

College of Management

Project Communications

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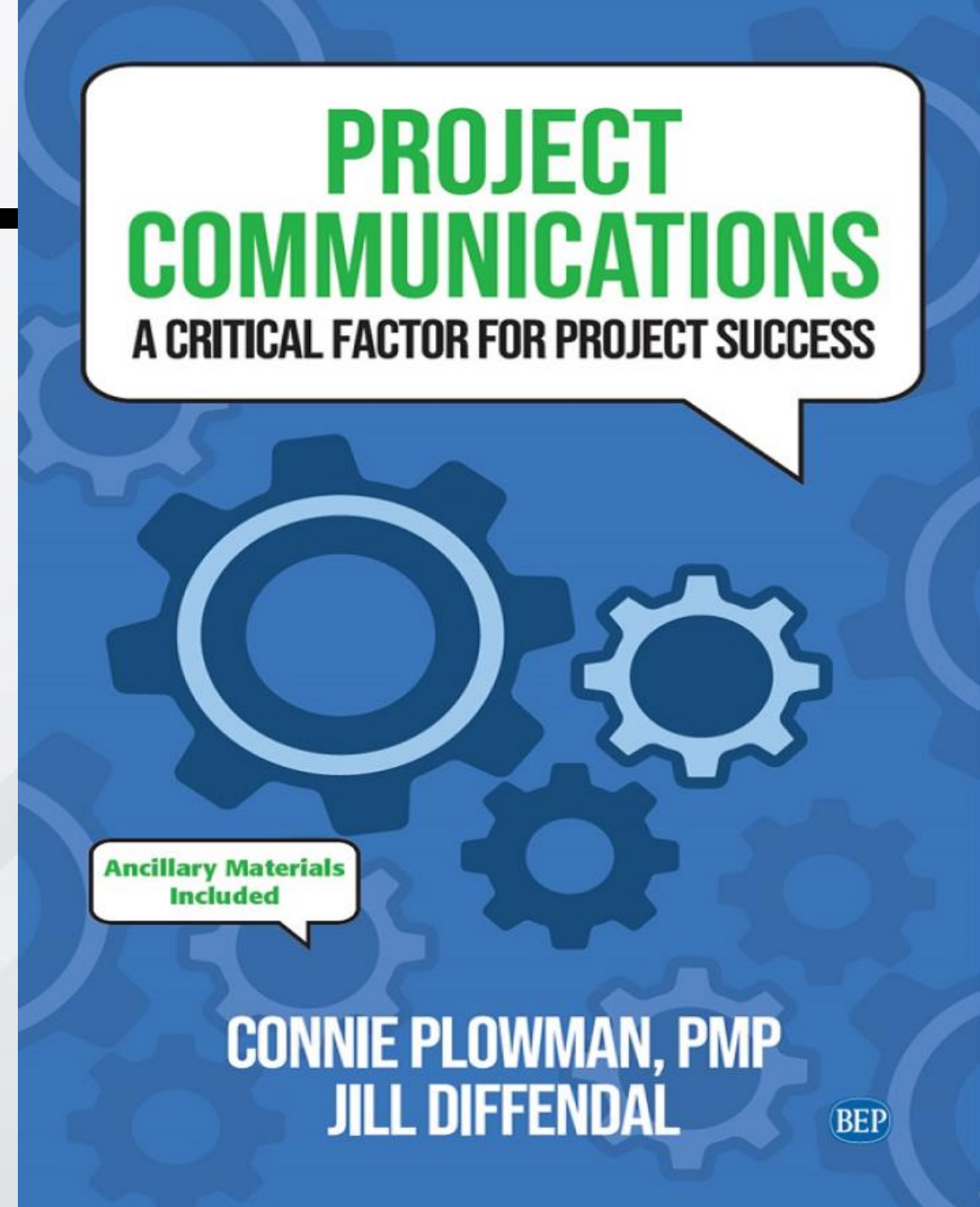
PMG 112

Lecture 06



Reference Book:

- **Ch1:** Introduction.
- **Ch2:** Exploring Communication Theories.
- **Ch3:** Knowing Your Audience.
- **Ch4:** Starting with the Basics.
- **Ch5:** Planning Project Communications.
- **Ch6:** Managing and Monitoring Project Communications.
- **Ch7:** Using Project Communication Tools.
- **Ch8:** Communicating Change.
- **Ch9:** Managing Conflict through Communication.
- **Ch10:** Closing.



