

College of Management

Project Communications

Lecturer: Dr. Raef Baraka

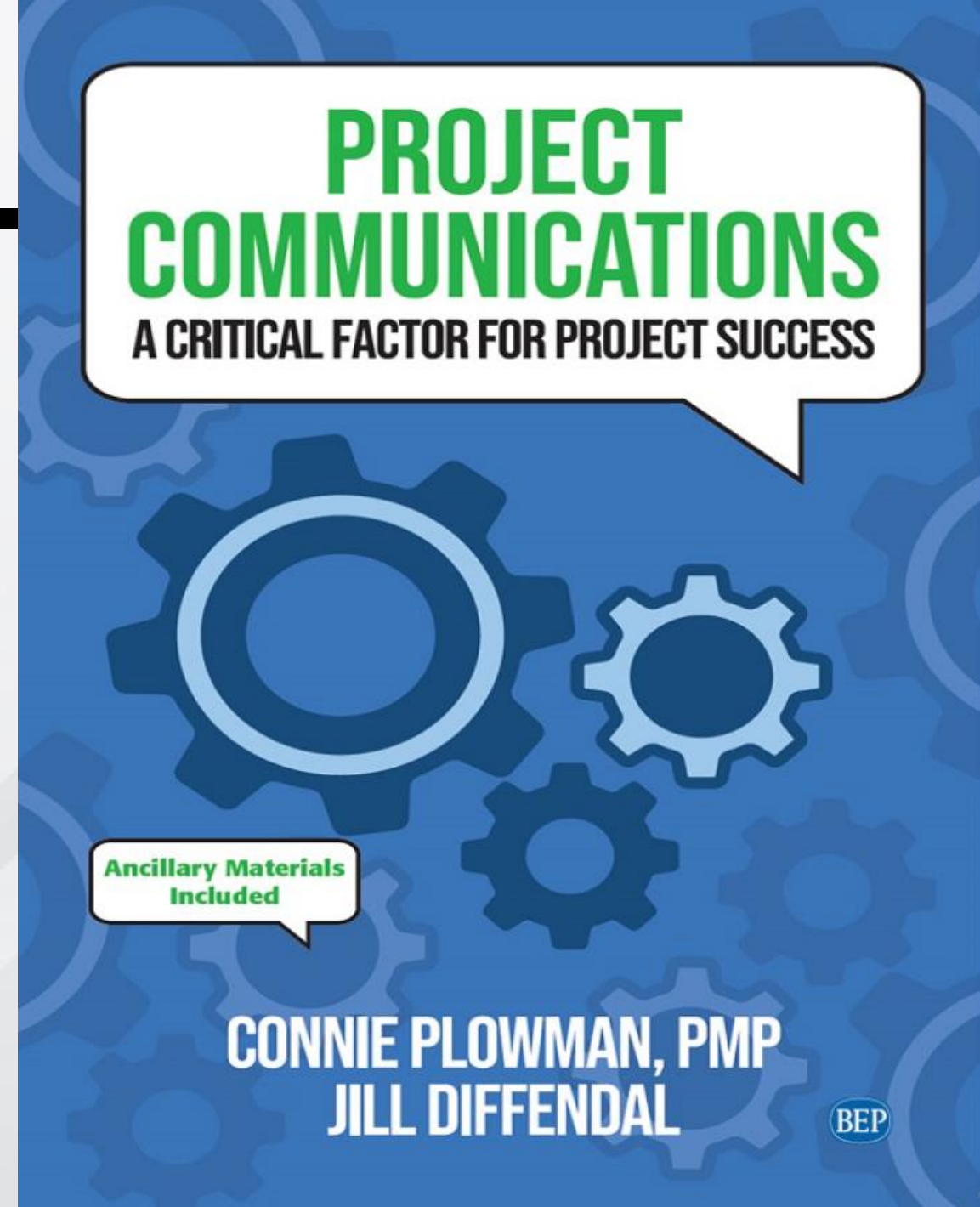
PMG 112

Lecture 05



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.



