

Chapter

9

Global Project Management

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Global Project Management

Lecture 9

Knowledge Sharing

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The stakeholder commitment framework

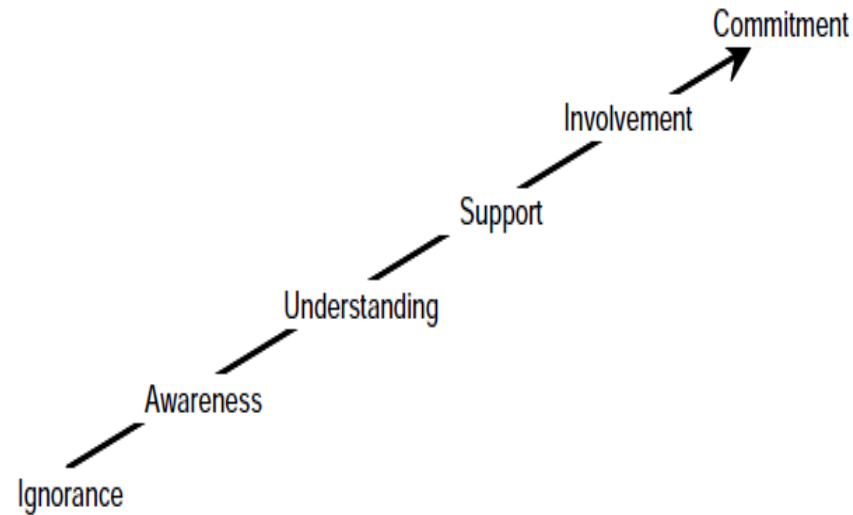


Figure 6.1 Levels of stakeholders' commitment (adapted from McElroy and Mills)

Identifying the stakeholders' requirements

Stakeholder Information	SP Sponsor	SC Steering committee	PM Project Manager	PC Project Coordinators	TM Team Members	C Customers	S Suppliers	P Partners
Project status	Informed by PM	Informed by PM	Prepare with PC	Prepare with PM	Informed by PM	Partially informed by PM (select relevant information)	Partially informed by PM (select relevant information)	Partially informed by PM (select relevant information)
Work package status	n/a	n/a	Informed by PC	Prepare with TM, inform PM	Prepare with PC	n/a	n/a	n/a
Project organization	Provide input to PM & Approve	Provide input to PM & Approve	Prepare with PC Review with SP & SC	Prepare with PM	Informed by PM	Partially informed by PM (exclude confidential information)	Partially informed by PM (exclude confidential information)	Partially informed by PM (exclude confidential information)
Logistics	Informed by PM	Informed by PM	Prepare with PC	Prepare with PM	Informed by PM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Standards and Templates	n/a	n/a	Prepare with PC	Prepare with PM	Informed by PM	n/a	n/a	n/a
Project Management Plan	Informed by PM	Informed by PM	Prepare with PC	Prepare with PM	Prepare with PM	Partially informed by PM (exclude confidential information)	Partially informed by PM (exclude confidential information)	Partially informed by PM (exclude confidential information)

