

Project Communication

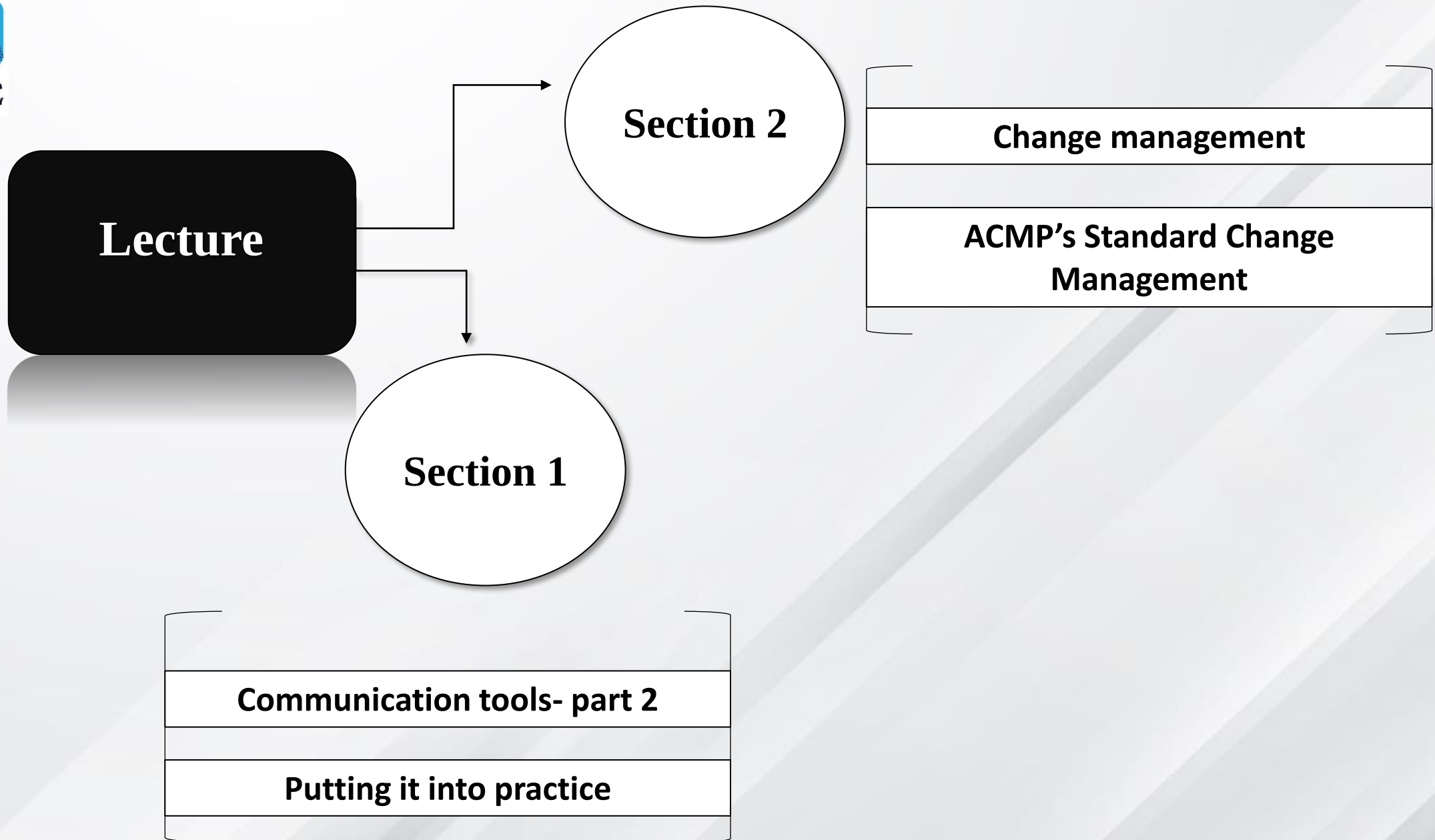
PMG 112

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Change management in projects

Lecture 7





Section One

Communication tools – part 2

Presentations

Presentations

Tools such as face-to-face presentations, interactive webinars, podcasts, or videos provide an excellent opportunity for communicating project information.

This is a time to use your presentation skills and facilitation techniques when presenting key project information. Graphs, charts, photographs, and stories can create very powerful and impactful images.