Chapter 6: Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

The purpose of this chapter is to help you:

- Build key skills needed to address stakeholders' practical needs and personal needs when communicating on projects—including a five-step approach.
- Measure the effectiveness of your project communications.



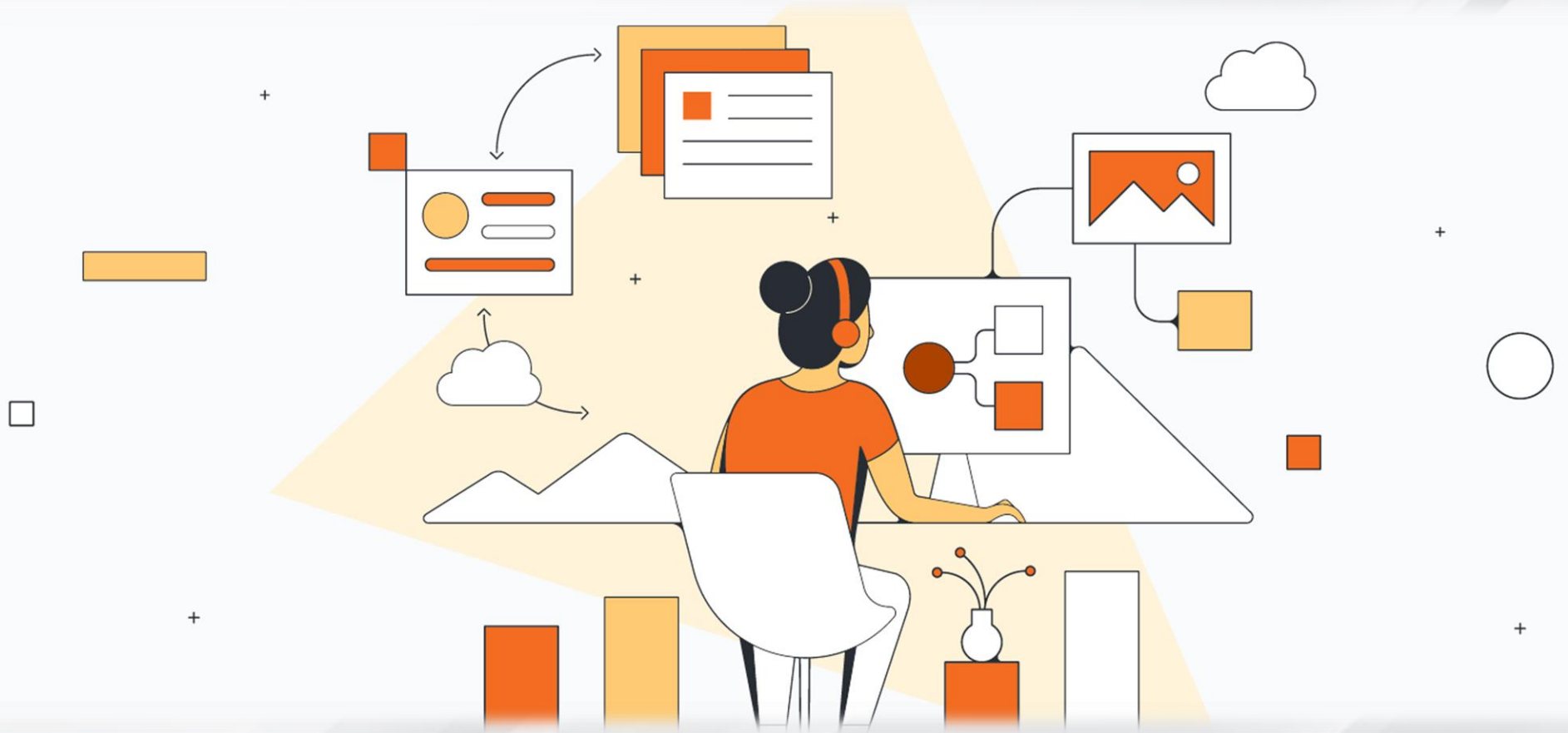
Chapter 6: Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

The purpose of this chapter is to help you:

- Understand the importance of incorporating feedback loops.
- Examine lessons learned and retrospectives.
- Put it into practice: Managing and monitoring communications in traditional, agile, and virtual project teams.



Managing and Monitoring Project Communications



The great enemy of communication, we find, is the illusion of it.