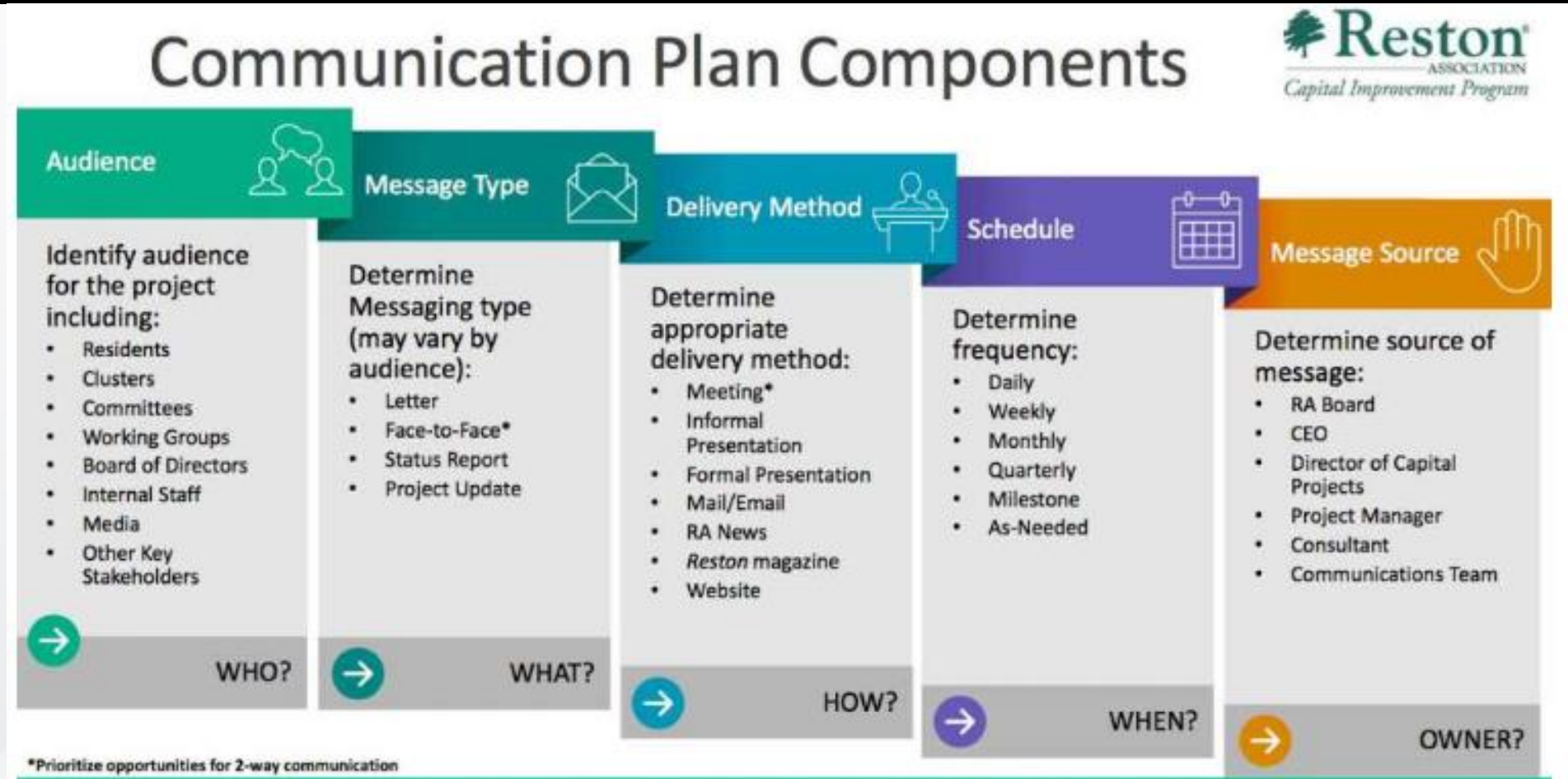
Chapter 5: Planning Project Communications

The purpose of this chapter is to help you:

- Understand the purpose, content, and development of a project communications management plan.
- Demonstrate how to effectively use a project communications management plan.
- Examine a communications matrix.
- Planning communications in traditional, agile, and virtual project teams.



Planning Project Communications



If you fail to prepare, you are preparing to fail.

—The Reverend H. K. Williams, religious leader and author

Starting with the Basics

Planning Project Communications

- Most often, we associate the concept of failing to plan or prepare with the overall project. If we fail to plan the project, we are planning for the project to fail. However, it can also be applied to planning communication on a project. What are the chances of project success if we fail to plan our communications?

**IF YOU FAIL TO
PLAN, YOU ARE
PLANNING TO FAIL.**

Benjamin Franklin

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

- If you are a project manager, how much time do you spend communicating when working on a project? This refers to how much time you are spending communicating on a project, not how much time you should be spending.
- For team members, think about how much time you think your project manager spends communicating on a project. Put an X somewhere between 0 percent and 100 percent on the continuum below.



Planning Project Communications



Kirtan Jamnadas

Project managers spend approximately 75-90% of their time engaged in some form of communication. Boost productivity with this powerful comms planning and tracking tool!

✉ Kirtan.jamnadas@activity.com.au

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

- “Top project managers spend about 90 percent of their time on a project in communicating”—with external stakeholders, groups, project teams, individuals, management, project sponsors, and others. Hopefully, you marked an X near 90 percent!
- **Since project managers are to be spending the majority of their time communicating, it is best to have a plan. A project communications management plan.**



Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

- Plan Communications Management is “the process for developing an appropriate approach and plan for project communications activities based on the information needs of each stakeholder or group, available organizational assets, and the needs of the project.”
- In other words, consider it your “**how to**” document. **How** will you communicate with various stakeholder groups? **How** will you utilize the processes, procedures, policies, plans, and knowledge already established by the organization? **What** new processes or procedures might be needed? **What, when, and who** will send and receive information?