Presentations

Benefits of Presentations

The benefit is that you can engage the audience and reduce uncertainty by directly addressing any project questions or concerns.

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Templates

Templates

There is a template or form for just about everything! Don't spend your time creating a form from a blank sheet of paper or screen.

Find a template, modify it, then use the same template for similar interactions.



Templates

Benefits of Templates

The benefit in using a template is that it provides consistent messaging and branding to support your project communication.

Spend your time on the communication content, and not on creating, designing, and redesigning a form.

[Hubspot](#)



Dashboards

Benefits of Dashboards

Dashboards are an excellent communication tool to show a high-level overview of your project or multiple projects. They provide an opportunity to communicate key project information or a quick comparison of projects and the status of each.

Dashboards can also be used to keep everyone informed of how the project is progressing.



Dashboards

Benefits of Dashboards

The benefit in using a dashboard is that it is flexible depending on what information you choose to include and can be customized based on the needs of your stakeholders.



In managing projects and working with project teams and stakeholders, you should be using a collection of project communication tools. Each tool in your collection has its own purpose and benefits. When it comes to project communications, there is no “one size fits all!”

To get started, we will look at five general categories of project communication tools. There may be other classifications, but let's start with these.

Table 7.3 Categories of project communication tools

1	2	3	4	5
Technology	Project documents	Presentations and templates	Meetings	Talents and strengths

Meetings

Benefits of Face-to-Face Meetings

Invest the time and money to have at least one face-to-face meeting for a project team, especially at the beginning of the project. Face-to-face meetings are critical for all teams.

Research shows that “when teams are unable to meet face-to-face—even once—they are less able to handle cultural differences and to understand and appreciate one another.” Don’t underestimate the power and benefits of face-to-face meetings.



Meetings

Downside of Face-to-Face Meetings

They are crucial to project and team success! The downside of face-to-face meetings is the difficulty in getting everyone scheduled to attend at the same time, and the costs that may be associated with them. However, there are greater costs when face-to-face meetings are not held.

Meetings

Criteria of Stand-Up Meetings

participants stand.

They do not sit down.

The meeting is short and focused.

In traditional or hybrid teams, these meetings may occur weekly and last longer.

Meetings

Benefits of Stand-Up Meetings

Regardless of the duration, the benefit of stand-up meetings is that they are consistent, short, and focused. It is an opportunity to quickly identify problems, prioritize items, and provide support where needed.

Meetings

Meeting Outcomes

When working with teams and conducting meetings, it is essential to communicate the meeting outcomes, goals, or intentions.

Meeting outcomes should address the intended goal for the meeting, and expectations of what will be accomplished by the end of the meeting. Include the meeting outcomes on the meeting agenda and distribute the agenda well in advance of the meeting time.

Meetings

Benefits of Meeting Outcomes

The benefit in clearly stating meeting outcomes is that everyone knows that their time and input is valued and respected, and can come prepared for focused discussions.

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Talents and strengths

What is a talent?

It is a natural ability that a person is born with.

What is a strength?

It is taking a talent and enhancing it by investing the time and effort to grow one's skills and knowledge through learning and practice. This occurs over a person's lifetime. A strength is the developed ability "to consistently provide near-perfect performance" in a given activity, including the activity of project communication.



Talents and strengths

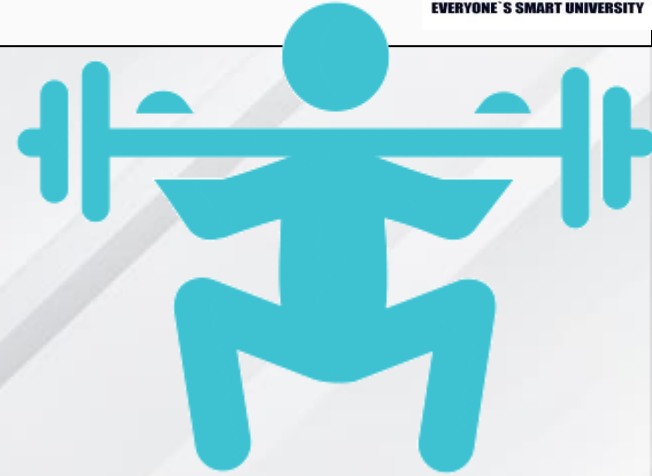
How each project team member develops their own specific communication strengths?

