Project Communications Management

Knowledge Area and Processes
Manage Stakeholder Expectations

The process of communicating and working with stakeholders to meet their needs and addressing issues as they occur.
Manage Stakeholder Expectations

Actively managing stakeholder expectations:

• Decreases the risks for project failure due to unresolved issues

• Limits disruptions during the project
Manage Stakeholder Expectations
Process Overview

**Inputs**
- Stakeholder register
- Stakeholder management strategy
- Project management plan
- Issue log
- Change log
- Organizational process assets

**Outputs**
- Organizational process assets
- Change requests
- Project management plan updates
- Project document updates

**Tools and Techniques**
- Communication methods
- Interpersonal skills
- Management skills
Communication Methods

Methods are identified for each stakeholder in the communications plan and utilized during stakeholder management.
Identifying Stakeholders and Selecting the Correct Tools

Stakeholder Landscape

- Keep Satisfied
- Manage Closely
- Monitor
- Keep Informed

Influence

Interest

Communication Methods
Identifying Stakeholders and Selecting the Correct Tools

Stakeholder Landscape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder Interest (Low)</td>
<td>Stakeholder Interest (High)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steering Committee, Board Meeting Updates</strong></td>
<td><strong>Issue, Change Logs, Status Meetings</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep Satisfied</td>
<td>Manage Closely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitor</td>
<td>Keep Informed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send Email, Status Reports</td>
<td>In-Person, Video, Email Updates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Communication Methods

Steering Committee, Board Meeting Updates

Issue, Change Logs, Status Meetings

Keep Satisfied

Manage Closely

Monitor

Keep Informed

Send Email, Status Reports

In-Person, Video, Email Updates
Project Managers spend approximately 90% of their time communicating.

Communication Compass

N (Management)

INTERACTIVE

W (Project Team)

INTERACTIVE
(Multi-directional, meetings, calls)

E (Business)

PULL
(Intranet, E-Learning, Kbase)

S (End User)

PUSH (Letters, Press Releases)
Communication Methods

Coordination with Stakeholders

- Make sure you coordinate with the brand manager and the category manager.
- And also the clients, the account execs, the project leaders, strategic planning, facilities management, product managers, marketing, and I.T.
- All I heard was “give up.”
- Let’s meet again in a year.
Stories and Experiences
(Good Vs. Poor Stakeholder Management)

**U.P. System Failure**

**Scenario:**
- 15 Counties with approx. 100 users
- Mainframe application
- Distributed Servers
- WAN (T1 lines and routers)
- Desktop computers for each user
Stories and Experiences
(Good Vs. Poor Stakeholder Management)

U.P. System Failure

Troubleshooting Options:

- Check application on each server
- Check the power to the main server
- Check the computer cords on the desktops
- Test the network for connectivity
Stories and Experiences
(Good Vs. Poor Stakeholder Management)

State - U.P. System Failure

Lessons Learned:

Don’t underestimate the importance of a
good cup of coffee!
Stories and Experiences (Good Vs. Poor Stakeholder Management)

DTE Energy - Status Reporting

Scenario:

- Weekly Status Report was color-coded with RYG
- QA analyst reported on assigned projects weekly
- The PM responsible for the project also provided weekly statuses
- Each week the status reports did not match up (via RYG)
Stories and Experiences
(Good Vs. Poor Stakeholder Management)

DTE Energy - Status Reporting

**Lessons Learned:**

Know your stakeholders and potential disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall Status</th>
<th>Risk/Issues</th>
<th>Schedule</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Forecast / Trend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stories and Experiences
(Good Vs. Poor Stakeholder Management)

GM/ GMAC Separation and Employee Portal

Scenario

- Very large project
- 6 months to complete
- GM system had to be decommissioned
- Several vendors involved
- Lots of stakeholders

(HR, Infrastructure, Security, Architecture, Network, Requirements and Testing teams, Managers, PMO, GM, Business, Employees, Contractors, Helpdesks, Procurement, Operations, Board of Directors, etc.)
**Stories and Experiences**  
*Good Vs. Poor Stakeholder Management*

**Ally Financial**  
**HR Wellness and Wallet Wise Projects**

**Scenario**

- Small projects
- One internal customer
- Many external customers
- 1-4 vendors
- Short timeframe for deployment
- Deadlines coincided with corporate announcements (internal and external)
Communication Methods & Technology Evolution

1980’s
- Memos
- Desktop PC’s
- Meetings
- List Service
- Bulletin Boards
- User Groups

