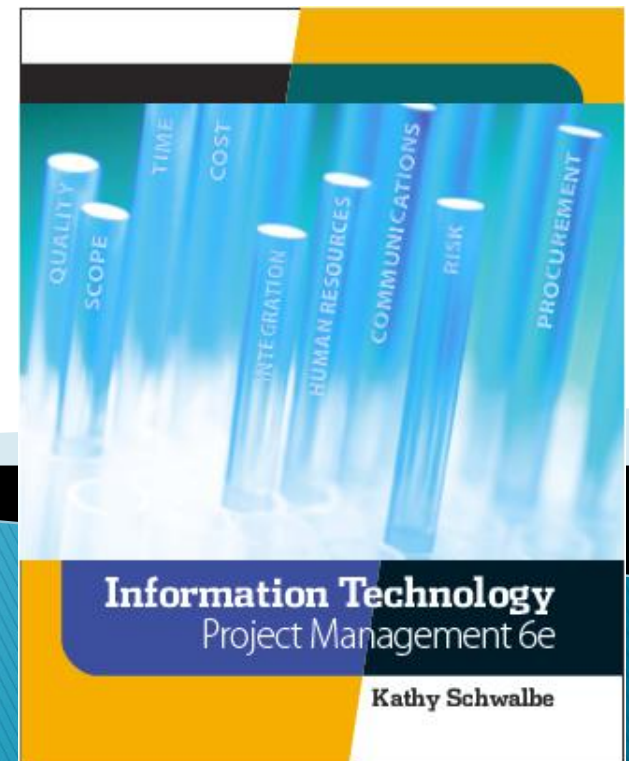


# Chapter 10: Project Communications Management

**Information Technology Project  
Management, Sixth Edition**

Note: See the text itself for full citations.



# Announcements

- ▶ ~~10/27 - Chapter 7, then team breakouts~~
- ▶ ~~11/3 - Chapter 8, then team breakouts~~
- ▶ ~~11/10 - Chapter 9, then team breakouts~~
- ▶ 11/17 - Chapter 10 & 11
- ▶ 11/24 - No Class Happy Thanksgiving
- ▶ 12/1 - Chapter 12
- ▶ 12/8 - Final Demo presented; Final reports due
- ▶ 12/15 - Final Exam