—William H. Whyte, journalist and author

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

- **Managing communications** is “the process of ensuring timely and appropriate collection, creation, distribution, storage, retrieval, management, monitoring, and the ultimate disposition of Project information?,
- **Managing communications** happens in the executing process group. This is when work is being done on the project. This is also the time when the project team is following their project communications management plan outlined in Chapter 5,



Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Why is managing communications important?

1. **Among the project team**, we need to make sure that everyone who is working on the project is kept informed—that they have the information they need for successful completion of their assigned tasks and deliverables.
2. **Outside the project team**, we need to ensure that stakeholders are also well informed—that they have the information they need to stay up-to-date and continue to support the project or move from being unaware or resisting the project to a more supportive position.

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring communications:

- While we may not be able to control everything – like when and how stakeholders communicate—we can control our **reaction, attitude, approach, and response** to their communications.
- During monitoring communications, **continuous oversight** is necessary to be constantly aware of the communication occurring throughout the project, whether it is communicating about project status, activities, or results or keeping stakeholders current with project information.

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring communications:

- Over the life of the project, we should also seek opportunities to make improvements in our communications. This can be done through **feedback, surveys, and ongoing conversations**.
- Your project communications management plan should be **revisited regularly and revised as needed**.
- When the team receives input on implementing more effective ways of communicating with stakeholders, the project communications management plan should be **updated** to reflect this improved way of working.

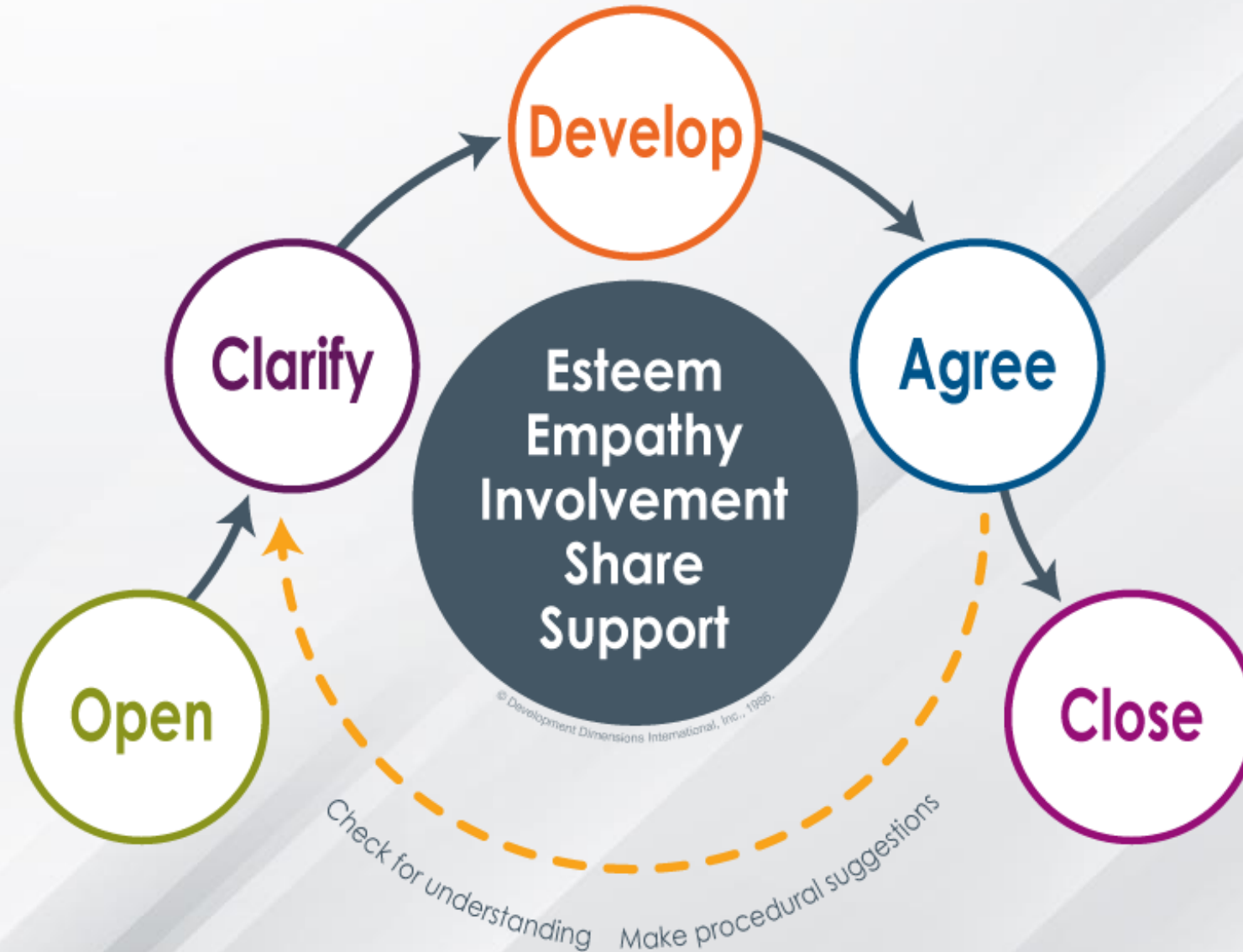
Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Managing and Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring communications:

