

Chapter 1

Introducing Project Communication

Many project managers take good communication for granted. They start working on a project without even thinking about how to communicate with others. The lack of a communication plan is possibly the biggest mistake the project manager and the team members make. Project communication is composed of three components:

- Communicating project information in a timely manner
- Generating the right level of information for the customers
- Collecting, distributing, and storing project information

TIP

The combination of these areas results in proper project communication. Take the time to see the bigger picture and fully understand the project communication aspects of your project.

Each team member communicates with other team members on a variety of subjects, issues, and processes daily. One common difficulty with project communication is that the project manager and team members assume they have communicated properly with each another, when most often they have not. In this chapter, we cover why you, the project manager, should plan project communication, work with personal communication, understand knowledge areas, and discover lifecycle processes.

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Going over a Project Scenario

Here is a typical communication scenario of a day in the life of a project:

1. A stakeholder requests an unexpected report.
2. A team member who is familiar with the data or has the skills to run a particular tool generates the report.
3. If the person who requested the report wants to receive it every week, the team member who created it will update it weekly and continue to send it indefinitely.

This scenario happens every day on thousands of projects. The customer requests a report, and it gets created, printed, and then sent off as soon as possible. The process is routine and requires no thinking or planning, just getting the information to the customers as soon as possible.

However, what just happened here? Or rather, what did not happen? Absolutely no planning occurred. The project manager should ask questions of the requestor as follows:

- What information does the report provide?
- What are you trying to achieve with this information?
- Who needs this report and how will they use it?
- How often is the information needed?
- How quickly do you need the report developed?
- Do you have the budget to develop this report?
- Is there an existing report that includes similar information?

Using this technique of question and answers actually develops the customer requirements for this report. This technique saves time and money by clarifying the needs of the customer before developing anything. Using this technique, the project team members gather information to develop the report and assemble enough detail to determine how to use the report with multiple stakeholders. It becomes a win-win for everyone.

When a project team member does not use this technique and simply develops the report on the fly from the initial request, it is setting a bad example and is filling a short-term request and not considering the long-term use of the information.

NOTE

Certainly, some reports should be turned around quickly, but without having a planning discipline in mind, short-term reports can quickly become long-term reports that never go away. Planning how you will communicate your project information is the responsibility of both the project team member and the customer.

Plan to Communicate, Communicate the Plan

We recommended that, as project managers begin new projects, they step back and look at how they will communicate effectively. This technique of upfront planning of your project communication is a brand new technique for the Project Management industry. Using a series of predefined planning questions forces the project manager and customers to think in a completely different way about how to deliver or receive project information. Each communication tool, such as a status report, is going to present and carry different project information. Therefore, project managers should plan how they will communicate this information to their customers, and customers should plan how they will utilize the information after they receive it. The days when project customers received and accepted generic status reports from project managers are over! For example, customers who plan the information they need for project level decision-making purposes, will no longer accept a status report that does not provide the information they need. If customers are not seeing the information they require, then the project manager has failed to communicate properly.

CROSS-REF

In Chapter 2, we cover the different ways customers want to receive project information.

CAUTION

Project managers must use their communication tools correctly. These tools enable them to deliver a variety of project statuses and, therefore, they should utilize as many tools as often as possible.

Normally, the project manager *provides* the project status to the customer, but rarely do both parties spend time together actually planning the information that is going back and forth between them. Generally, the project manager or team member sends the information to the customer without asking if the information is valuable or helpful to them, and that is the fundamental problem with project communications today. If the project manager sits down with the customers and asks them what kinds of information they need from the project, there will be a much better understanding of the information that should flow between them, and the project manager can then plan accordingly.

Upfront planning of projects is not new; project managers have been doing that for years. However, upfront planning specific to project *communication* is new but is rarely done by project managers today. We advise all project managers to plan not only their projects but also how they will communicate their project's information. We suggest learning all the communication tools in this book and then selecting the right tools based on the size of the project. Upfront planning goes a long way in effectively communicating with your customers, and some of the tools located in this book are going to help you become a great communicator.

After the upfront planning is complete and the project manager and customers agree on what communication tools will work, the project manager should send out a communication plan to all customers, clients, and upper management containing the agreed-upon information and the tools to be used on the project.

In this book, we also cover two brand-new communication tools to the project management industry. The first tool, the project communication requirements matrix, documents project roles, reports timing and frequency, and includes the names of the staff members receiving project information. The second tool is the people report matrix that provides a table displaying the project roles and the different reports those roles will receive. This allows anyone to be able to determine at a glance who is receiving what report, and this is helpful to the project manager when the customer is asking for project information. The project manager can refer to a report that the customer is already receiving that contains the same information. Finally, we highlight and discuss in detail the impact and benefits of using a project communication plan. As we all know, project communication plans are one of the most important tools a project manager can use on their project and is the tool that establishes the rhythm of project communications. Without it, the project manager, team members, or customers have no idea who is managing, controlling, or reporting project information.

CROSS-REF See Chapter 2 for more information on the project communication requirements matrix and the people report matrix.