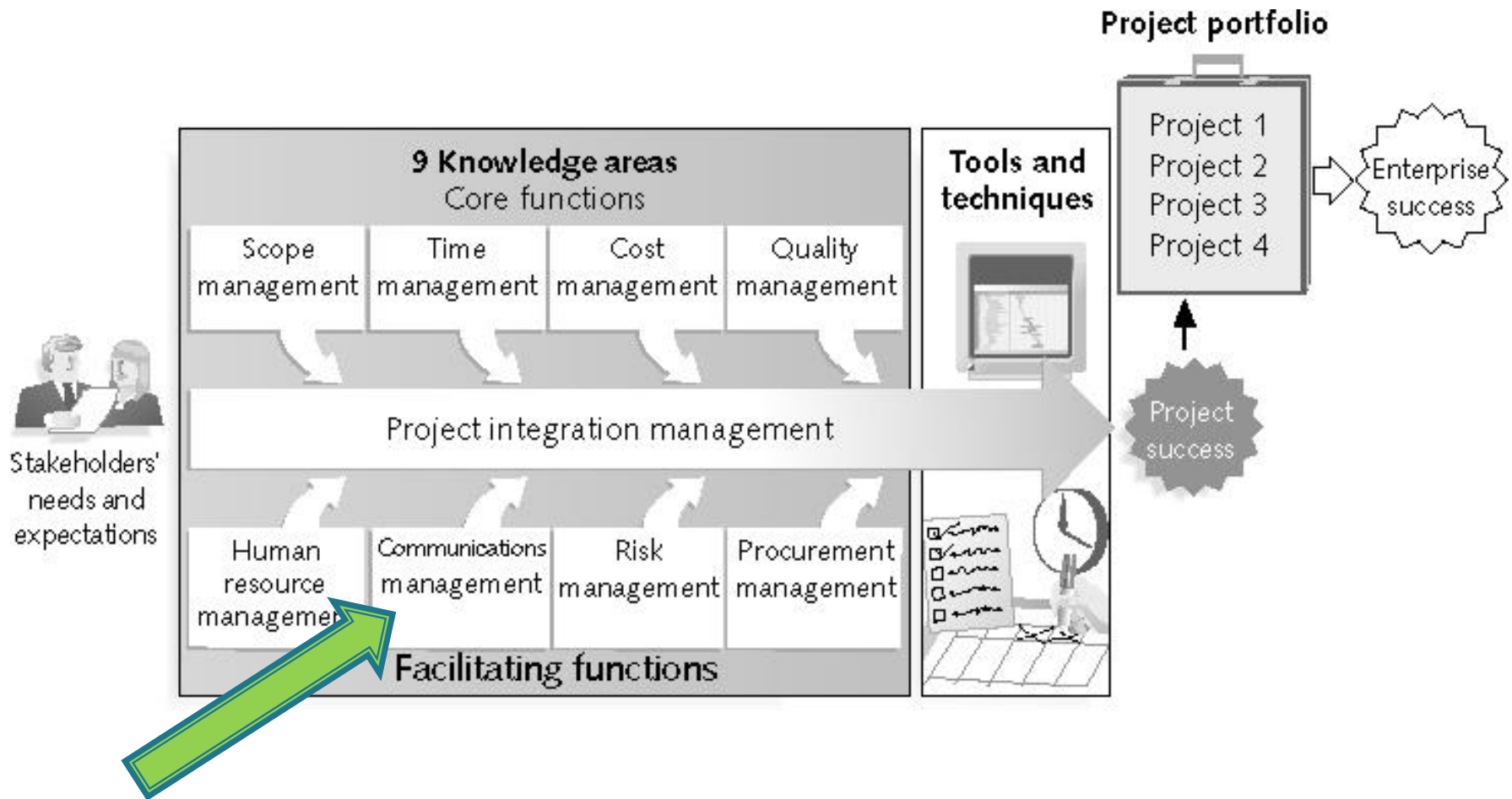
# Learning Objectives

- Understand the importance of good communications in projects
- Explain the elements of project communications planning and how to create a communications management plan
- The greatest threat to many projects is a failure to communicate
- List various methods for improving project communications, such as managing conflicts, running effective meetings, using e-mail etc...

# Importance of Good Communications

- IT Employees get a rep for being poor communicators
- Research shows that IT professionals must be able to communicate effectively to succeed in their positions
- Strong verbal skills are a key factor in career advancement for IT professionals

# REVIEW: Project Management Framework – 9 Knowledge Areas



# REVIEW:(continued)

Knowledge Area	Project Management Process Groups				
	Initiating	Planning	Executing	Monitoring and Controlling	Closing
<i>Project Communications Management</i>	Identify stakeholders	Plan communications	Distribute information, Manage stakeholders expectations	Report performance	
<i>Project Risk Management</i>		Plan risk management, Identify risks, Perform qualitative risk analysis, Perform quantitative risk analysis, Plan risk responses		Monitor and control risks	
<i>Project Procurement Management</i>		Plan procurements	Conduct procurements	Administer procurements	Close procurements



# Figure 10-1. Project Communications Management Summary

## Initiating

Process: **Identify stakeholders**

Outputs: Stakeholder register, stakeholder management strategy

## Planning

Process: **Plan communications**

Outputs: Communications management plan, project document updates

## Executing

Process: **Distribute information**

Outputs: Organizational process assets updates

Process: **Manage stakeholder expectations**

Outputs: Organizational process assets updates, change requests, project management plan updates, project document updates

## Monitoring and Controlling

Process: **Report performance**

Outputs: Performance reports, organizational process assets updates, change requests

Project Start

Project Finish

# Project Communications 5

## Management Processes

- ▶ **Identifying stakeholders:** identifying everyone involved in or affected by the project and determining the best ways to manage relationships with them
- **Planning communications:** determining the information and communications needs of the stakeholders
- **Distributing information:** making needed information available to project stakeholders in a timely manner
- **Managing stakeholder expectations:** managing communications to satisfy the needs and expectations of project stakeholders and to resolve issues
- **Reporting performance:** collecting and disseminating performance information, including status reports, progress measurement, and forecasting



# Identifying Stakeholders

- ▶ Who's your audience!
- ▶ Recall that the ultimate goal of project management is to meet or exceed stakeholder needs and expectations from a project, so you must first identify who your particular project stakeholders are

# Planning Communications

- Every project should include some type of **communications management** plan, a document that guides project communications
- Creating a stakeholder analysis for project communications also aids in communications planning (see Table 10-2 for an example)

# Table 10-2. 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.

# Communications Management Plan Contents

- Stakeholder communications requirements
- Information to be communicated, including format, content, and level of detail
- The people who will receive the information and who will produce it
- Suggested methods or technologies for conveying the information

# Communications Management Plan Contents (continued)

- Frequency of communication
- Escalation procedures for resolving issues
- Revision procedures for updating the communications management plan
- A glossary of common terminology

# Distributing Information

- Getting the *right information* to the *right people* at the *right time* and in a useful format is just as important as developing the information in the first place
- Important considerations include:
  - Will you use technology to distribute?
  - How formal or informal do you need to be and at what times?