- And finally, we need to deliver project information in a way that **influences and inspires**, **reduces uncertainty** and **builds trust**, and that grows the project knowledge and support of individuals and groups interested in our project at all levels, both inside and outside the organization.

Managing Project Communications



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

- From a broad perspective, managing communications on a project means ensuring that the project communications management plan is being executed. In practice, managing communications starts with managing your conversations with all stakeholders.

Ideally, your interactions end by accomplishing at least one of the following:

1. Providing information needed to support the role of the person/group or their project needs
2. Reducing their uncertainty about the project, their role, or others involved in the project.
3. Building their trust in the project's goals, plan, and participants.

Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

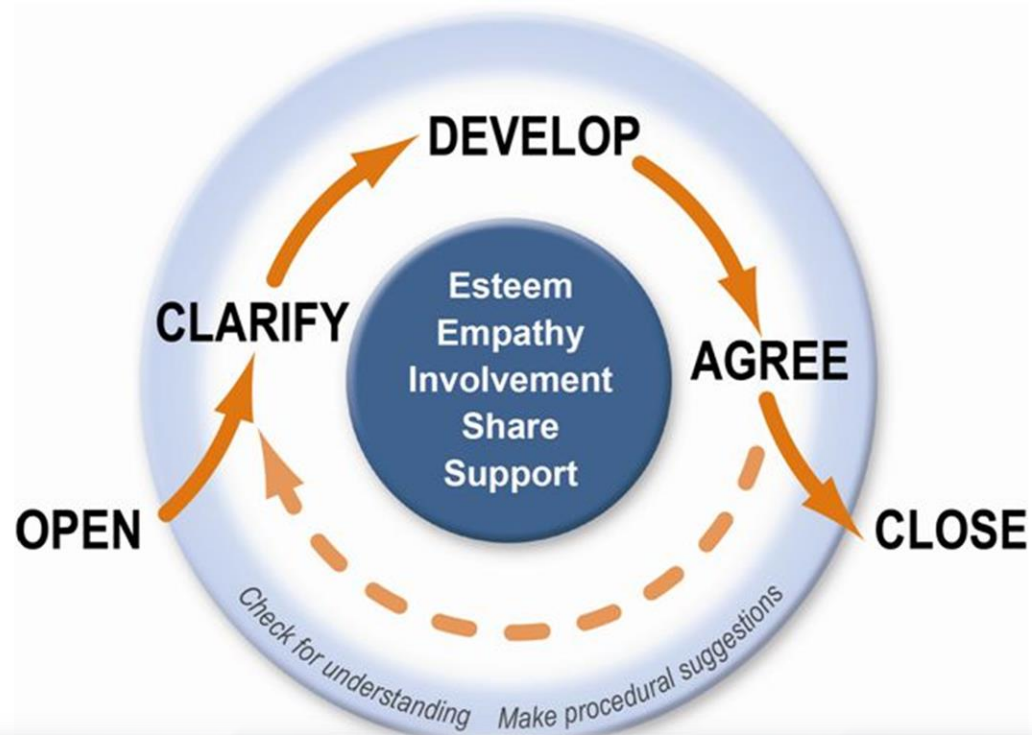
- Team members are focused on getting the work done to achieve the project objective (**practical needs**) and to know that they are valued contributors and integral key members to the project team (**personal needs**).
- The skills used to meet the personal and practical needs in our communications are called **“Interaction Essentials.”**

Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Interaction Essentials

(to meet personal and practical needs)



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Personal Needs.