It will vary depending upon the person's talents and the opportunities available to them for developing their talents into strengths.

The following are general examples of project team members who are engaging in the process of developing and using their communication strengths on their project teams:

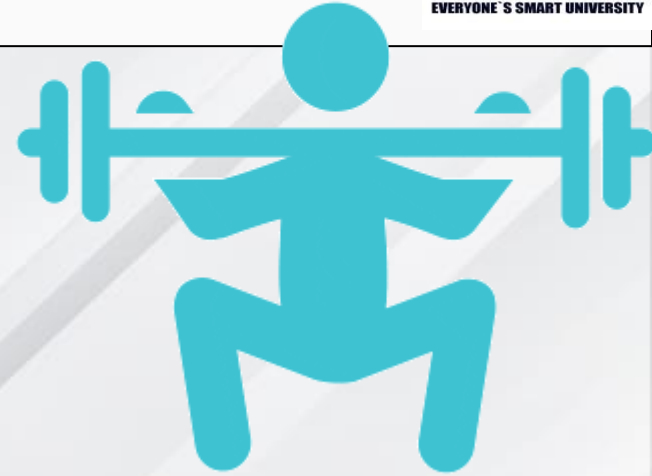


Talents and strengths



If a project team member has the natural talent of “naturally understanding how people feel,” then he can acquire and invest the knowledge of “what goes into asking good questions” into his talent to develop a strength for “creating an environment in which team members can communicate how they feel” about the progress of the project.

Talents and strengths



If a project team member has a natural talent to “write lists to keep track of project details,” then he can invest the skill of using a software program into his talent. to develop a strength for “communicating the progress of the project team by making those lists available to and usable by other project team members.”



Talents and strengths

If a project team member has a natural talent for “wanting to break down and test research and data,” which she has already developed into a strength for “analyzing data which is relevant for her project team,” then she can invest further in her talents and strengths by practicing effective written and/or verbal articulation of her analysis to develop an additional strength for “communicating her analysis to the project team,” so that the project team can effectively use her analysis in the team’s decision-making



Section One

Putting it into Practice

For traditional Teams

Using project communication tools

Traditional
project
teams

- At the start of team meetings, have each participant share a new feature or approach they have found useful with one of the team's project communication tools.
- Designate an area, wall, or room where project information can be posted. Visuals can help the team stay focused on important details of the project.
- Traditional teams often benefit from colocation. Where this occurs, encourage impromptu problem-solving as a group. It can be extremely effective in not only solving the problem, but also in communicating issues and creating awareness of potential issues.

For Virtual Teams

Using project communication tools

Virtual project teams

- Using technology to communicate is crucial on virtual teams. Make sure that everyone has easy access and the necessary knowledge to effectively use the technology tools. Invest in training, coaching, or technology super-users so that technical expertise is easily available.
- Interview team members about their technology experiences. Ask them what communication tools they like and why, and what tools they don't like and why. Post the results. This will jumpstart your efforts in selecting tools that everyone will use.
Ensure that the virtual team doesn't rely solely on asynchronous communication tools. Plan regular phone or
- video meetings with the team, and encourage them to use the phone or video chat to connect with one another frequently.
- Using chat tools allows team members to pop in (much like popping over to someone's cubicle) for a quick question. This is an effective way to simulate face-to-face interaction and can facilitate quick problem-solving and team cohesion.

Section Two

Change management

What Is Change Management?

Change is “the transition from a current state to a future state.” Current state and future state bookend the change—they are defined respectively as the conditions at the start when the change begins, and at the end once the benefits of the change have been realized.

Change management is “the practice of applying a structured approach to the transition of an organization from a current state to a future state to achieve expected benefits.”

It focuses on the people within the organization who are affected by the change (all stakeholders, including the project team), and how to support them in accepting the change and transitioning to the future state.

How Do Change Management and Project Management Work Together?

The ACMP's Standard for Change Management specifically calls out the relationship between change management and project management.

Project management methodologies typically emphasize the organization and management of resources and activities required to complete projects (deliver the change) within the defined scope, budget, timeline, and quality standards.

Change management methodologies typically emphasize the people side of change and the activities required to prepare the organization for the delivered change, facilitate the transition from the old way of working to the future state, and embed the change as the new norm.