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

- And **how** will that information be distributed? **Where** will project information be stored, and **how** will it be retrieved? **How** will the information be disposed of at the end of the project?
- The purpose of a project communications management plan is to answer these and other questions in guiding the project team's communications to "ensure timely and appropriate planning, collection, creation, description, storage, retrieval, management, control, monitoring, and ultimate disposition of project information?"

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

- Plan Communications Management happens in the planning process group. **It is our “communications road map.”**
- It is our guide for keeping everyone **informed**—with the **right** message, at the right **time**, using the right **methods**, for the right **reasons**. The other chapters
- This book provides insight into these different factors. The project communications management plan is where you bring them all together.

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

- Regardless of the size or complexity of the project, here is a word of caution: Just because you have a template or form does not mean that you fill it out and you are done.
- Project management is not about “form filling.” It is about adapting the templates, tools, and techniques to meet your project, stakeholder, and organizational needs—and then using them.
- Take a look at the example in the Exhibit. This is a sample outline of a table of contents for a project communications management plan.

Planning Pro Communications management plan table of contents—sample outline

Table of contents

1. Overview and Purpose
2. Organizational Policies and Procedures
 - a. Communications Processes
 - b. Technology and Information Storage
3. Stakeholder Communications
4. Communications Matrix
5. Change Control
6. Project Team
 - a. Contact Information
 - b. Roles and Responsibilities
 - c. Reports
 - d. Meetings and Calls
7. Signatures
8. Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms/Abbreviations
9. Appendix 2: Communication Templates
10. Appendix 3: Communication Examples
11. Version Control

Planning Project Communications

Communication Management Plan

Communication Type	Objective of Comm.	Format	Frequency	Audience	Owner	Deliverables
Kick-Off Meeting	Introduce the project, manage expectations, set	Meeting	One-Time	All Core Project Stakeholders	Project Manager	Meeting Minutes, Updated Charter
Status Report	Report of the status of the pro	Document, emailed	Weekly	All Core Project Stakeholders	Project Manager	Status report, issues log, risk log
Steering Committee	Clear issues, review performa	Meeting	Monthly	Steering Comm, PM, others as n	Project Manager	Meeting Minute Action items, up
Task Board	Show work planned, in prog	Information radiator	Real-time	All Core Project Stakeholders	Development Team	Phys task board and electronic ver
Lessons Learned Review	Capture lessons for future projec	Meeting	One-Time	All Core Project Stakeholders	Project Manager	Lessons Learned Report

Planning Project Communications

COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT PLAN

ID	STAKEHOLDER	INFORMATION	METHOD	TIMING OR FREQUENCY	SENDER	ASSUMPTIONS	CONSTRAINTS
S001	Call centre agents	High level information on go live, new features and training dates.	Email and verbal updates via team leads.	Monthly until rollout phase then weekly.	Project Manager / Change Manager	All Spanish speaking call centre agents are able to read English up to college level. Team leads will provide verbal updates via meetings.	Email must be plain text, max size attachments is 2mb.
S002	IT support and infra team	Tech spec and hardware requirements. Go live dates and test results.	Email and IT weekly mtg at key milestones.	To align with start up, test and prep for launch.	Project Manager	None.	Max size attachments is 2mb.
S003	Marketing	New features for users so marketing can write website blurb.	Email product brief, and arrange meeting with marketing manager.	Dates tbc	Change Manager	Assumes that new product launches will have been completed, so marketing has bandwidth for website update.	Website update must not fall during holiday change freeze.
S004	Customers	Coming soon update on new features and go live help text. Provide in English and Spanish.	Email and on website	Dates tbc	Change Manager	Assumes 60% of emails will get through and remainder of users can self-assist using help text.	Help text must be screen reader compatible.