Figure 8.2 Example of a communication requirements matrix

Distributing information to the global stakeholders

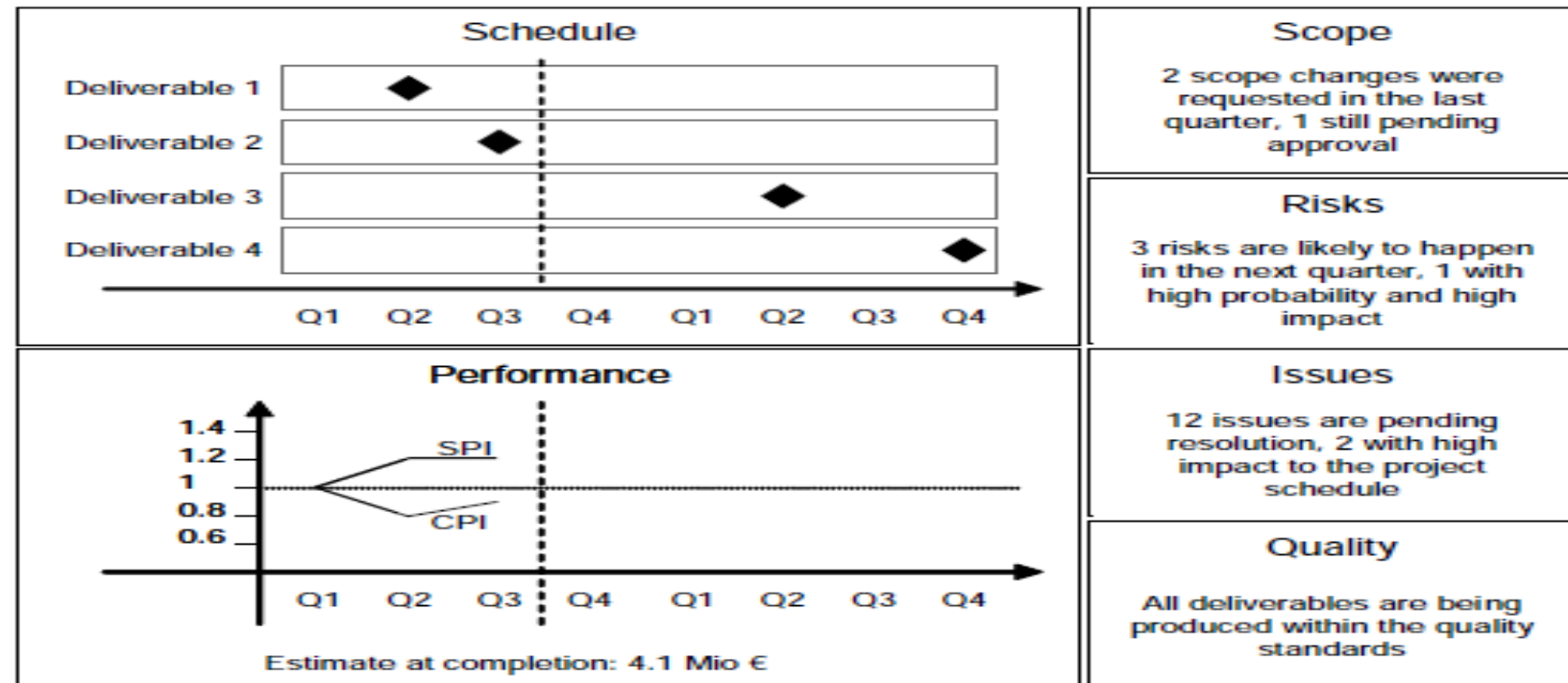
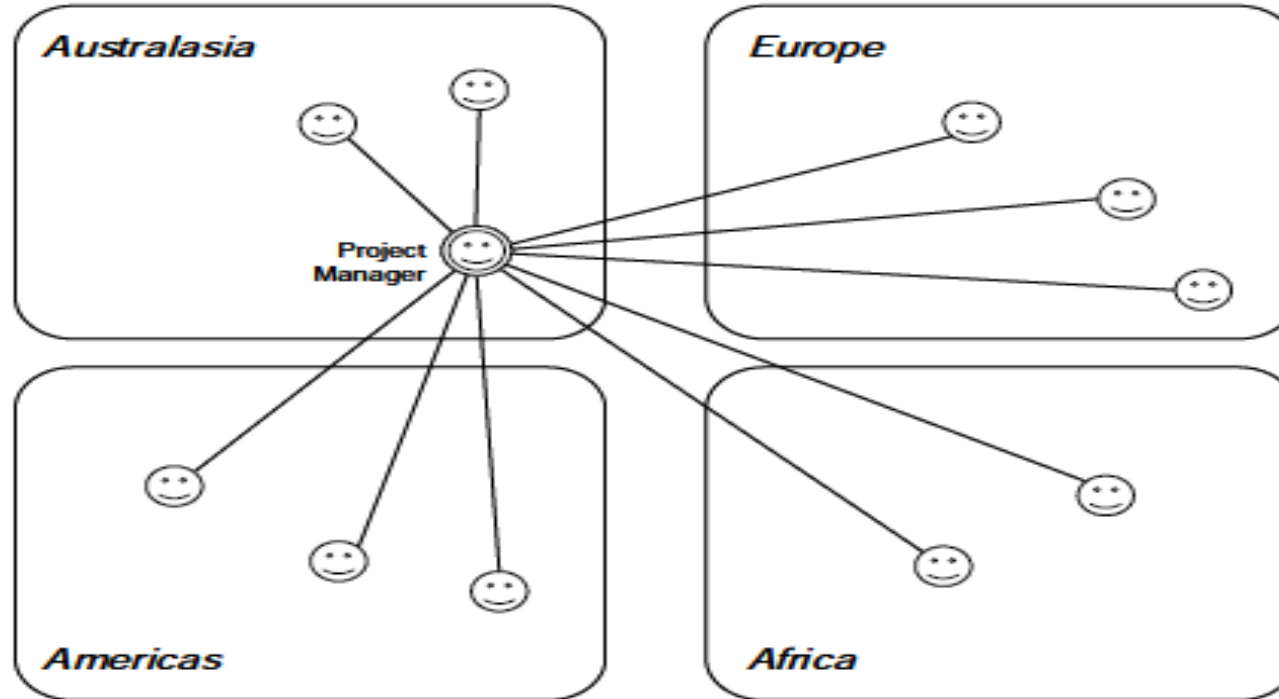


