Plan

- Manage Communications

- Monitor communications

- Conclusions

Key Concepts of Communication Management

➢ The process of developing an appropriate approach and plan for project communication activities based on the information needs of each stakeholder or group, available organizational assets, and the needs of the project.

➢ **Internal** (within the project) and **external** (customer, vendors, other projects, organizations, the public);

➢ **Formal** (reports, minutes, briefings) and **informal** (emails, memos, ad-hoc discussions)

    ➢ Formal – Verbal

    ➢ Informal – Verbal

    ➢ Formal – Written

    ➢ Informal – Written

➢ **Vertical** (up and down the organization) and **horizontal** (with peers)

➢ **Official** (newsletters, annual report) and **unofficial** (off the record communications)

➢ **Written and oral, and verbal** (voice inflections) and **nonverbal** (body language)

Listen to people's **hearts**, feelings **uncommunicated**, pains **unexpressed**, and complaints not spoken.

Key Concepts of Communication Management

➢ Misunderstandings can be reduced but not eliminated through using the **5Cs of written communications** in composing a traditional (non-social media) written or spoken message

➢ Correct grammar and spelling.
➢ Concise expression and elimination of excess words.
➢ Clear purpose and expression directed to the needs of the reader.
➢ Coherent logical flow of ideas.
➢ Controlling flow of words and ideas.

➢ These should be supported by
  ➢ Active Listening
  ➢ Awareness of cultural differences
  ➢ Identifying and setting stakeholder expectations
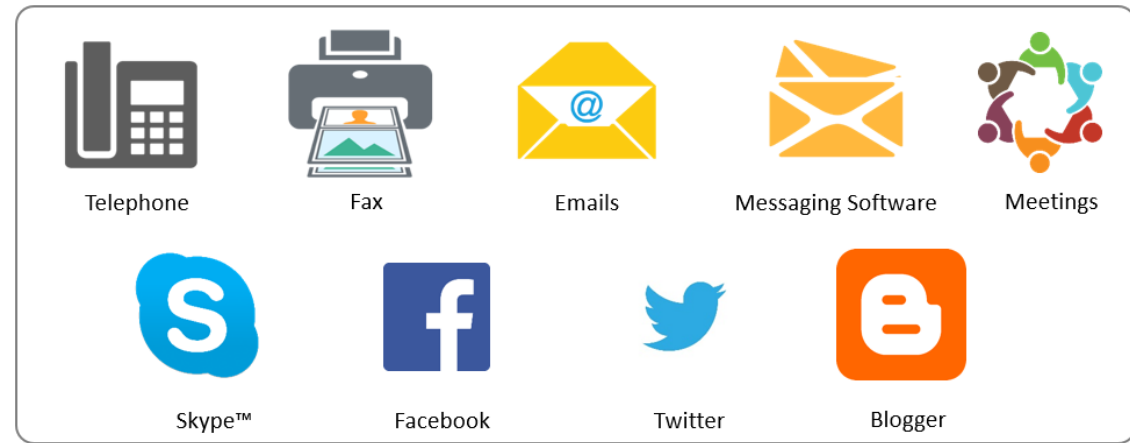 ➢ Enhancement of skills of the team