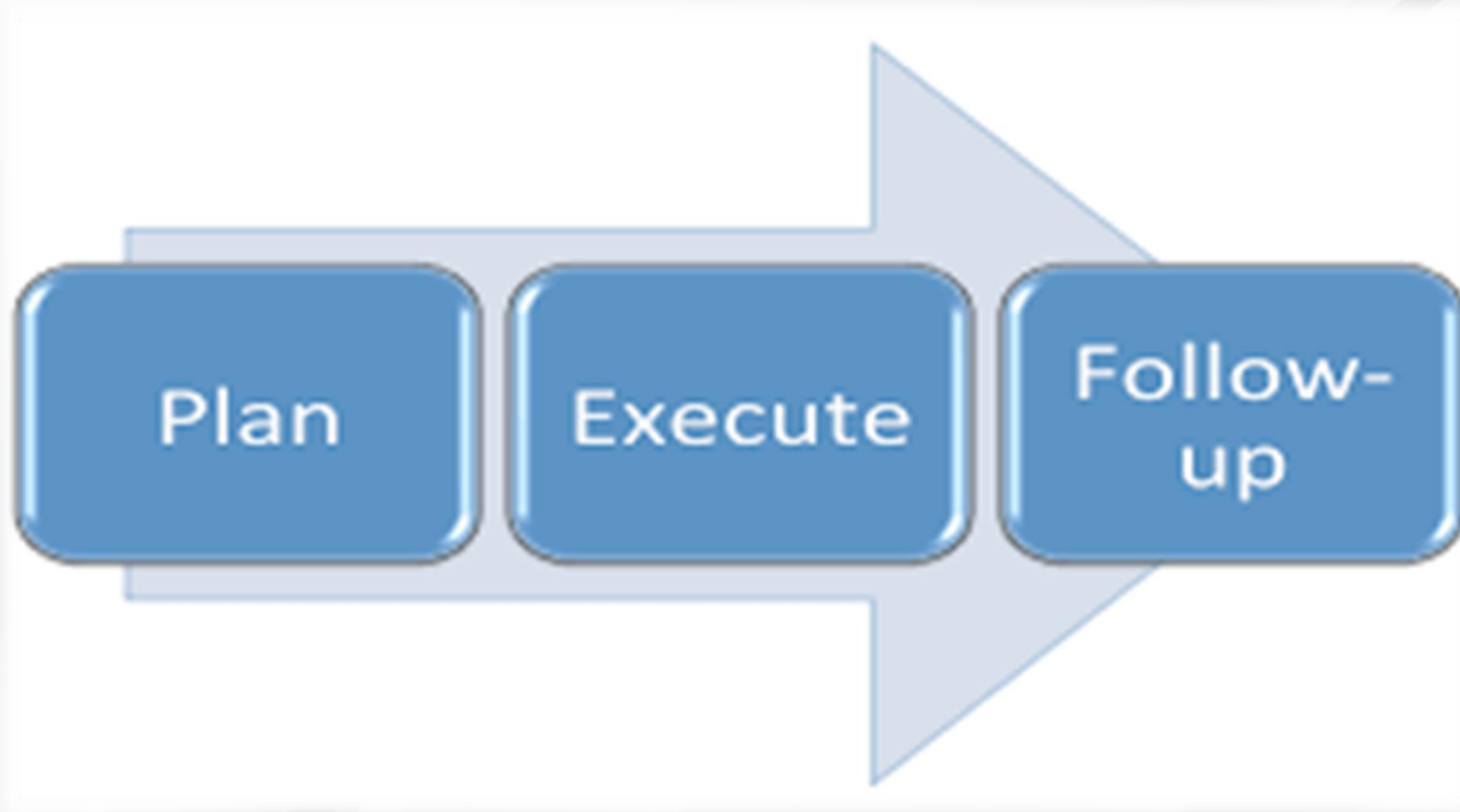
Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

Additional recommendation:

- Do not make your project communications management plan so voluminous and so complicated that no one uses it. It needs to be proportionate to the size and complexity of your project and the project experience of your team.
- The less project management experience your team has, the more information is included in your project communications management plan.
- Otherwise, there is a greater risk of miscommunication occurring.

Create the Plan. Follow the Plan.



Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

When developing a project communications management plan, where do you begin?:

- Start by reviewing the project communications management plans of previous, similar projects. Review the **lessons learned**. What **worked well**? What needed **improvement**? What project communications areas were **challenging**? Share and discuss the findings with your project team.
- You can learn a lot from the experiences of other project teams and avoid mistakes that others have made. Once you have completed the review and discussion, you can start to collaborate and develop your own project communications management plan as a team.

