Key Project Roles

Many projects include individuals from several different roles, and each of these individuals may have a different communication style. As a project manager, part of your role will be to ensure that these different roles are able to communicate and collaborate effectively for the life of the project. In this reading, you'll briefly review some common project roles, learn about tools you can use to determine different communication styles, gain insight into some common communication styles, and learn how acknowledging other's communication styles can impact project success.

Review of Project Roles

Successful project managers understand that each role in a project plays a unique and important part in the project's success. To encourage collaboration and communication between stakeholders, it is important for project managers to understand the different responsibilities of each role. Some of the most common roles in projects include:

- **Sponsor**

    The sponsor is the person or group that provides the funding for the project. They are responsible for ensuring that the project aligns with the organization's goals and that it is completed within the allocated budget.

- **Product Owner**

The product owner is responsible for defining the product vision and ensuring that it aligns with the organization's goals. They work closely with the development team to prioritize features and ensure that the product meets the needs of the stakeholders.

- **Scrum Master (Team Facilitator)**

  The scrum master is responsible for ensuring that the development team follows the agile methodology and scrum framework. They facilitate the daily scrum meetings, remove any obstacles that may be blocking progress, and ensure that the team is staying on track. **Note**: PMI refers to a Scrum Master as a Team Facilitator.

- **Business Analyst**

  The business analyst is responsible for analyzing the organization's needs and identifying areas where the project can help to meet those needs. They work closely with the product owner and the development team to ensure that the product meets the business requirements.

- **Core Team Members** The core team members are the individuals who are responsible for completing the project. They include developers, designers, testers, and other specialists who are needed to build and deliver the product.

As a project manager, it is important to ensure that all of these roles are working together effectively, and managing the collaboration and

communication of the different roles involved in a project is crucial to its success.

In a predictive project, the "Project Team" consists of the project manager, core team, and extended team. In an adaptive project, the team consists of the product owner, scrum master, and development team.

How to determine communications styles

People communicate in different ways, and understanding these communication styles is essential for effective collaboration. One way to determine communication styles is by using surveys, such as I-speak, MBTI, Emergenetics, and Insights. Look at each of these surveys and how they can help identify communications styles.

I-Speak Survey

The I-speak survey is a tool that helps individuals understand their communication style by measuring four components: Thinker, Senser, Feeler, and Intuitor.

MBTI

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is a personality assessment tool that helps individuals understand their preferences and tendencies. The tool identifies four different dichotomies that describe a person's preferences, including extraversion vs. introversion, sensing vs. intuition, thinking vs. feeling, and judging vs. perceiving.

Emergenetics

Emergenetics is a tool that helps individuals understand their thinking and behavioral preferences. The survey identifies four different thinking attributes and three behavioral attributes, which can help individuals understand how they communicate and interact with others.

Insights

Insights is a tool that helps individuals understand their communication style and how to communicate effectively with others. The survey identifies four color energies that represent different communication styles: fiery red, sunshine yellow, earth green, and cool blue.
By taking these surveys, individuals can identify their strengths and weaknesses and learn how to adapt their communication style to better communicate with others.

Different types of communication styles

Since understanding the communication styles of team members can help you communicate more effectively with the team and improve collaboration, it is important for you to understand some common communication types. In each of the surveys above, the names of the communication styles differ, but the concepts are similar.

Thinking vs. Feeling

The thinking and feeling dimensions refer to how individuals make decisions and judgments. People who score high on the thinking dimension tend to make decisions based on logical analysis and objective facts. On the other hand, people who score high on the feeling dimension tend to make decisions based on their personal

values and emotional responses. These dimensions can also be known as analytical vs. social.

Sensing vs. Intuiting

The sensing and intuition dimensions refer to how individuals perceive and process information. People who fall on the sensing dimension tend to process information through their five senses and rely on concrete, tangible information. On the other hand, people who are strong intuits tend to process information through patterns and connections and rely on abstract concepts and ideas.

Assertiveness

All of these communication styles surveys measure assertiveness as a component of communication. Assertiveness refers to the degree to which individuals express their opinions and ideas. Some individuals may be more assertive and direct, while others may be more reserved and indirect in their communication style.

Flexibility

Flexibility refers to the degree to which individuals can adjust their communication style to fit the situation and the person they are communicating with. All of these surveys measure flexibility, or versatility, as a component of communication. Some individuals may be more versatile and adaptable in their communication style, while others may be more rigid and inflexible.

It is important to note that no communication style or personality type is better than another. Depending on the project, or situation, some communication styles may be more preferred than others. It is also important to note that these characteristics exist on a spectrum, and many people fall somewhere in between. For example, this can mean

that while typically, a person may be more intuitive, in certain circumstances they may process information using their senses and the data that is available to them.

How to acknowledge other's communication styles for maximum impact

As a project manager, understanding the communication styles of team members can help you communicate more effectively with the team and improve collaboration. The following are some ways that a project manager can use the results from communication styles surveys to communicate more effectively and improve collaboration:

Adjust Your Communication Style

By understanding the communication styles of team members, project managers can adjust their communication style to better fit the preferences of team members. For example, if a stakeholder prefers more data to make a decision, you may need to present more data to reach a decision.

Adapt Your Leadership Style

Different communication styles may require different leadership styles. Some team members may require more detailed instructions, while others may prefer more autonomy. Understanding the communication styles of team members can help project managers adapt their leadership style to better suit the team's needs.

Encourage Open Communication

Encourage open communication by creating an environment where team members feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas, no matter what their communication style is. Project managers can create an inclusive space where team members feel heard and valued. This is especially important for team members who may be less assertive, particularly during meetings. As a project manager, you can invite them to participate during the conversation, or you can encourage them to participate in other ways after the meeting.

Foster Team Collaboration

Understanding the communication styles of team members can also help project managers foster team collaboration. By understanding the strengths and weaknesses of team members, project managers can assign tasks that align with each team member's strengths.

Provide Communication Training

Communication styles surveys can also identify areas where team members may need additional communication training. Project managers can provide training to team members to help them communicate more effectively with each other. Understanding communication styles can also help when you are giving reviews.

Conclusion

When you understand the roles and responsibilities of the people on your projects and their unique communication styles, you can foster effective communication and collaboration. By using communication

style and personality type surveys, you can learn more about the team and your stakeholders and acknowledge those communication preferences for maximum impact on your projects.