



جامعة الجميع الذكية
EVERYONE'S SMART UNIVERSITY

Everyone's Smart University

Assignment 1 (Spring 2021)

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Section

Master

Date

Thursday
18 / 03 / 2021.

Course Code

(PMG506)

Advanced project Management

- **Introduction:**

Project Communications Management includes the processes that are required to ensure timely and appropriate, planning, collection, creation, distribution, storage, retrieval, management, control, monitoring, and the ultimate disposition of project information.

Communication integration (the complexity of communication management) states that the organization messages are to be presented to individuals instead of the “markets” (Juholin, 2009, 25). Communication Strategy in Projects can be a competitive advantage if done in a planned, coherent, and proactive way. Communication strategy is built to ensure that. It is a strategic approach to all communication within the company. It is the plan how to manage communication. It supports the overall company strategy to achieve its objectives.

Strategic communication means delivering the best message, through the right media, and measured that they do relate directly to the organizational and communication-specific goals. It is the difference between doing communications stuff and doing the right communications stuff. (Idea.org, 2012)

There is a difference between communicating strategy and communication strategy. Communication of the corporate strategy is targeted to implement the planned strategy within the organization. It is internal communication either to plan or to execute company strategy. Communication strategy on the other hand is the strategy map drawn to organize internal and external communication. It aids to execute the corporate strategy. (Hämäläinen & Maula, 2004, 11)

Communication is planned in many different levels. Operative planning is developing actions and arrangements when target groups and their needs and wants for interaction are known. This can be different kinds of occasions, campaigns etc. when planning is on operative level. (Juholin, 2001, 54)

The need for changes in strategy arises from the changing environment of the company. Strategy includes both the objectives and the operative guidelines for actions. Controlling the environment means not only adopting to the changes in the environment but also changing and affecting the environment and at basic level, choosing the operational environment. Sometimes the companies do not even notice the change that has already happened, or they notice but do not understand the effect and therefore do not react to change. In the best case the company can foresee the coming changes in advance and utilize the changes or even threats to their benefit. (Kamensky, 2010, 18-19)

Communication strategy should always follow the company level strategy, so if there are changes in the strategy, communication should be reviewed and revised as well. Continuous follow-up of communication can also be a good strategic tool. By following up and evaluating the status of the company communication, the minor clues of environment changes can be sensed earlier.

Communication strategy is defined as the definitions, choices and objectives that are implemented and applied using its communication resources in order for the company to prosper now and in the future. In the strategy the company sets its course aligning its central targets and actions. In order to implement that, different definitions are needed. Communication strategy is a strategic plan for communication. (Juholin, 2009, 69)

Building a communication strategy can be done in many ways. One way is to make it as a project. A project has a beginning and an end; therefore this type of approach is good for communicating something one timer or campaign-like. The project plan could be built as follows: (Hämäläinen & Maula, 2004, 76-77):

- Current state analysis
- Setting targets and defining the project

- Mapping existing information and material and the needs to produce new ones
- Defining target groups
- Defining channels
- Challenges, issues and how to tackle them
- Resources
- Schedule and milestones
- Roles, responsibilities and mandates
- Execution and its steps
- Expected results and means of evaluation
- Project follow-up and documentation
- Quality assurance

In a project-oriented company, the project targets should support the achievement of the company targets. The difficulty to create a Communication Strategy in Projects – High Technology Sector Viewpoint 37 communication strategy for projects is the ever-changing nature of the environment. In high technology sector the life cycle of projects is relatively short, and schedules are tight. Despite the constant pressure communication planning should be well-planned and managed.

Juholin (2009) shares the same basic concepts of building a communication strategy but divides the process into four areas: basic definitions, communication strategy planning, communication plan and follow-up. The end results should reflect the change towards the company objectives.

- **Literature Review and Conceptual framework:**

The study is built together by binding theory and empirics into one rope under the theoretical framework heading. The research questions have been defined as:

1. What are special features of communication in high technology project management?
2. What kind of communication strategy is most efficient in projects?
3. How can communication strategy execution be followed up in projects?

The objectives are defined as:

- to define the process of communication
- to define special features of project communication
- to define what kind of strategy works best in projects
- to define how to measure and improve execution of communication strategy in projects

This study follows inductive, hermeneutical circle where understanding is gained through gathering information, processing it in order to refine it into a new synthesis. Figure 1 demonstrates the different aspect of information processing. (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2010)

- **Methodology:**

This study is based on ontological and epistemological metatheory –frame in interpretative-hermeneutical paradigm. Qualitative methodology has been selected to be used because of the nature of the research. Communication and its

implications to project management cannot be measured with only numbers, therefore qualitative approach is selected. To be more specific interviews are used as method to collect information. Reading Identifying Selecting Refining Sorting Searching Acquiring

The advantage of this kind of qualitative research is that it allows a focus on a specified phenomenon or research problem (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001). Since project management and communication cannot be taken out of their context as they are clearly intertwined, qualitative method is applicable to study implications of both together.

- **Results and Discussion:**

The importance of communication in projects is indisputable. A complex project needs a functional, clear communication plan and capable team to execute it. The plan however should be flexible as the nature of projects is iterative it may cause changes for communication needs also. Product development project usually progress in sprints (Whitaker, 2009, 269-270).

Communication has three main functions: connecting, informing, and engaging (Boone, 2000, 7). In a project environment integrating could be added as a fourth element. In the end projects are about integrating different competencies, knowledge, organizations, technologies, networks etc. working together in order to create something bigger and greater than the sum of the parts equals to. Project manager is in leadership position what comes to integrating: he/she needs to see the project as an entity and find ways how everyone involved can utilize their own strengths and core competencies.

Project managers' tasks are to make decisions concerning the project, help in problems solving and otherwise be on top of all issues in the project. Project's managers key responsibilities can be drawn down to project coordination, problem solving, leading people and making decisions as presented in figure 20 (Siikaluoma, 2012, 43

Communication is not rocket science; it is an everyday life tool. In a high technology project environment where movements are fast and showy, the importance of keeping up the pace is essential: meaning that communication must also be efficient and flexible in order to allow different specialists to work their magic. Communication is the link between modules; if it breaks the results are most probably not what they should be. Taking care of small things like giving proper instructions to everyone despite their high degrees can save someone a lot trouble and act as motivator to input information to be shared.

- **References:**

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- Idea.org (2012). What is Strategic Communications. Available at <http://www.idea.org/blog/2011/03/16/what-is-strategic-communications>. Accessed 18.1.2012
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