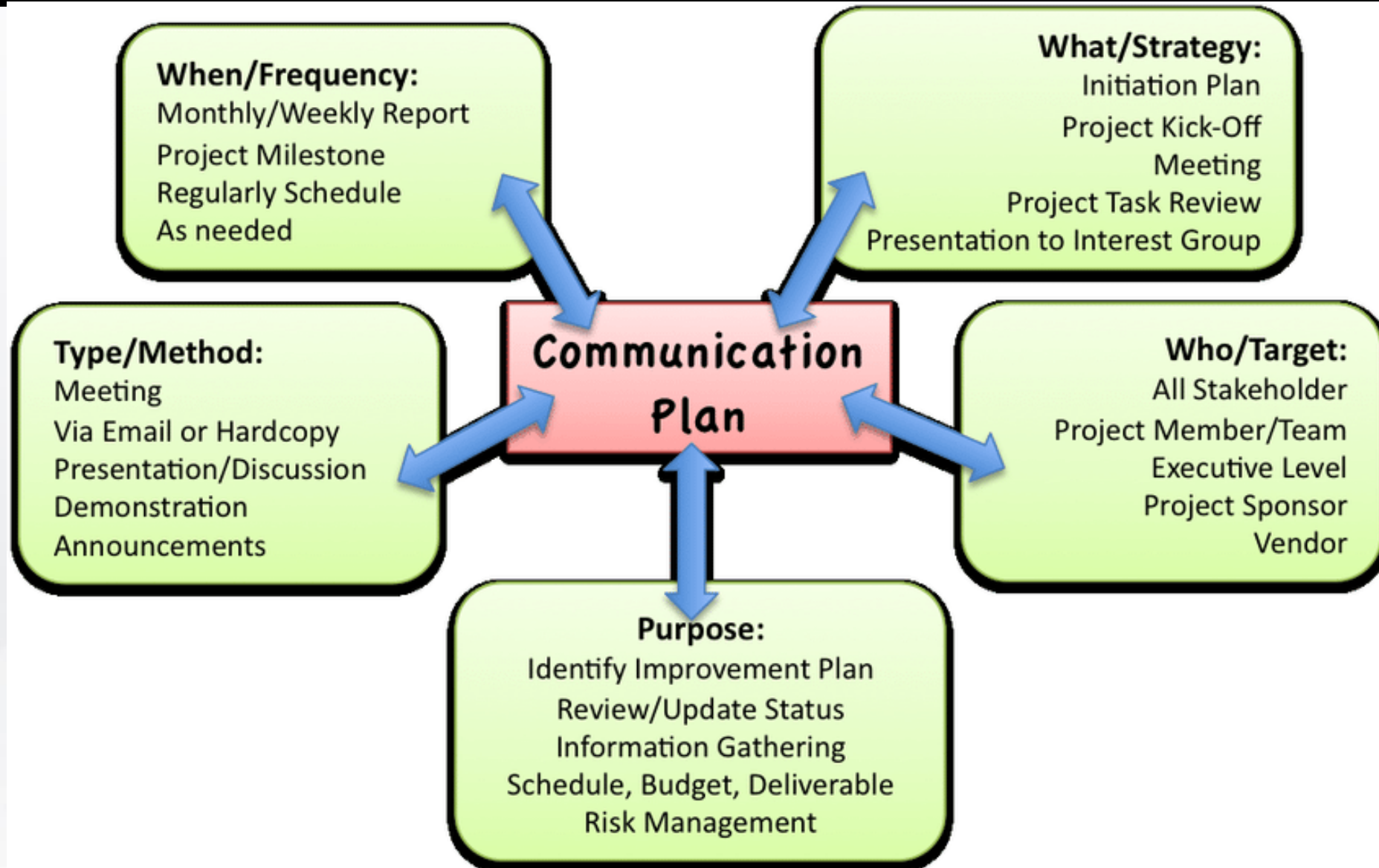
Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

Your project communications management plan should include:

- All stakeholders that you have identified in your project (see Chapter 3).
- Address the aspects of the project that impact them most.
- Incorporate the basics of good project communication discussed in Chapter 4, and make sure your plan aligns with the ground rules you set with your team.
- Project communications management plan should incorporate elements for handling and communicating that change with stakeholders

Create the Plan. Follow the Plan.



Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

Why the project communications management plan is designed:

- The project communications management plan is designed to be developed by and used by the project team to ensure that stakeholders are receiving the project information that they need and that the project communications are effective.
- Once the project communications management plan has been developed, you now need to follow it.

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

List of techniques to ensure your project communications are being used effectively:

1. **Take ownership:** In project management, ownership is everything. Make sure that someone on the team owns the project communications management plan. This individual is responsible for ensuring that the project communications management plan is followed properly, reviewed regularly, and updated as needed.



Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

List of techniques to ensure your project communications are being used effectively:

- 3. Keep a log:** With so much information being shared on a project, maintain a log (or journal) of critical communications.
- This will serve you well when documenting lessons learned.