Plan Communication Management

> Key factors and condensations in Plan Communication Management are

>> Who needs what information, and who is authorized to access that information

>> When they will need the information

>> Where the information should be stored

>> What format the information should be stored in

>> How the information can be retrieved

>> Whether time zone, language barriers, and cross-cultural considerations need to be considered
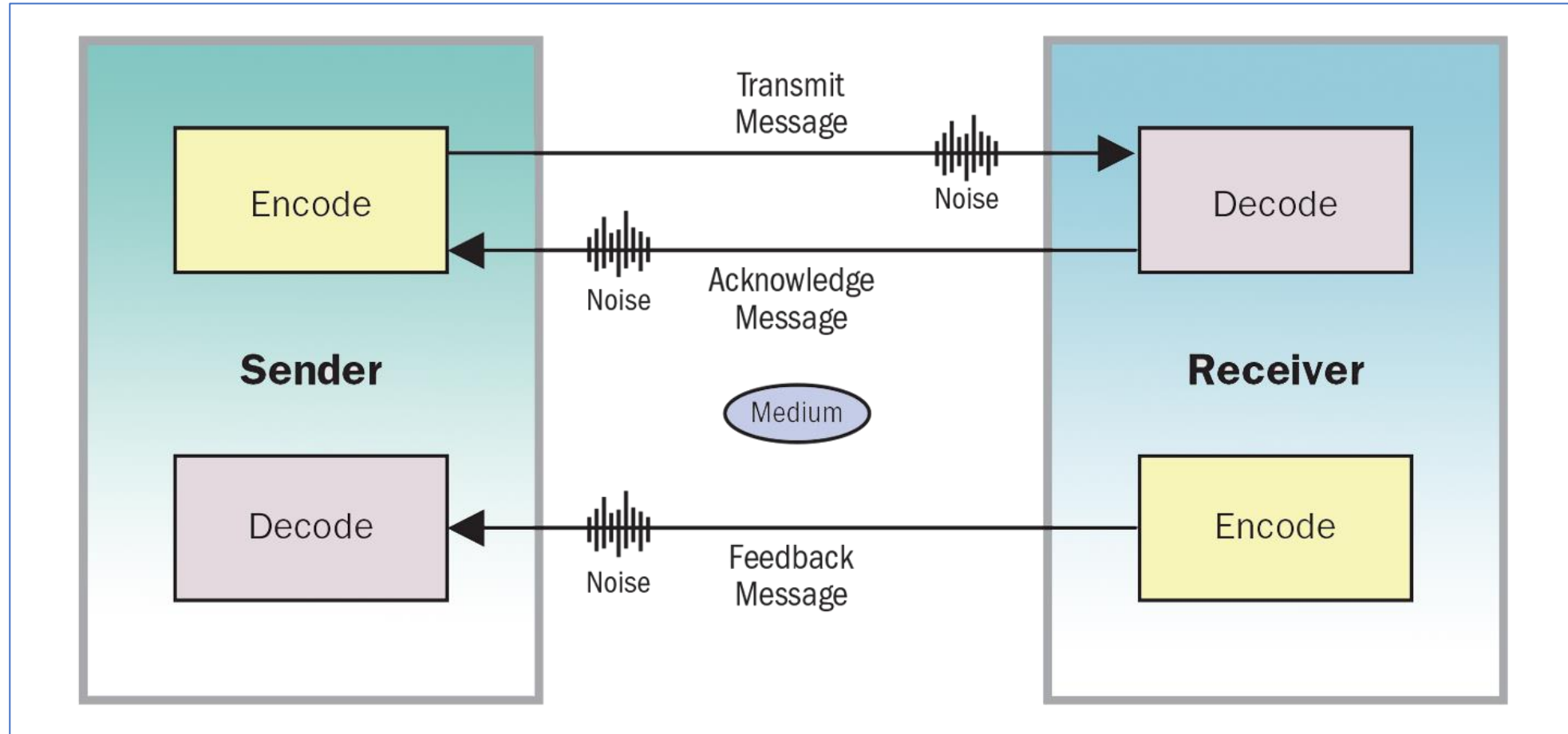
Factors that can affect the choice of communication technology include:

- Urgency of the need for information

- Reliability and Availability of technology

- Ease of Use

- Project environment

- Sensitivity and confidentiality of the information

| Telephone | Fax | Emails | Messaging Software | Meetings |
| Skype™ | Facebook | Twitter | Blogger | |

Communication Model

Communication Method

➢ Interactive communication - most efficient way to ensure a common understanding. Real time exchange information.
  ➢ Examples: meetings, phone calls, instant messaging, video conferencing

➢ Push communication – ensures that the information is distributed but does not ensure that it actually reached or was understood.
  ➢ Examples: letters, memos, reports, emails, faxes, voice mails, blogs, press releases

➢ Pull communication - Used for large volumes of information, or for large audiences, to access the content at their discretion.
  ➢ Examples: intranet sites, e-learning, lessons learned databases, knowledge repositories

Communication Channels

Given that communication takes place between four members of a team, there are six unique channels of communication that exist.