- Let's start with managing project communications by addressing personal needs. This includes everyone inside and outside the project team who has an interest in our project.
- **The five key principles are:**
 1. Self-esteem.
 2. Empathy.
 3. Involvement.
 4. Share.
 5. Support.



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Personal Needs.

1. Self-esteem.

- By maintaining or enhancing self-esteem, we are managing communications by reassuring team members that they have the necessary expertise to be part of the team, by giving praise for doing a great job, or by suggesting a better way of working.



#1 Maintain or enhance self-esteem.

Acknowledge good thinking and ideas, recognize accomplishments, and sincerely show confidence.



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Personal Needs.

1. Self-esteem.

- **To maintain self-esteem**, we would have fact-based discussions focused on the problem (not the person) and show our respect and support.

Example: “Joe, you have the most knowledge about the problem on this project. This project is very important to our customers. We really need your expertise in handling this situation.”

- **To enhance self-esteem**, we would focus on recognizing great ideas and key contributions. This is an opportunity to build and show confidence in the project team member or stakeholder. To do this, we must be specific and sincere.

Example: “Sally, great job in speaking up today at the project team meeting to express your concerns with the project schedule. You are correct. It is very aggressive. Thanks for pointing this out. I really appreciate your ongoing contributions to the team.”

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Personal Needs.

2. Empathy.

- By listening and responding with empathy, we are managing communications to build understanding, address the positive and negative emotions, and show that we care about others' feelings while working with the facts.

Example: “Brian, I know this is a very large, complex project. You might be feeling a bit overwhelmed with doing all this project work, as well as getting your regular work done.”



#2 Listen and respond with empathy.

Respond to facts and feelings, defuse negative emotions, and acknowledge positive emotions. This establishes mutual respect and trust.



Managing Project Communications

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Personal Needs.

3. Involvement.

- By asking for help and encouraging involvement, we are managing communications to seek ideas, ask for help, get commitment, and really be involved with the project and working together as a team. This is an opportunity to ask open-ended questions..

Example: “Maria, now that we have developed the project plan together, what are your thoughts?
What does project success look like for you?”.



#3 Ask for help and encourage involvement.

Ask for ideas, opinions, or points of view, and encourage others to contribute. Leaders should not be the first one to offer ideas.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Personal Needs.

4. Share.

- By sharing our thoughts, feelings, and rationale, we are managing communications to build trust. Trust is everything when it comes to working as a high-performing project team. To build trust, we must share our feelings, have open and honest communications, and discuss “why” decisions, changes, or actions are taken. The benefit of sharing is building relationships.



#4 Share thoughts and feelings to build trust.

Express yourself with thoughts, feelings, and rationale as part of a conversation, appropriate for the situation.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Personal Needs.

4. Share.

Example: “I understand how you are feeling. I had a similar experience working on a large, complex project and worried about getting my regular work done. By developing a simple time management system, I scheduled time in my calendar to do project work and time for my operations work. It worked for me. It might also work for you.”



#4 Share thoughts and feelings to build trust.

Express yourself with thoughts, feelings, and rationale as part of a conversation, appropriate for the situation.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Personal Needs.

5. Support.

- By providing support without removing responsibility, we are managing communications to build ownership. In managing projects, everything is “owned” by someone. When you own a task or responsibility, you are more likely to see it to completion and be successful. As the project manager, it is your responsibility to provide the necessary resources to help team members get their project tasks done and remove any obstacles that get in their way. With support, you are building confidence in others to be successful.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Personal Needs.

4. Share.

Example: “What can I do to help you? What is in your way of getting the project done? Perhaps there are some barriers that I can remove for you to be successful.”



#5 Provide support without removing responsibility.

Team members have the best chance to develop ownership when leaders avoid taking over on a task or assignment, even if in a helpful spirit.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Personal Needs.

- Using these five key principles in managing project communications ensures that the personal needs of your project team and stakeholders are being addressed.
- They feel “valued, respected, and understood.” How will you know their personal needs? For the project team, we suggest simply asking each team member. For outside stakeholders, we suggest identifying their needs during stakeholder analysis and documenting them in your stakeholder register as part of knowing your audience.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Practical Needs

- A “five-step” conversation roadmap called the Interaction Guidelines is considered as “a vehicle to frame conversations in a quick, logical, and thorough way—from start to finish—to cover all the specific information people need” on the project.
- This approach can be used with any conversation or interaction—any time—with anyone associated with the project. To meet the practical needs and to ensure that you have addressed all items that need discussing, the five steps in the Interaction Guidelines provide an excellent framework to follow



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Practical Needs

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Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Practical Needs

1. OPEN

- In this step, we address what the objective of this conversation is and why it is important. Just like a “project objective,” you could consider this step as your “communication objective.” This is an opportunity to “open the dialogue.”