How Do Change Management and Project Management Work Together?

As you can see, change management and project management differ, but overlap and are often interdependent. Integrating the two can help ensure that the objectives of the project (and the organization) are achieved. The responsibility for that integration varies depending on the context of the project.

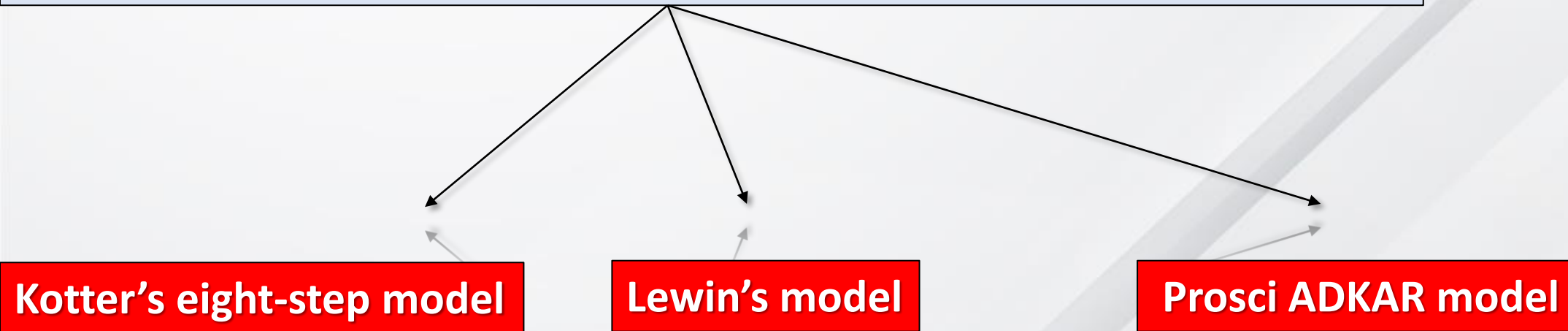
Some organizations have change management offices, departments, and/or practitioners who specialize in this methodology. These practitioners are often part of the project team, and their role is to ensure the integration of change management principles into the life cycle of the project.

How Do Change Management and Project Management Work Together?

Other organizations expect communication professionals to address change management as part of their responsibilities within a project. In many projects, change management or communication resources are not available to the project team. In these cases, it is the responsibility of the project team to ensure that change management principles are addressed.

What are the change communication models?

There are a number of change management models available. Here is a brief overview of three of the most common:



Models like these can be useful frameworks to help you integrate change management principles into your project.

Kotter's eight-step model

In his best-selling book *Leading Change*, John Kotter proposes an eight-step plan to help organizations change successfully. He based his approach on his personal experience and research with dozens of organizational change initiatives.

Create a sense of urgency around identified crises or opportunities.

Build a team to lead the change.

Develop a vision for the change, and a strategy to achieve the vision.

Get everyone on board by communicating the change vision.

Kotter's eight-step model

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Empower employees to action and remove barriers to change.

Generate short-term wins to build momentum and positive reaction to the change.

Continue the change momentum until the change vision is achieved.

Anchor the change within the organization's culture

Lewin's model

Kurt Lewin's model for change is one of the earliest (1951), and while it is simple, it is still widely used today. He presented "Changing as Three Steps," or CATS:

Step 1: Unfreeze—People and organizations must prepare for change. One strategy to accomplish this is to demonstrate the discrepancy between the current state and the desired state

Step 2: Change—People must change behaviors and embrace new roles and responsibilities. This is where change is put into action through new structures and processes.

Lewin's model

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Step 3: Refreeze—The new systems and behaviors are cemented into place. Support mechanisms like reward systems and reinforced cultural values can help accomplish this.

Prosci ADKAR model

Jeff Hiatt, founder of the change management consultancy and training organization Prosci, developed a model that can be a useful tool in understanding and facilitating the five outcomes that individuals need to achieve in order to make change “stick.”

Awareness of the reasons/need for change

Desire to participate in the change

Knowledge about how to change

Reinforcement of the change

Section Two

ACMP's Standard Change Management

Communicating Change

Incorporating principles of change management into your project communications is a natural fit. Managing change is much like managing uncertainty.