If a team comprises ten stakeholders, how many channels of communication would exist?
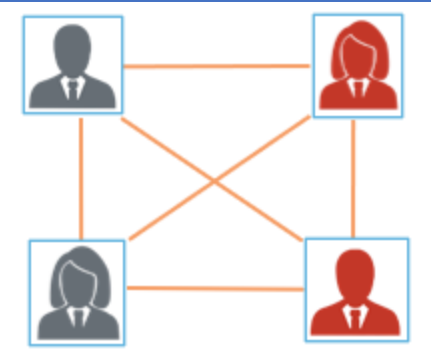
Use the formula:

$$\text{Number of Communication Channels} = n * (n-1)/2$$

In the formula, 'n' is equal to the number of stakeholders.

Components of the Communication Management Plan

- Stakeholder communication requirements;
- Information to be communicated, including language, format, content, and level of detail;
- Escalation processes or Matrix
- Reason for the distribution of that information;
- Timeframe and frequency for the distribution of required information
- Person responsible for communicating the information;
- Person responsible for authorizing release of confidential information;
- Person or groups who will receive the information, including information about their needs, requirements, and
- expectations;
- Resources allocated for communication activities, including time and budget
- Methods or technologies used to convey the information, such as memos, email, press releases, or social media
- Project Documents updates

Manage Communications

➢ The process of ensuring timely and appropriate collection, creation, distribution, storage, retrieval, management, monitoring, and the ultimate disposition of project information. – PMBOK 6th Edition

➢ To ensure efficient and effective communications flow between project stakeholders.

Manage Communications

Sender-receiver models
- Incorporating feedback loops to provide opportunities for interaction/participation and remove barriers to communication.

Choice of media
- When to communicate in writing versus orally, when to prepare an informal memo versus a formal report, and when to communicate face to face versus by e-mail.

Writing style
- Appropriate use of active versus passive voice, sentence structure, and word choice.

Meeting management techniques
- Preparing an agenda and dealing with conflicts and issues

Facilitation techniques
- Building consensus and overcoming obstacles.

Listening techniques
- Listening actively (acknowledging, clarifying, and confirming understanding) and removal of barriers that adversely affect comprehension

Manage Communications

Progress Status Report – Project Status Report

- Hard-copy document management: letters, memos, reports, and press releases
- Electronic communications management: e-mail, fax, voice mail, telephone, video and web conferencing, websites, and web publishing
- Electronic project management tools: web interfaces to scheduling and project management software, meeting and virtual office support software, portals, and collaborative work management tools

- Performance Reporting – Planned vs Actual
  - Analysis of past performance
  - Analysis of project forecasts (including time and cost)
  - Current status of risks and issues
  - Work completed during the period – SPI – CPI.
  - Work to be completed in the next period
  - Summary of changes approved in the period – CRs
  - Other relevant information, which is reviewed and discussed

Communications Barriers/Enhancers

▸ **Communication Barriers:**
  ▸ Distorted Perceptions
  ▸ Distrusted Sources
  ▸ Transmission Errors
  ▸ Noise or Distance
  ▸ Message not Clearly Encoded
  ▸ Saying "it is a bad idea"
  ▸ Hostility
  ▸ Culture

▸ **Communication Enhancers:**
  ▸ Make the Message Relevant for the Receiver
  ▸ Reduce the Message to Its Simplest Terms
  ▸ Organize the Message into a Series of Stages
  ▸ Repeat the Key Points

Control Communications

➢ The process of process of ensuring the information needs of the project and its stakeholders are met.
➢ Customer Satisfaction surveys
➢ Collecting Lessons Learnt
➢ Observations from the team
➢ Review the data in Issue logs
➢ Evaluate the changes in the Stakeholder engagement matrix
➢ Trigger to change the Communication Management plan.
➢ Change Risk Registers / KPIs.

Conclusions

- Communication is a two way process
- Active listening is the key – understand the customer pain areas
- 90 % of time Project Managers are communicating on the project and with stakeholders
- Make use of the best and effective communication Methods / Technologies for your project
- Keep updating the Issue log / Risk Registers / communicate with Stakeholders
- Keep Sending Daily / Weekly / Monthly Quarterly review reports. – Information Distribution.
- Variance Analysis and Early warning signals

Reference Books

- Project Management – The System Approach to Planning, Scheduling, and Controlling - Harold Kerzner

- Project Management – The Managerial Process - Clifford F. Gray, Erik W. Larson, Gautam V. Desai

- PMBOK 6th Edition – www.pmi.org

- EdWel Programs – Richard Perrin