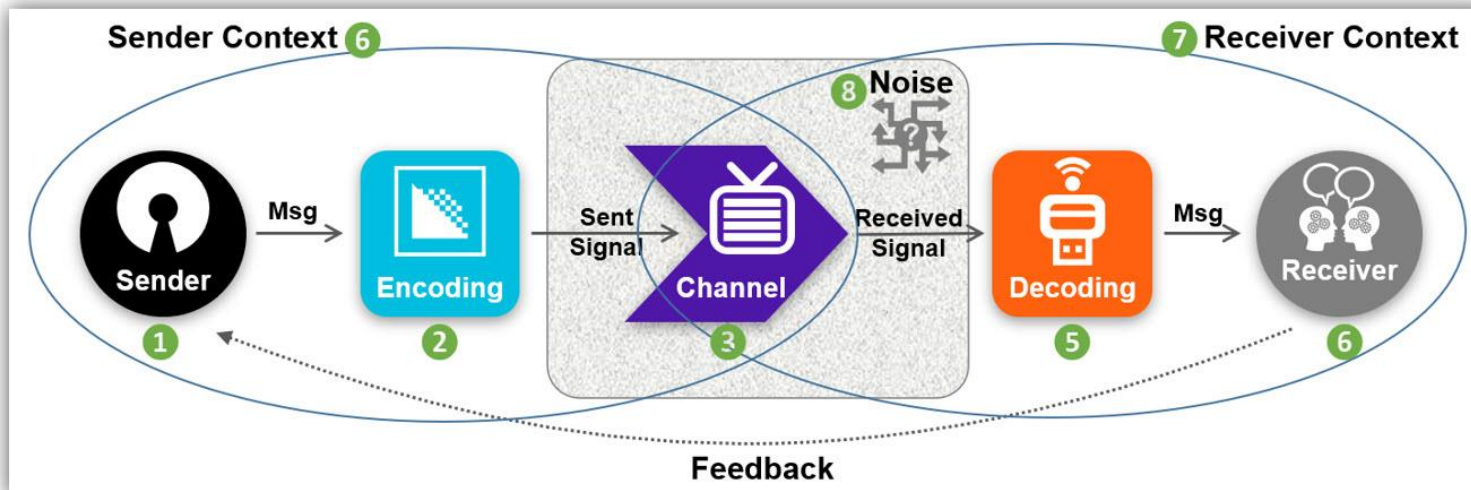


Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

List of techniques to ensure your project communications are being used effectively:

4. **Get feedback:** Getting feedback is essential for effective project communications. In communicating and engaging with stakeholders, listen to their feedback and incorporate relevant input. We will discuss feedback further in Chapter 6.



Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

List of techniques to ensure your project communications are being used effectively:

- 5. Do a systems assessment:** Ask the project team and others who are accessing project information if systems for storing and retrieving project information are working properly. Make necessary adjustments or provide ongoing assistance.

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

Communication Output	Completeness	Accuracy	Timing	Volume	Average
Communication management Plan					
Project Records					
Project Reports					
Project Presentations					
Performance Reports					
Change Requests					
Project archives					
Project Closure					
Lessons Learned					
Average					

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

List of techniques to ensure your project communications are being used effectively:

6. Make updates: If something is not working in your project communications, make changes.

- As changes occur, make necessary updates to the project communications management plan.
- Keep track of changes through proper revision control.
- Remember, the project communications management plan evolves over the life of the project.

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

List of techniques to ensure your project communications are being used effectively:

- 7. Ask questions:** If you are uncertain about a process in the project communications management plan or a specific message, ask others. Get clarity before sending project information. One valuable technique is to have others read (or listen to) your message before sending (or saying) it. Ask: How does this read to you? How does this sound to you? This activity can make a tremendous difference.

Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

List of techniques to ensure your project communications are being used effectively:

8. Lead by example: Make sure that you are effectively communicating. Over time, others will see your example and aspire to do the same.