The rest of this chapter outlines four change management concepts to build into your project communications. These concepts are drawn from the change management models described above, as well as the ACMP's Standard for Change Management.

ACMP's Standard Change Management

Incorporating principles of change management into your project communications is a natural fit. Managing change is much like managing uncertainty, which we have addressed throughout this book. The rest of this chapter outlines four change management concepts to build into your project communications. These concepts are drawn from the change management models described above, as well as the ACMP's Standard for

The need for change

Stakeholder support through the change

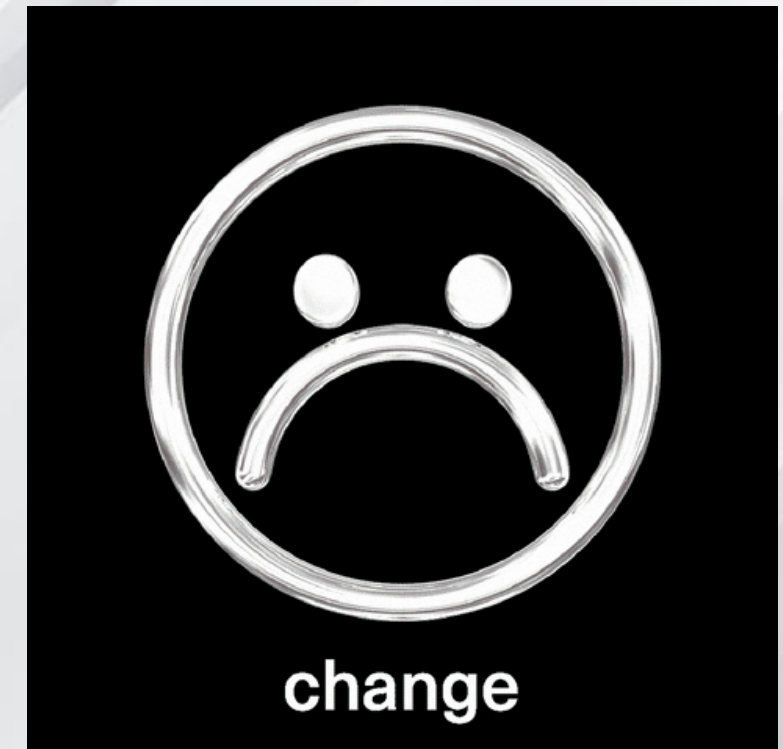
The effect of the change on stakeholders

Change reinforcement

The need for change

Employees want to know that the change is coming and why it's happening. This includes explaining why the change is necessary, how it is tied to the organization's overall strategy, and what the risks are of not changing.

Communications about the need for change should start early in the project life cycle, and should clearly express the rationale for the project and relate it to the organization's goals and/or purpose. Much of this information can often be found in project documents like the project charter and business case, as well as organizational information like mission, vision, and/or values statements.



The need for change

Communication should contain these principles:

Address the need for the new change

Address the benefits of the new change and how it aligns with organizational goals

Showcase sponsorship for the change: Messages from leadership legitimize the change, reinforce its alignment with organizational goals, and reassure employees they will be supported through the change.



The need for change

Communication should contain these principles:

Showcase sponsorship for the change: Messages from leadership legitimize the change, reinforce its alignment with organizational goals, and reassure employees they will be supported through the change.

A message from the chief financial officer could underscore the importance of the change and express a strong commitment to providing support to all employees affected by it. Supportive messages from immediate supervisors of directly impacted employees can also model a demonstrated need for and commitment to the change.