1990’s
- Portable PC’s
- Email
- Meetings
- Phone Conferencing
- Presentation Software

2000’s
- Email
- Laptops
- Meetings
- Video Conferencing
- Project Mgmt Software
- File sharing/networks
- Internet

Present
- Email
- Laptops
- Meetings
- Conferencing (Phone/Video)
- Mobile Devices/Smart Phones
- SMS (Texting)
- Blogging
Interpersonal Skills

- Leadership
- Team Building
- Motivation
- **Communication**
- **Influencing**
- Decision Making
- Political and cultural awareness
- Negotiation
Interpersonal Skills

Communication

- Single biggest reasons for project success or failure

Openness in communication:
- Builds teamwork
- High performance
- Improves relationships
- Creates mutual trust
Interpersonal Skills

**Influencing**

- Strategy of sharing power and getting others to cooperate

- Some guidelines
  - Lead by example
  - Follow through with commitments
  - Use flexible interpersonal style
  - Adjust the style to the audience
Interpersonal Skills

**Influencing**

- Building relationships based on Trust and Respect
- Some characteristics used to determine creditability
  - Truthfulness and Openness
  - Willing to share ideas and information freely
  - Capability and confidence
Interpersonal Skills

Influencing

• Know what type of power you have with the project team:
  • Legitimate
  • Reward
  • Penalty
  • Referent
  • Expert
Interpersonal Skills

Influencing – Expert Power

YESTERDAY I HAD A GREAT MEETING ABOUT PROJECT WOMBAT.

WHAT?!

I’VE BEEN MANAGING THAT PROJECT FOR SIX MONTHS! HOW CAN YOU HAVE A MEETING WITHOUT INVITING ME?!!

HAVE YOU NOTICED THAT MEETINGS GO SMOOTHER WITHOUT ANY KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERTISE?

KINDA.
Interpersonal Skills

Influencing

M – Make
O – Other
P – People
F – Feel
I – Important

M.O.P.F.I.
Management Skills

Management is the act of directing and controlling a group of people to coordinate and harmonize to accomplish goals.

- Presentation skills
- Negotiating
- Writing skills
- Public speaking
Management Skills

Controlling

You can manage your stakeholders more effectively by controlling your communications
## Controlling Communications

### What can you control?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Can Control</th>
<th>Cannot control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your preparedness</td>
<td>Others’ words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your groundedness</td>
<td>Others’ actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your words</td>
<td>Organizational culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your actions</td>
<td>External circumstances</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Management Skills

Directing

• Project managers must be decisive and move forward when directives are necessary

• It’s better to decide an issue and be 10% wrong, than to wait on the last 10% of input that cause schedule delays
Resolving Conflict

How to disagree with demanding people

- Private versus public
- Come prepared with facts
- Avoid criticizing them
- Address their concerns
- Build on positive areas
- Offer solutions
Resolving Conflict

How to Handle Sneak Attacks

- Stay calm
- Be neutral
- Stop and consider things before making commitments
- Lessons learned after the attack to better prepare yourself for next time
- Listen actively
- Show respect
- Stall! This will buy you time to compose an appropriate response
- Breathe!
- Body language will help present confidence
Manage Stakeholder Expectations

Project management proverbs that show you what can go wrong:

1. The most valuable and least used word in a project manager’s vocabulary is “NO”.

2. The conditions attached to a promise are forgotten, and the promise is remembered.

3. What you don’t know hurts you.

4. Project teams detest progress reporting because it vividly demonstrates their lack of progress.

5. Of several possible interpretations of a communication, the least convenient one is the only correct one.

6. No major project is ever installed on time, within budget, with the same staff that started it.
Manage Stakeholder Expectations

Tools and Techniques Summary

Communication Methods
1. Know your audience
2. Consider project scale
3. MBWA (coffee breaks, candy)
4. Short meetings, touch points, checkpoints (15-30 minutes)

Interpersonal Skills
1. Know your own management style
2. Reduce your stress level
3. Divide and conquer

Management Skills
1. Influence, Direct and Control
2. Resolve the issues
3. Don’t be afraid to say “no” or I don’t know.
4. Rely on your past experiences
Happy Stakeholders

Questions ??
References

- Self-promotion for Introverts: The Quiet Guide to Getting Ahead” by Nancy Ancowitz
- Project Management “A Systems Approach to Planning, Scheduling and Controlling by Harold Kerrzner, Ph.D
- Hot Button Marketing – George Eastman, founder of Kodak
- “Push the Emotional Buttons That Get People to Buy” (Book) by Barry Feig