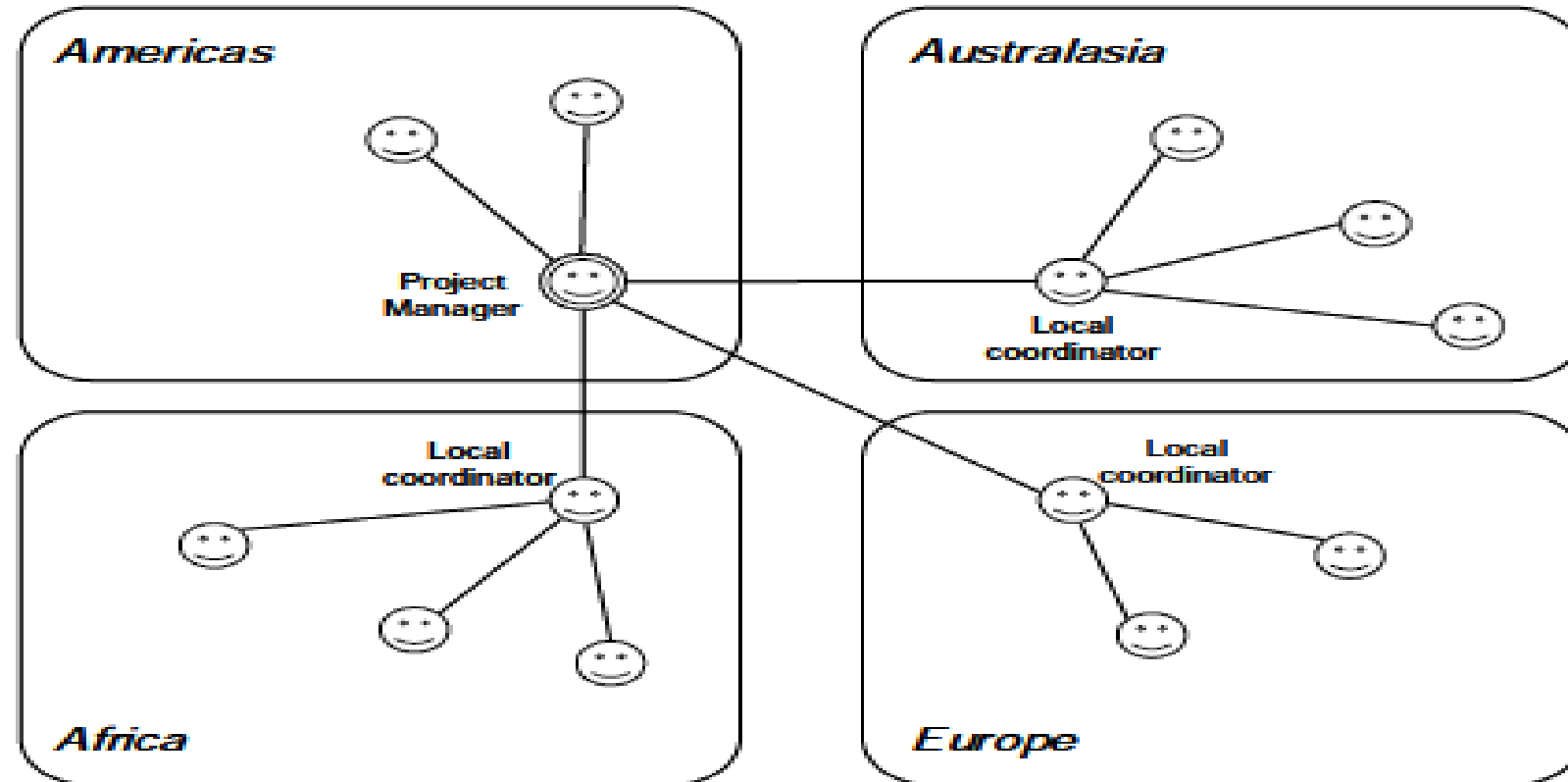
Figure 9.1 Example of a project dashboard – main page