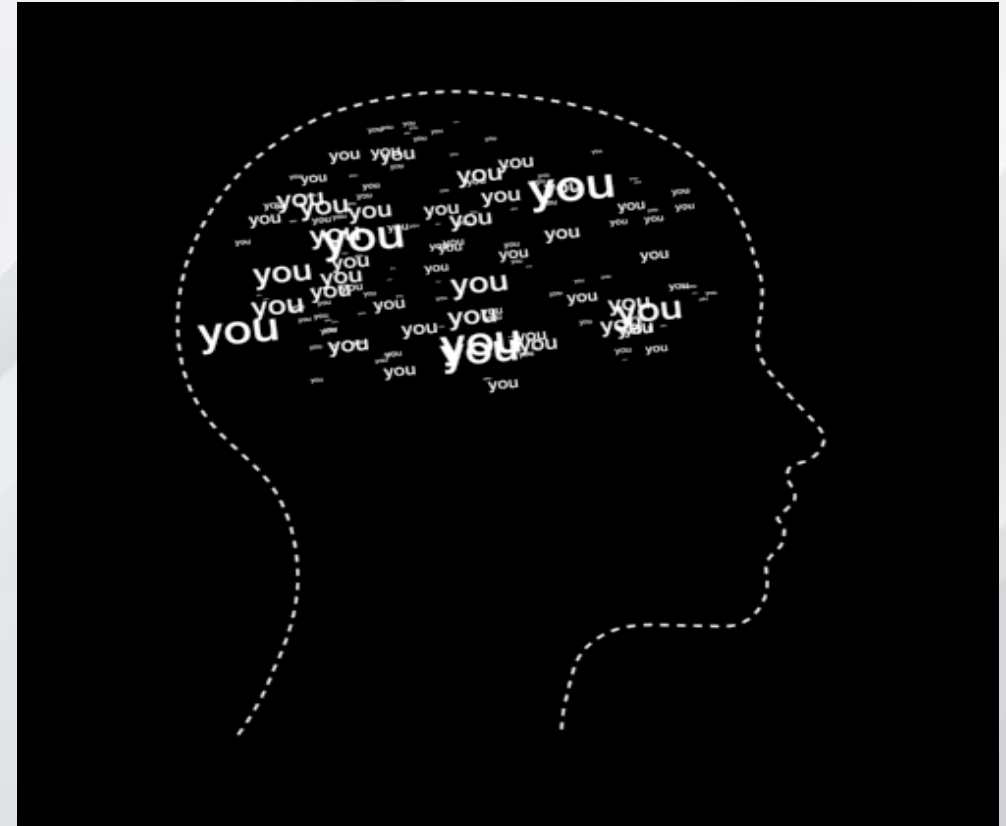


The effect of the change on stakeholders

In line with the concept of “What’s in it for me?” or WIIFM, communicating change means letting stakeholders know what to expect and when to expect it. Reduce their uncertainty and increase their trust in the project by answering their big questions.

Communications about what to expect should also begin early in the project life cycle and continue throughout.

Don't expect to know and be able to share every aspect of this information up front; tell stakeholders what you can, when you can.



The effect of the change on stakeholders

In line with the concept of “What’s in it for me?” or WIIFM, communicating change means letting stakeholders know what to expect and when to expect it. Reduce their uncertainty and increase their trust in the project by answering their big questions.

Don't wait until every detail is finalized before you begin communicating, or stakeholders will begin to speculate on their own.

Address any anticipated risks and uncertainties. If the new software will eliminate redundancies or create efficiencies, be clear about any impact on employee jobs.

Clearly outline expectations.

Stakeholder support through the change

Employees need to know how to make the change you are asking of them. This includes communicating, educating, and training around roles and responsibilities, processes and tools, and desired behaviors. Initial communications should emphasize that support will be provided. you could use communications to:

Provide multiple educational tactics to suit employees' different learning styles and give them a sense of control over how they will develop their knowledge.

Formal training sessions can walk employees through the new changes.
so that they can see how it works and practice using it.
Follow-up videos and/or written documentation can reinforce the individual steps required.



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An intranet forum can provide a place for users to ask questions and project team members to share tips and best practices. Challenge yourself to use the rule of seven by communicating a number of options for employees to learn, and then reinforce their learning.

Solicit and address feedback about the change. Follow up with employees to identify any pain points they may be experiencing with the new changes.

Change reinforcement

Reinforcement means ensuring the change is sustained. Human beings tend to revert back to old habits and patterns, so it's important to keep the change and its purpose in front of stakeholders even after the project itself is complete.