Example: Today, I would like to hear your thoughts on how the team will achieve the project objective for the new accounting system. This new system will reduce our invoicing time by 30 days and accelerate the receipt of customer payments.



Describe the purpose of the discussion and share why it's important.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Practical Needs

2. CLARIFY

- In this step, we are gathering information by seeking details and sharing data about the project problem. This is an opportunity to ask questions, identify roadblocks, and reveal any concerns. This step is essential for establishing clarity and gaining mutual understanding.

Example: We both agree that this is a very difficult project and must be delivered on time, within budget, and according to project specifications. So, let's look at the facts that we have. I don't want to miss anything..



Seek and share information about the situation. Be curious and listen with empathy.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Practical Needs

3. DEVELOP

- In this step, we are developing ideas, leveraging our creativity, utilizing the expertise of others, and discussing
- what resources and support are needed to make these ideas a reality. This is an opportunity for the project manager to also share your ideas and suggestions.

Example: To achieve the project objective, we really need a high-performing project team. I would like to hear your ideas on this. What do you think it will take to be a high-performing team, and what additional resources do you think are needed?..



Use your understanding of the situation to seek and discuss ideas.
Explore needed resources and support.



Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Practical Needs

4. AGREE

- In this step, we are putting together our action plan with specific dates, details, and alternatives if needed. This is an opportunity to show commitment and how progress on the action plan will be tracked.

Example: So let's agree to meet every Monday morning at 9 a.m. to review the action plan together and make any necessary adjustments. I will send a calendar request for our weekly meetings.



Ensure understanding and agreement of who will do what and by when. Confirm how to track progress and offer support.



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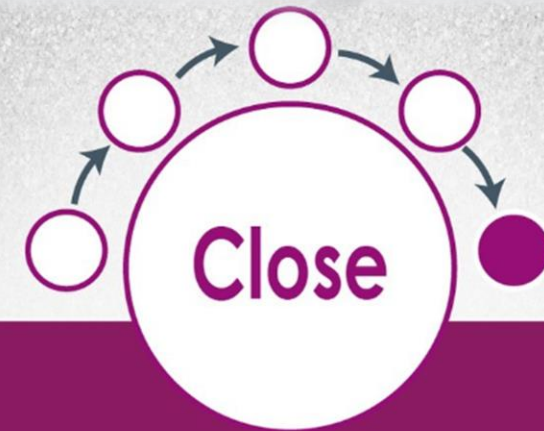
Practical Needs

5. CLOSE

- In this step, we want to summarize the important items that have been discussed and provide our support and encouragement. This is an opportunity to build confidence and trust.

Example: Let's recap what we have decided. Do you have any questions?

I have complete trust and confidence in you. I know that you will do an excellent job on this. You are the right person to handle this difficult situation.



Briefly summarize what was discussed and agreed upon to help ensure commitment to actions and build both parties' confidence in achieving the plan. ➔

Managing Project Communications

Managing Project Communications

Throughout the five-step process, make sure that you are also:

- 1. Checking for understanding.** In project conversations, there is often a lot of information to share and discuss. Getting “off track” can easily occur, which can create misunderstandings and confusion. During the discussion, use the opportunity to “check in.” Ask: “What have you just heard?” When someone repeats what you have said, this helps to check for understanding.
- 2. Making procedural suggestions.** In project conversations, we need to keep the discussion moving forward and on target. Remember that during Step 1, we stated the purpose and importance when we “opened” the discussion. To achieve your conversation objective, you may need to adjust the dialogue along the way.

Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

**Project Communications
Management**

**Monitor
Communications**

Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

- Monitoring communications in your project means evaluating the communications that are taking place so that you can ensure you are achieving the intent of your project communications management plan.
- Even a project communications management plan that is executed fully, down to every e-mail and status report, may not be effective if the communications are not achieving their purpose. Two methods to do this are to measure the effectiveness of your project communications and to incorporate feedback loops.

Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

Measuring the Effectiveness of Project Communications:

- Before you start evaluating the effectiveness of your project communication, you need to determine what, how, and when.