Centralized project management



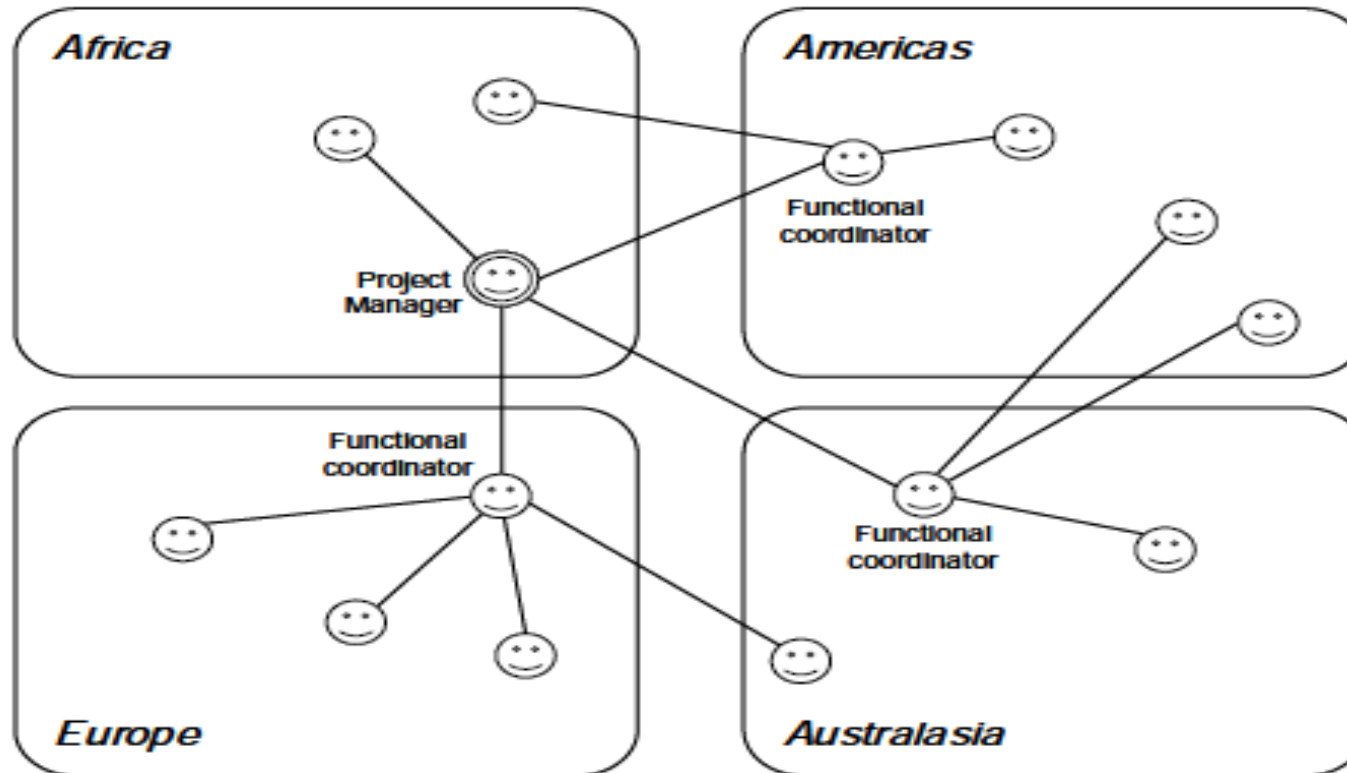
1 Example of centralised structure

Distributed project management, with local coordinators



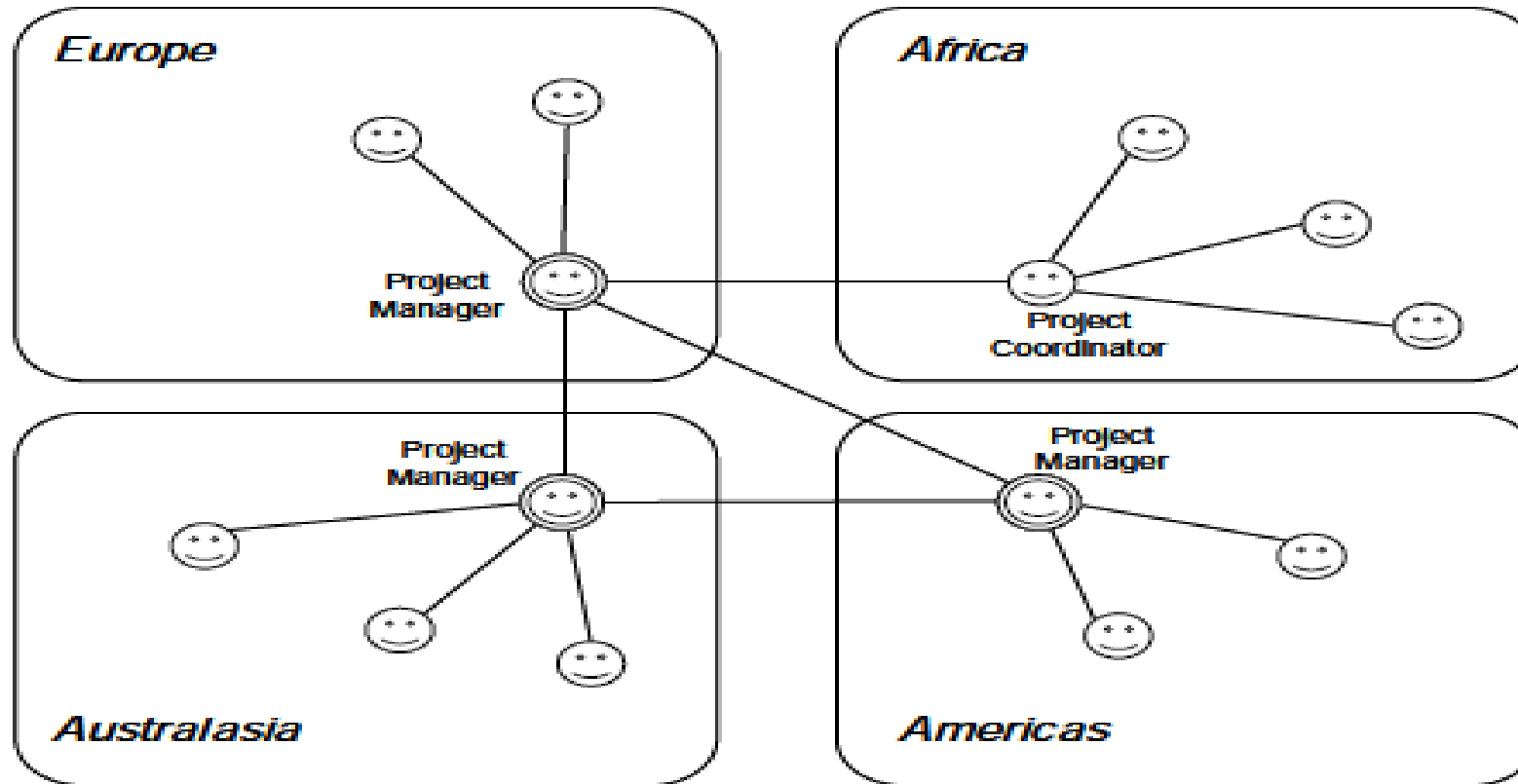
2 Example of distributed structure

Distributed project management, with functional coordinators



.3 Example of distributed-functional structure

Round-the-clock project management



1.4 Example of round-the-clock structure

Culture awareness – the team members that are familiar with the organizational and country cultures involved in the project may also have fewer requirements for training and coaching, and are less likely to generate conflicts. They tend to feel more comfortable than other people when working with a mix of different ethics, standards, policies or working practices.