# Distributing Information in an Effective and Timely Manner

- Don't bury crucial information
- Don't be afraid to report bad information - (frame it and have mitigation plans)
- Oral communication via meetings and informal talks helps bring important information—good and bad—out into the open
- Visual Aids help explain the issues, data, graphs, options.....

# Other Communication Considerations

- ▶ Keep this in mind! Rarely does the receiver interpret a message exactly as the sender intended
- ▶ Geographic location and cultural background can affect the complexity of project communications
  - Different working hours
  - Language barriers
  - Different cultural norms

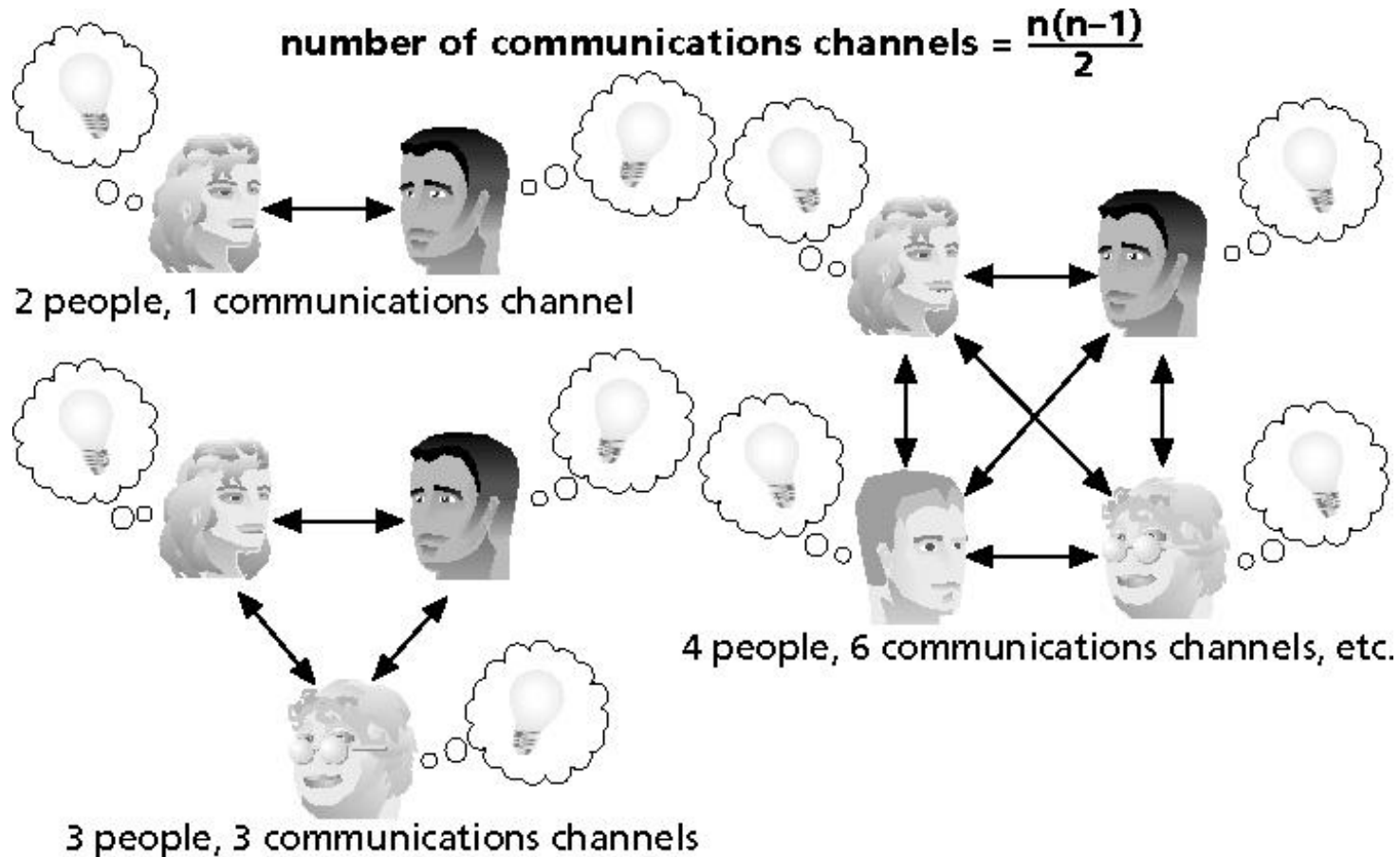
# Determining the Number of Communications Channels