WHAT: What are you measuring? What are the criteria for the measurement?

HOW: How will you measure it?

WHEN: When will you measure its effectiveness?

Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

Measuring the Effectiveness of Project Communications:

WHAT: What are you measuring? What are the criteria for the measurement?

- When deciding what to measure, revisit the specific goals of each tactic in your project communications management plan. You are looking to measure whether your project communications are meeting your stated **goals**..

Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

Measuring the Effectiveness of Project Communications:

HOW: How will you measure it?

There are several approaches to measuring communications:

1. **Usage data:** Technology applications lend themselves most readily to quantitative measures.
2. **Surveys:** If you want to know if communications are working for the people who receive them, just ask. Surveys can range from simple feedback questions that provide qualitative and/or anecdotal information to more formal surveys with quantitative results.
3. **Planned versus actual communications:** Measure how closely you are keeping to the plan and compare that with other project outputs

Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

Measuring the Effectiveness of Project Communications:

WHEN: When will you measure its effectiveness?

- It is a good idea to start measuring early and then measure frequently **throughout the life of the project.**
- Project communications should be iterated and refined to ensure they are effectively informing all of your stakeholders.

Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

Feedback Loops:

- Communication is not a one-way street. Sending an e-mail, for example, is only half of the process. Have you ever sent an e-mail and not received a response? You might ask yourself, “Did the person receive my message? Did they read it? Did they understand it?”
- You are uncertain whether your message has been delivered because you have not gotten feedback from the receiver. Feedback from the receiver, such as a response to your e-mail, “closes the loop” between the sender and receiver of the message.

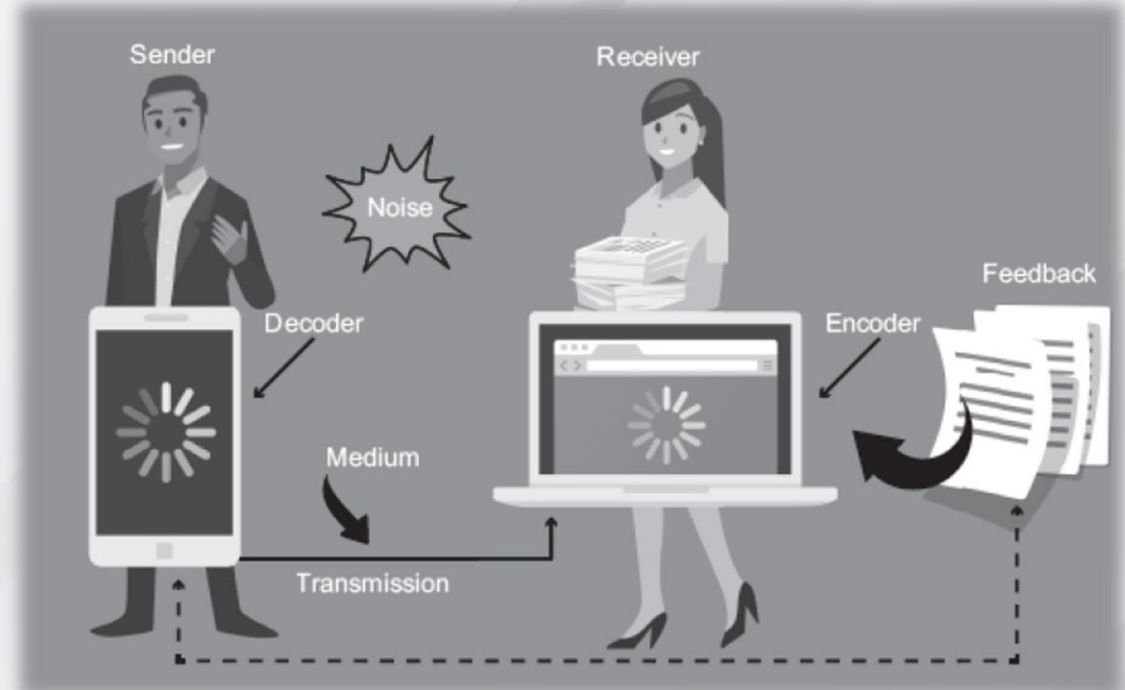
Monitoring Project Communications

Monitoring Project Communications

Feedback Loops:

Why is a feedback loop important?

- It verifies that what you intended to communicate is what is actually understood by the receiver.





Thank You