Defining project offices

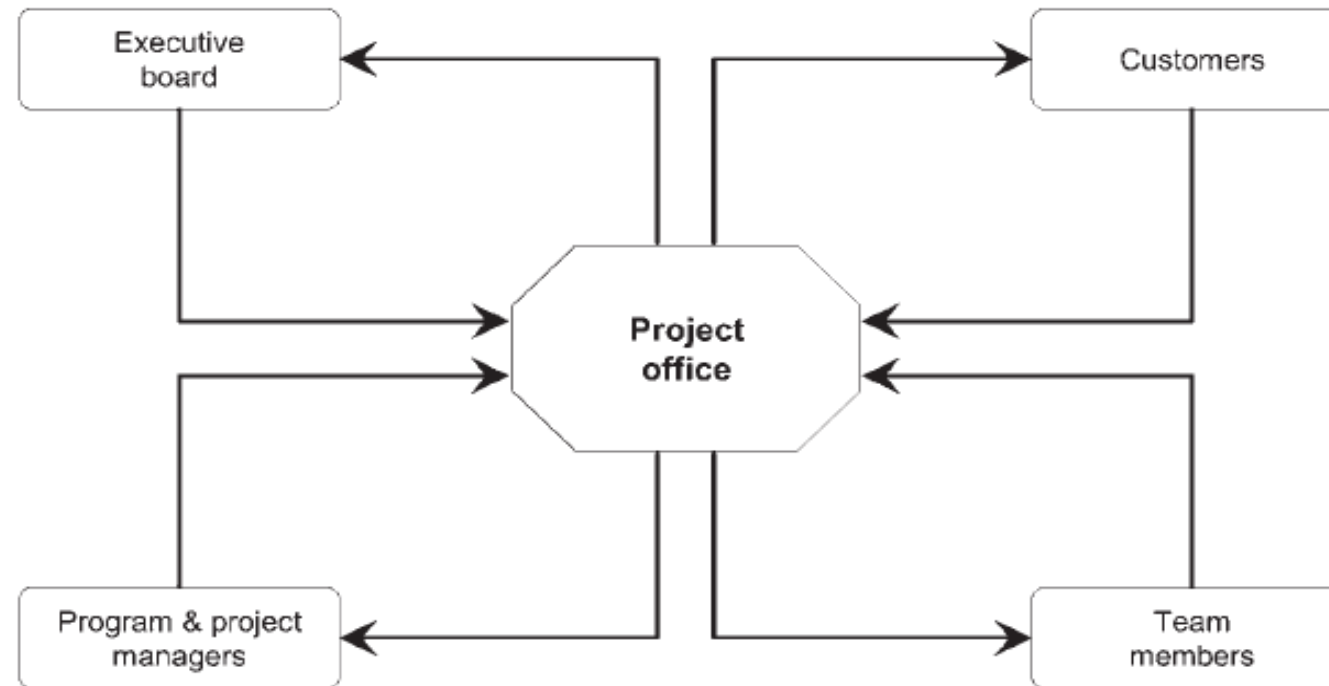


Figure 13.1 Project office and the stakeholders

Global Collaborative Networks

Many organisations form strategic alliances and partnerships to access specific markets, to obtain capital resources or sponsorship, or to share R&D and manufacturing skills. Very often, the relationship is sealed around a group of programs or projects. A seamless exchange of information is essential for these initiatives to be successful.

Collaborative networks: a project-centred approach

Castells (2000) suggests that organisations are evolving from multinational enterprises to international networks, which include large corporations and a series of small and medium business, each in a different country and organizational culture, all with a shared mission to be achieved within a limited timeframe.

Collaborative networks: a project-centred approach

These networks can aggregate the main suppliers, producers and customers with their sub-contractors and service providers, and are strongly reliant on the cooperation among different individuals and on the communication between the computer networks.

Knowledge Sharing

Collaborative environments need to be available on global projects to facilitate the sharing of information about the project and the products. The project manager can create the project management plan with the participation of team members in all locations, and keep all its documents in a shared workspace.

Knowledge Sharing

The team members can organize review cycles for design documents, keeping different versions and a history of the changes. Project-related information, like the global project binder, can be maintained in shared tables or spreadsheets, allowing the owners of tasks, issues and risks to keep their information accurate in real time and accessible to all stakeholders.

Knowledge Sharing

Another form of collaboration goes beyond formal documentation, by collecting knowledge in an informal manner, through discussion groups, web links and project announcements.

Knowledge Sharing

Originated from the BBS (Bulletin Board Systems) and newsgroups, and using a similar language and structure to chat rooms, discussion boards have the advantage of keeping discussions stored in a shared place and allowing the stakeholders to search for information at any time during the project. Global project offices can establish procedures to archive the knowledge base so that it can serve as a basis for future projects.

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

International companies need to consider different software solutions to satisfy all their knowledge-sharing requirements and the main objective of the evaluation phase is to guarantee a good integration level among the different collaborative tools, which might also be combined with e-mail, web conferencing and calendar systems.

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

Proprietary software can force companies to use a complete suite of tools from the same supplier and sometimes these are not the best options available. Global organisations might consider the use of open solutions for better integration and a wider choice of complementary packages.

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

The first requirement for knowledge-sharing suites is a good system for document collaboration, which allows different team members to checkout, update documents, submit them for review, and publish a final version. The software must recognise all document types: text editors, spreadsheets, presentations, design schemas, program sources, blueprints and other files applicable to the different projects in your company.

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

The usual knowledge management activities must be performed as easily in the knowledge-sharing software as in older file sharing systems: that is, to look for a specific document, to edit it and to save a new version. The creation of historic versions, back-ups, archiving and indexing must be performed smoothly by the software with little or no human intervention. Complex or time-consuming activities may inhibit the use of the collaborative environment.

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

A second requirement for knowledge-sharing software is the management of discussion groups. The project office or project manager can create various groups, according to the categories of information and the types of stakeholders exchanging information (for example, environmental aspects, engineering standards, technical discussions, marketing strategies, sales forecasts, and so on).

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

The project team members can create discussion threads, one for every topic of interest: technical or environmental discussions, suggestions to improve the quality or reduce the cost of the project deliverables, informal conversations that may reveal potential risks, opportunities or issues.

