



# Project Communications Management

## Study Notes

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# Points to Note

- Please read Chapter 10 from Project Management Institute, A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge, (*PMBOK® Guide*) – Fourth Edition, Project Management Institute, Inc., 2008 (pages 243-271).
- The study notes explain topics that are important for PMP® exam preparation, and you can expect several questions from these topics.
- It is very important to understand all the concepts discussed in this chapter, so please pay close attention to all the terms used.
- Try to relate the concepts to real life examples.
- After reading the study notes, please answer the chapter test questions in this knowledge area. The chapter questions improve your understanding of the concepts discussed in this study notes.



# What is Project Communications Management?

- Processes required to ensure prompt and appropriate generation, collection, distribution, storage, retrieval, and ultimate disposition of project information.
- Project managers spend most of their time communicating with team members and other project stakeholders — internal (at all organizational levels) or external to the organization.
- The project communications management processes include the following:
  - Identify Stakeholders
  - Plan Communications
  - Distribute Information
  - Manage Stakeholder Expectations
  - Report Performance

Please refer to figure 10-1, *PMBOK® Guide* Fourth Edition, page 244, which provides an overview of the processes included in Project Communications Management.



# Importance of Communications Management

- Project managers spend more than 90% of their time communicating with team members and other project stakeholders — internal (at all organizational levels) or external to the organization.
- The project manager should effectively and efficiently communicate with stakeholders.
- Managing communications is very vital for any project.
- Although the project manager should pay a lot of attention to managing communications, he cannot control all the communications, because there are just too many channels. The formula used to calculate the total number of communications channels is  $n(n-1)/2$ , where  $n$  refers to the number of stakeholders.
- The project manager uses a variety of communication methods to share information among stakeholders. He or she should decide what, how, and when to use each communication method.
- A failure in communication can have a negative impact on the project.



# Identify Stakeholders

- Process to identify all those (people or organizations) impacted by the project and document relevant information on their interests, involvement, and impact on the success of the project.
- The stakeholders are identified early in the project and their levels of interest, expectations, importance, and influence are analyzed as this is critical to project success.
- The identified stakeholders are classified according to their interest, influence, and involvement.
- The important tools and techniques used are stakeholder analysis and expert judgement.
- Stakeholder analysis systematically analyses and gathers quantitative and qualitative information, and determines whose interests should be taken into account throughout the project.
- The outputs of Identify Stakeholders process are: Stakeholder register and stakeholder management strategy
  - Stakeholder register – contains details of identified stakeholders
  - Stakeholder management strategy – defines the approach to increase the support of stakeholders and minimize their negative impacts throughout the entire project life cycle



# Various Forms of Communication and Their Characteristics

Form of Communication	Characteristics	Examples
Written Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Precise</li><li>• Transmitted through the medium of correspondence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project charter, scope statement, project plan, WBS, project status</li><li>• Complex issues</li><li>• Contract related communications</li><li>• Memos</li></ul>
Written Informal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Email, notes, letters, etc.</li><li>• Regular communication with team members</li></ul>
Oral Formal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High degree of flexibility</li><li>• Use the medium of personal contact, group meetings, or telephone</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentations, speeches,</li><li>• Negotiations</li></ul>
Oral Informal		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Conversation with team members</li><li>• Project meetings</li><li>• Break-room or war-room conversations</li></ul>
Non-verbal Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• About 55% of total communication</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facial expressions, hand movements, tone of voice while speaking, etc.</li></ul>

Reference: Project Management - A Systems Approach To Planning, Scheduling, and Controlling, Ninth Edition, Page 273



# Plan Communications

- Determines the information needs of the stakeholders and defines the communication approach to satisfy those needs.
- Responds to the information and communication needs of stakeholders by determining: who needs what information, when they will need it, how and from whom they get it.
- Involves some of the most important factors for project success – Identification of information needs of all stakeholders and determining a suitable means of meeting those needs.
- Is completed usually in the early stages of the project, i.e., while developing project management plan.
- Is linked with enterprise environmental factors, because project's organizational structure impacts the project's communication requirements.
- Communications management plan is the main output (for more details, please refer to *PMBOK® Guide* Fourth Edition, pages 256-257).



# Communications Management Plan

- Communications management plan can be formal or informal, highly detailed or broadly framed – based on project needs.
- This is contained in or is a subsidiary of the project management plan.
- Usually includes:
  - Stakeholder Communication requirements
  - Description of the information to be communicated, including reason for distribution, time frame, frequency, format, content, level of detail, etc.
  - Person responsible for communicating information, for authorizing release of confidential information, and persons going to receive information
  - Technologies/methods used to convey information
  - Resources allotted for communication activities
  - Escalation process, identifying the time frames and management chain
  - Flow charts of the information flow, workflows with possible sequence of authorization, list of reports, and meeting plans, etc.
  - Communication constraints derived from legislation, regulation, technology, etc.
  - Method of updating and refining the communications management plan as project progresses and develops



# Plan Communications - Tools and Techniques

- Communication Requirements Analysis
  - Determines the information needs of the stakeholders
  - Determines who will communicate with whom and who will receive what information
- Communication Technology
  - Is the means by which information is transferred among stakeholders
- Communication Models
  - Demonstrate how the information is transmitted and received between the sender and the receiver
- Communication Methods
  - Are classified as interactive, push, and pull communications

(For more details, please refer to *PMBOK® Guide* Fourth Edition, pages 253-256)



# Distribute Information

- Process to make information available to project stakeholders as planned
- Process includes implementing the communications management plan, as well as responding to unexpected requests for information.
- Tools and Techniques used are:
  - Communications Methods
  - Information Distribution Tools
- Output is Organizational Process Assets Updates.

The organizational process assets that may be updated include:

- Stakeholder notifications
- Project reports
- Project presentations
- Project records
- Feedback from stakeholders
- Lessons learned documentation



# Manage Stakeholder Expectations

- Process to communicate and work with stakeholders to meet their needs and address any issues as and when they occur.
- Benefits:
  - Increases the chances for project success
  - Helps stakeholders understand the benefits and risks associated with the project, thus securing their involvement and support
  - Keeps the project on track by resolving stakeholder issues
  - Project Manager is responsible for stakeholder management
- Tools and Techniques used are:
  - Communication methods
  - Interpersonal skills
  - Management skills
- Outputs are:
  - Organizational process assets updates
  - Change requests
  - Project management plan updates
  - Project document updates



# Report Performance

- Process to collect and distribute performance information, which includes status reports, progress measurements, and forecasts.
- Performance reports (for example: a simple status report) provide performance information on areas such as scope, schedule, cost, and quality.
- Tools and Techniques used are:
  - Variance Analysis
  - Forecasting Methods
  - Communication Methods
  - Reporting Systems
- Outputs are:
  - Performance reports
  - Organizational process assets updates
  - Change requests