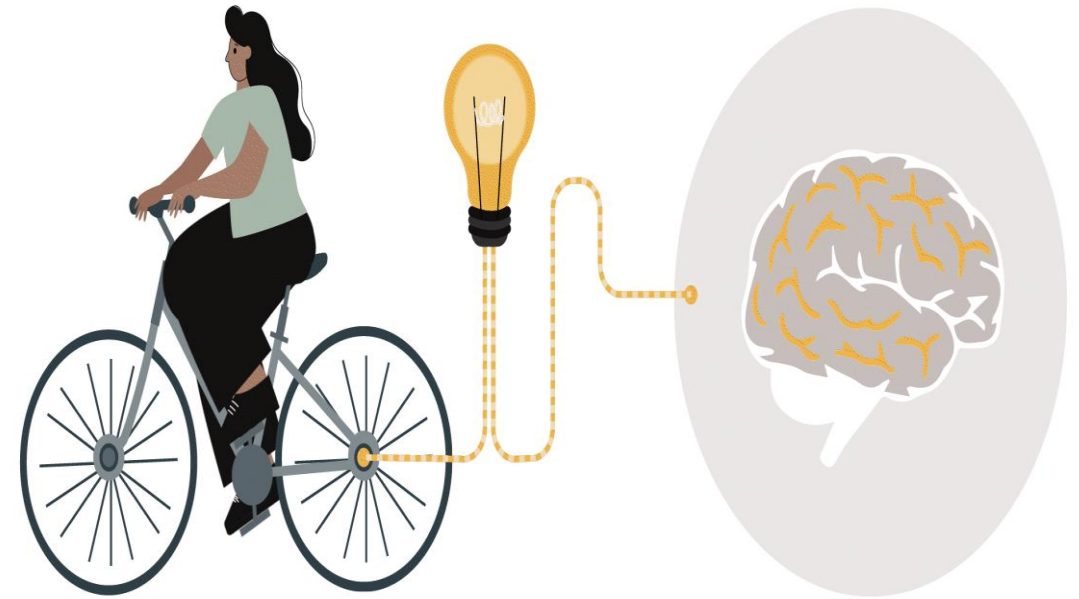
Does change stop after ending the project?



Change reinforcement

Does change stop after ending the project?

Projects generally come to an end when the objectives of the project are achieved. Change management, however, continues after the end of the project to ensure that the outcomes are successfully adopted and integrated into the organization. It is an ongoing process to continue to influence stakeholders' engagement with and ability to implement the change.

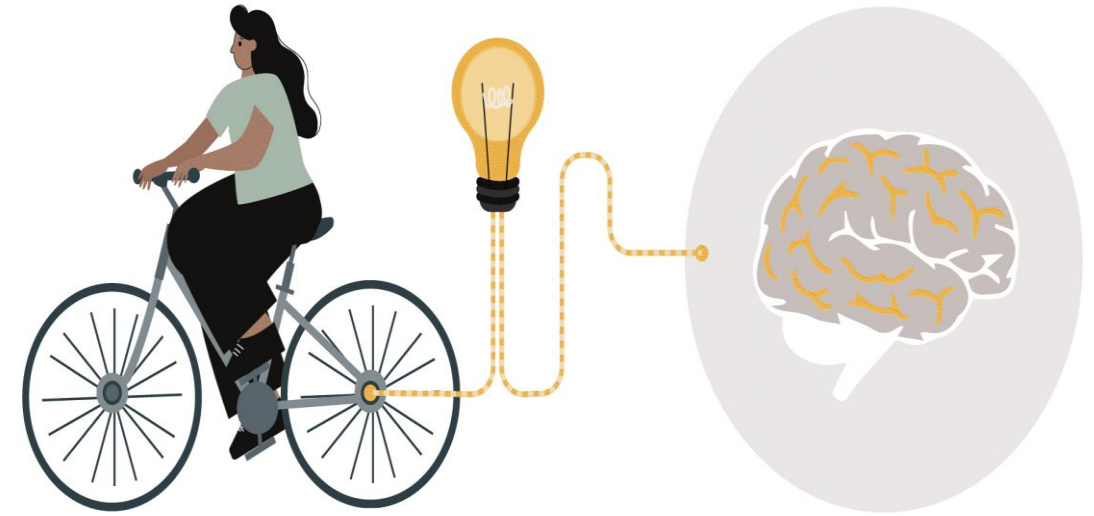


Once the project is completed, team members move on to another project and/or return to their functional roles. However, you can include ongoing communications in your project close-out process.

Change reinforcement

Does change stop after ending the project?

Recommend to the sponsor or other stakeholders who will manage the outcomes of the project that they continue communicating to keep stakeholders engaged and inhibit regression back to the former state.



You can even provide recommendations of what those communications should look like and include a transition management plan in your project.

THANK YOU