COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

Say the right thing to the right person

Please note that this tutorial is based on the PMBOK Version 6 which were released by PMI in September 2017. This article is revised in January 2020.

The notes below contains ALL the concepts that any PMP aspirants should know, however; should not be limited. It is recommended to refer linked articles for detailed understanding.

Before we proceed, let's take a look at WHY we need Communication Management:

> You are the Project Manager for building HR management tool for PWC with multiple teams in different countries.
>
> The dev team in India had call with product manager in US. The team started working on login module however the product manager strictly told them to avoid that. The dev team claims that they were asked to work on login module itself. There is no proof at either end since it was a verbal call.
>
> The client is requesting a stand-by small feature, on the software but he don't want his

Communication: The process of sending and receiving information through verbal, written or any other channel/medium is known as communication.

	INITIATION	-
	PLANNING	Plan Communication Management
	EXECUTING	Manage Communications
	MONITORING & CONTROLLING	Monitor Communications
	CLOSURE	-

PLAN COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT
Phase: **PLANNING**   Knowledge Area: **COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT**

This process is responsible for creating the plan for strategizing the communication for the project. In order to manage huge projects where there are 100s of resources located in different geographies, it is mandatory to have a proper communication plan.

Types of Communication:
There are major 4 types of communications that are used in a project:

- **Formal Written**: Project Management Plan, Reports etc
- **Formal Verbal**: Scheduled Meeting, Planned Conference
- **Informal Written**: Email, Hand written notes
- **Informal Verbal**: Casual chat, unscheduled meetings

There are multiple reasons for the communication in a project like giving reports to stakeholders, creating and updating the PM plan, presentations, asking functional manager for more resource, sharing poor performance, scheduling party for milestone achievement etc.

There are 5 Cs of the Communication:

- Correct Grammar & Spelling
- Concise
- Clear & Purposeful
- Coherent and Logical
- Controlled Flow

Communication Methods: There are few communication methods that are important methods for the communication:
- **Interactive**: In this communication where two or more people are involved where one person sends info and other person(s) responds like telephonic conversations.
- **Push**: This is one way stream of communication. In this the sender send the info and do not expect a response in return from the recipient. Ex: Blogs, Status Reports, MoM.
- **Pull**: The sender places the info at one place and the receiver needs to retrieve info. For example: PM placing the document at one shared drive and people pulling from there.

Communication Channel: The mathematical formula to calculate the communication channels based on the number of participants is as below:

$$n(n-2)/2 \qquad n = number\ of\ participants$$

MANAGE COMMUNICATION

Phase: **EXECUTING**   Knowledge Area: **COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT**

The communication management also refers that the info flows back and from throughout the project, also the stakeholders would require the updates regularly throughout the project.

Blockers: Anything that causes troubles in communication are known as blockers, there are following type of blockers in the communication:

- Distance between those trying to communicate
- Background Noise
- Culture
- Language

Following are the types of the reporting in the communication:

Status Report: The report that shows where project stands currently w.r.t performance baseline
Progress Report: The report that shows what has been accomplished
Trend Report: This report examines project results over time to see if the performance is improving.
Forecast Report: The report to predict the future performance and project status
Variance Report: The report that compares actual results to baselines
Earned Value: The report that checks for cost, schedule and scope to measure performance
Lessons Learned: Performance reports are used as lessons for future projects

MONITOR COMMUNICATION

Phase: **MONITOR & CONTROL**   Knowledge Area: **COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT**

In order to keep track of how the communication flow is throughout the project the PM needs to continuously monitor the communication. This is done by ensuring that the communication management plan is properly followed.

It is important to check for the decided metrics to be followed, also the project manager needs to use soft and interpersonal skills to enhance the communication.

It is the duty of the Project Management Team to escalate any blockers in the communication and the PM should always ask for the feedback on the reports shared with stakeholders. Following documents can be used for monitoring the communications like PM Plan, Issue Log, Lessons Learned document etc.