It influences
company culture



It builds trust and
respect

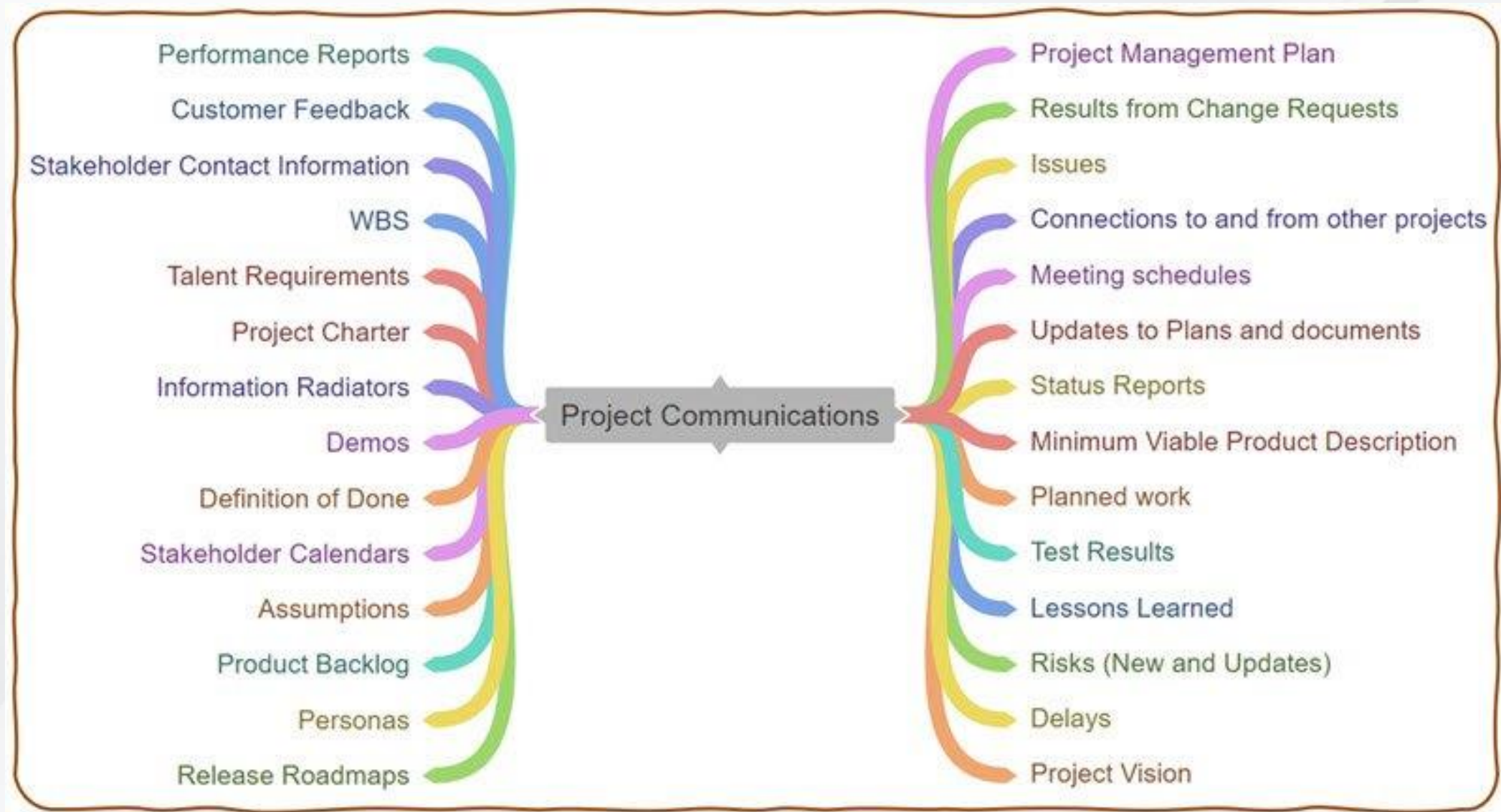


It increases employee
engagement



It boosts
productivity

Project Communications Take Time



Planning Project Communications

Planning Project Communications

Having a communication expert on the project team could be extremely beneficial.:

- This individual would work closely with the project manager to help orchestrate and support communications, assist in creating and executing the project communications management plan, and help reduce the risk of the wrong message being sent to the wrong stakeholder groups at the wrong time for the wrong purpose.
- Keep in mind, however, that it is the project manager who is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the project communications management plan is created and properly executed.

Communications Matrix

3. Communication Matrix

Techno-PM

Project Management Templates

#	Communication	Format	Frequency	Owner	Distribution	Escalation
1	Weekly Status Update	E-Mail	Once a week	PM	All project team members and major stakeholders	CEO
2	Action Items FollowUp	Conference Call & E-Mail	Once every 2 work days(M, W, T)	PMO	Everyone who has an action item allocated, and their TL's, PM	COO
3	Budget Usage	Face to Face Presentation & E-Mail	Fortnightly	CFO	CEO, COO, PMO, PM, Key Stakeholders	CEO
4	Risks Review and Update	Face to Face Presentation & E-Mail	Fortnightly	PMO	PM, TL's, COO	PM

MATRIX

PROJECT COMMUNICATION MATRIX

This slide is perfect for product descriptions

Information	Receiver	Timing of communication	Method of Communication	Sender
 Documents (DRAFT)	Project Manager	As Required	Email, Shared Drive	Project Team
 Documents (Approval)	Project Team	As Required	Email, Shared Drive	Project Manger
 Time Usage, Hours	Manager	Weekly	Email	Project Team
 Project Status Report	Overseeing VP	Monthly	Email	Project Manager
 Team Status Change	Project Manager	Monthly	Phone/ Meeting	Manager
 Expense Approval	Overseeing VP	As Required	Email/ Software	Project Manager
 Work Request (internal)	Group Lead	As Required	Email	Project Team
 Work Request (External)	Vendor	As Required	Email/ Fax	Project Manager
 Request for Review	Project Team	As Required	Email	Project Team

Communications Matrix

Communications Matrix

- **A communications matrix** provides an “at a glance” document to quickly assess what information needs to be distributed, to whom, when, and how.
- **A communications matrix** can also take many forms and is developed together by the project team. Information that is included in a communications matrix can come from a variety of sources—the sponsor, project manager, management, project team, stakeholder analysis, lessons learned from other projects, company requirements, etc.

Table 5.1 Project communications matrix example

Communication	Format	Timing	Owner	Recipients	Comments
Status reports	E-mail	Weekly	Project manager	Project team and sponsor	Use one-page status report template
Status meetings	In-person or virtual/ conference call	Weekly	Project manager	Project team	30 minutes or less; distribute status report in advance
Status meeting minutes	E-mail	Within 24 hours of status meeting	Project coordinator	Project team	Includes action items and decisions
Action items	E-mail	As needed	Project coordinator	Project team	Each action item has follow-up due date and will be reviewed at each status meeting
Budget reports	E-mail and in-person review	Monthly	Project manager	Project team, sponsor, key management personnel	Use budget report template
Schedule updates	E-mail and in-person review	Monthly	Project manager	Project team, sponsor	Provide summary of schedule updates to key management
Risk review	In-person or virtual/ conference call	Weekly	Project manager	Project team, sponsor	Include in weekly status meetings
Issues or problem log	E-mail	As needed	Project manager	Project team, sponsor	Include in weekly status meetings
For other documents, determine the format, timing, audience, and other considerations based on the urgency, sensitivity, project needs, and stakeholder expectations.					