- ▶ 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 =  $\frac{n(n-1)}{2}$

where  $n$  is the number of people involved

# Figure 10-2. The Impact of the Number of People on Communications Channels



# Communicating 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

# Suggestions for Improving Project Communications

- ▶ Manage conflicts effectively
- ▶ Develop better communication skills
- ▶ Run effective meetings
- ▶ Use e-mail and other technologies effectively
- ▶ Use templates for project communications



# Conflict Handling Modes

1. **Confrontation:** directly face a conflict using a problem-solving approach
2. **Compromise:** use a give-and-take approach
3. **Smoothing:** de-emphasize areas of difference and emphasize areas of agreement
4. **Forcing:** the win-lose approach
5. **Withdrawal:** retreat or withdraw from an actual or potential disagreement
6. **Collaborating:** decision makers incorporate different viewpoints and insights to develop consensus and commitment

# Running Effective Meetings

- ▶ Determine if a meeting can be avoided
- ▶ Define the purpose and intended outcome of the 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
- ▶ Build relationships

# Using E-Mail, Instant Messaging, and Collaborative Tools Effectively

- ▶ Make sure that e-mail, instant messaging, or collaborative tools are an appropriate medium for what you want to communicate
- ▶ Be sure to send information to the right people
- ▶ Use meaningful subject lines, limit the content of e-mails 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

# 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 organizations, or use samples from textbooks
- ▶ Recall that research shows that companies that excel in project management make effective use of templates

# Table 10-5. Sample Template for a Monthly Progress Report

---

## **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 to the 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.

---

# Project Web Sites

- Many project teams create a project Web site to store important product documents and other information
- Can create the site using various types of software, such as enterprise project management software



# Figure 10-4. Microsoft Office Enterprise Project Management (EPM) Solution

Project Web Access

Welcome North Mary ▾ | This Site ▾

Office Project Web Access

Home Site Actions ▾

## Project Center

New ▾ | Actions ▾ | Go To ▾ | Settings ▾ | View: Summary ▾

Edit | Edit Project Properties | Build Team | Resource Plan | | |

	Project Name	Project: Schedule Status	Project Cost Status	Start	Finish	%
[-]	<b>Business Drivers.Expand into new markets and segments</b>			12/16/2005	2/26/2007	
	<a href="#">Portable Satellite Radio Product Dev</a>			1/9/2006	2/26/2007	
	<a href="#">Marine Satellite Radio Product Dev</a>	?		1/9/2006	2/26/2007	
	<a href="#">Satellite Products Production Line Installation</a>			3/24/2006	8/29/2006	
	<a href="#">Satellite Radio Product Development Program</a>			12/16/2005	2/26/2007	
	<a href="#">Production Expansion Program</a>			1/2/2006	9/8/2006	
	<a href="#">2132 Hoover Assembly Building Remodel</a>			1/2/2006	9/8/2006	
[-]	<b>Business Drivers.Improve customer satisfaction score</b>			1/1/2007	12/27/2007	
	<a href="#">IT Infrastructure Support 07</a>			1/1/2007	12/27/2007	
[-]	<b>Business Drivers.Improve employee satisfaction</b>			1/23/2006	4/20/2006	
	<a href="#">CBT Implementation TD</a>			1/23/2006	4/20/2006	
[-]	<b>Business Drivers.Increase market share in existing markets</b>			1/9/2005	2/26/2007	
	<a href="#">Boat Show</a>			5/23/2006	8/1/2006	
	<a href="#">Consumer Technology Show</a>			10/10/2006	1/1/2007	
	<a href="#">Business Launch Event</a>			9/22/2006	9/22/2006	

**My Work**

- My Tasks
- My Timesheets
- Issues and Risks

**Projects**

- Project Center
- Proposals and Activities

**Resources**

- Resource Center
- Status Reports

**Reporting**

- Data Analysis

**Approvals**

- Task Updates
- Timesheet
- Administrative Time

**Personal Settings**

**Server Settings**

**Lists**

- Proposal proxy list

**Documents**

- Shared Documents

# Chapter Summary

- ▶ The goal of project communications management is to ensure timely and appropriate generation, collection, dissemination, storage, and disposition of project information
- ▶ Main processes include:
  - Identify stakeholders
  - Plan communications
  - Distribute information
  - Manage stakeholder expectations
  - Report performance