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

When analysing the efficiency of the tool to manage the discussions, think about how intuitive it would be for any project stakeholders to write new discussion threads, to be informed about threads created by other people, to detect which replies were given to specific threads and to search for information in all threads.

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

Project announcements are an additional and important feature, since global project teams cannot have wallboards to share personal events (like birthdays and marriages), project matters (new project members, important milestones, decisions, changes), external events that may affect the project

Evaluating technologies for knowledge sharing

(press releases, environmental reports, changes in the organizational structure) and project metrics (for example, important deviations on cost, schedule, quality and customer satisfaction). The announcement board must allow the posting of text, pictures and hyperlinks to project documents with detailed information on the topics being published.

Evaluating the existing knowledge-sharing solutions

When the organization or project already deploys knowledge-sharing solutions for collaboration among distant team members, a survey (see example in Table below) can identify the simplicity of use and compliance with the requirements identified in the section above. In this survey, you can confirm if other team members share your impression, by comparing the results with the mind map.

Table 19.1 Survey to identify efficiency of existing knowledge sharing suites

Question	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
It is always easy and quick to publish information about the project				
It is always easy and quick to create and update the project documents				
It is always easy and quick to find the project documents and information				
All team members consistently publish up-to-date information and documents about the project tasks under their responsibility				
I know how to instruct a new colleague to obtain access to the knowledge-sharing system				
I consider it important to share personal events, external information and the evolution of the project metrics with the project team members and other stakeholders				
I find it easy to share personal events, external information and the evolution of the project metrics with the project team members and other stakeholders, using the knowledge-sharing suite				
General comments about the knowledge-sharing suite				
Suggestions on how to improve the knowledge-sharing technology				

Implementing a new knowledge-sharing solution

After all the different components are selected, validated and integrated, a pilot implementation is recommended to identify how the stakeholders are using the different functions and to determine the best approach to deploy the knowledge-sharing suite into all global projects.



Implementing a new knowledge-sharing solution

This approach is also recommended when some components are being added or updated in the existing knowledge-sharing suite. At the end of the pilot phase, the evaluation survey can be announced to all the participants, identifying if the implementation can proceed to other projects or locations in the same organization, or even extended to partner companies. Depending on the survey results, a second pilot phase can be organized to correct important gaps between the requirements and the solution in place.



Defining procedures for knowledge-sharing set-up

All global project stakeholders must know how to prepare their computers to access the knowledge-sharing systems (for example, by installing client software or plug-ins), how to obtain access to the applications (for example, by requesting user identifications, passwords or access rights) and how to use all the basic knowledge-sharing functions.



Defining procedures for knowledge-sharing set-up

The structure of the documentation must show how the various applications are integrated, how to publish the information and how to search for it. You can use the checklist in Table below opposite to produce and publish the documentation to help all project stakeholders accessing and using the knowledge-sharing suite.



Table 19.2 Checklist: documentation and procedures for knowledge sharing

	Information available	In electronic format	Published	Accessible by all locations
How to request access to the knowledge-sharing solution				
How to request installation of desktop software required by the knowledge-sharing solution				
How to access the knowledge-sharing software				
How to find and publish project information				
How to find and publish project documents				
How to create a new discussion group				
How to post new threads or topics on the discussion groups				
How to search for information on the discussion groups				
How to use pictures or hyperlinks in the project announcements				
How to lock files, to avoid other people changing them at the same time as you				
How to create online lists and tables that allow the update of information items by various team members at the same time				
How to finish the session				
How to request support				

Evaluating the implementation

Some time after implementing the new technology components, preparing and publishing the documentation and announcing the new solution to all project team members, you may evaluate the improvements and detect if corrections are required by deploying the same assessment survey (Table above) and comparing the new results with the initial findings.

Evaluating the implementation

A new implementation cycle can start to correct problems or to improve the quality of the knowledge-sharing tools and the documentation.

Chapter

9

Resources:

Global Project Management

Communication, Collaboration and Management Across Borders

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