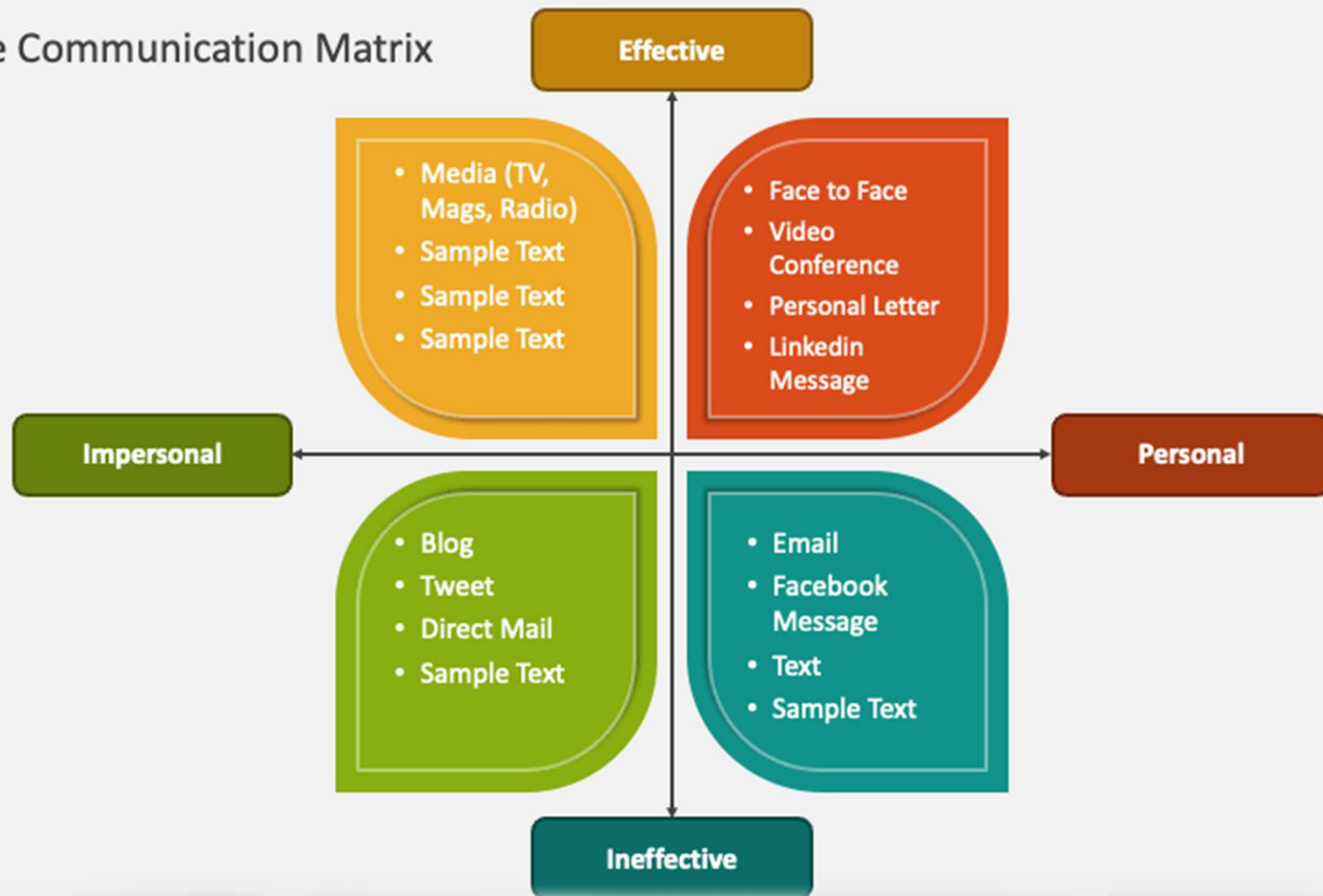
Communications Matrix

Communications Matrix

- Since projects have lots of information, having an electronic document repository can be helpful.
- This is a secure online location where all project data can be stored. Instead of e-mailing documents, a link to the information can be provided.
- This helps with accessibility, version control, and data security.

COMMUNICATION MATRIX

Effective Communication Matrix



Starting with the Basics

Lecture Summary

- Project communication is essential to project success. A project communications management plan helps you and the project team stay on track in keeping others informed—with the right message, at the right time, and for the right purpose. As the project team implements the project communications management plan, the team may find adjustments need to be made.
- **The project communications management plan should evolve throughout the life of the project. There are several techniques that you can use to ensure that your project communications management plan is being used effectively. Consider adding a communications specialist to your project team when needed.**

Starting with the Basics

Lecture Summary

- **Project communications take time. A communications matrix provides an “at a glance” look at project communications. And finally:**
- **If you fail to plan your project communications, you plan to fail.**
- **Don’t overlook the importance and value of having an effective project communications management plan for your project—not only to have it, but to use it**



Thank You