One method you can use to plan project communication is to gather the project team members and stakeholders into a communication planning meeting. This meeting allows the group to jointly plan on who will be involved in communicating project information. During the meeting, the communication requirements matrix and the people report matrix are developed and included as part of the communication plan. The group then selects the communication tools for utilization on the project, so that everyone is aware from the start of the project what tools are used and who is responsible for creating them. After the planning meeting occurs, the project manager completes the communication plan and everyone agrees to it. The project manager sends the plan to all customers, clients, upper management, and team members to document what was agreed upon, allowing them to use the plan throughout the project. That communication plan becomes the official plan for the project.

The project management office (PMO) is important in the role of project communication. A project management office is a formal organizational structure that supports all projects and project methodologies for the organization. Normally, a Project or Program Director heads the project management office along with project managers and administrative support. The size of the project management office will vary depending on the company size and the number of projects being executed. Large corporations have had project management offices for many years. Often, project management offices set the standards for project communication tools, such as status reports, issues lists, risks, communication plans, project schedules, and so on. As a project manager, you must be aware of the governances that the project management offices have established and adhere to those rules while managing your projects. It is important that after reviewing the communication tools in this book and the different aspects covered about project communications that each project manager looks at the current policies and procedures of their own PMO to determine if there are any differences. If there are large differences, it may be because the PMOs are not following the same rigor and processes outlined in this book. This is okay because it simply represents a lack of immaturity in the PMOs at this time. As the PMO grows and establishes itself, it will learn to put great value on how important it is to communicate project information effectively and will

start to enforce the new policies and procedures that enhance project communications. A project manager who discovers large discrepancies may find value in discussing the inconsistency with the leaders of the PMO. Not everything covered in this book will be applicable to every project, or across every industry, but the foundation is solid and is an incredible starting point for any project manager in enhancing their project communications.

Understanding Project Management Knowledge Areas

The project manager and team members are involved in all aspects of the project; therefore, one of the most important things a project manager and team members can do is understand the project's knowledge areas. Knowledge areas are the nine components of any project, which are common to all projects, regardless of their size or industry. There are nine knowledge areas defined by the Project Management Institute (PMI). To be a successful project manager you should know and understand each of the areas. We cover them in the following sections.

NOTE

The Project Management Institute's Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) has called these areas Knowledge areas. The Project Management Institute (PMI) was founded in 1969 to promote the project management profession. The membership is now over a half million and growing fast. The PMI organization has developed a standard for the profession of project management and has documented those standards in the Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK).

The Project Management Institute's Project Management Body of Knowledge has included the following areas as their knowledge areas: Project Integration, Scope, Time, Cost, Quality, Human Resources, Communication, Risk, and Procurement.

Project integration management

The *project integration management* concept area includes all concept areas and activities that require coordination throughout the life of the project. The Integration knowledge area is the work required to integrate all areas of project management: Integration, Scope, Time, Cost, Quality, Human Resources, Communication, Risk, and Procurement. Most projects are undergoing continuous change that requires constant integration. A typical day for a project manager can have her shifting attention from communication issues to cost and budget concerns, and then to addressing quality issues, and so on. Project managers spend their day spread thinly between each of the nine knowledge areas, so they must have a solid understanding of each knowledge area to be able to address the project situation properly. Project managers who are unsure of a particular knowledge area will struggle until they learn that area well enough to work effectively in it. It is important that project managers understand the knowledge areas well to help them be successful in their jobs.

Project scope management

The *project scope management* identifies how to manage all the work that is required to complete the project. In many cases, creating a work breakdown structure consisting of project activities, costs associated with activities, project resource names, and the project schedule acts as a central repository for the entire project's scope. Therefore, using the work breakdown structure for project scope management is a valuable tool. The other important communication tool within the scope management area is the project communication plan. The communication plan documents and describes how the project manager or team members will communicate project information throughout the life of the project. Project scope control is a critical task that project managers undertake while managing their projects. Project managers should ensure that their project has well-defined scope and ensure that customers and management approve that scope before getting too far along in the project. Without that approval, the project's scope can easily get away from you, and your project may be negatively impacted. To prevent scope getting out of hand, project managers must ensure that at the beginning of the project they have a change control process defined and in place. A *change control process* is an important method of scope control. A common term within scope management is *scope creep*. Scope creep is adding additional work items to the original scope without going through a change control process.

NOTE

Scope creep is a common risk to projects today. Scope creep can consist of a small change like adding two or three new reports to a software development project to complex change where designers add 1000 square feet to the building.

The project scope approval process is normally project specific and is important to every project manager to understand and drive continually. There are two major groups that handle scope approval. The first group is the customers requesting the additional work, and the second group is the project manager or the team members who perform the work. In most cases, the customers or owners have the final say as to whether the additional scope is added to the project, but that often comes with a price; it is either the price of extending the project schedule or adding more costs or resources to the project.

Time management

Time management includes all aspects of managing the time components of the project. Activity estimating is a difficult component of a project to manage because, in many cases, these estimates are pessimistic *best guesses*. Your project team members normally give these to the project manager. The team members give a best guess as to how long they feel it will take to complete their assigned area of the project. Unless your project is using machines, such as in manufacturing, where scheduling the time it takes to perform a task is exact, activities estimating and working with your project team members' best guesses can be challenging. As a project manager, you are basing the success of your project on the best guess estimates given by your team members. If there are any miscalculations from anyone, your project time lines can suffer.

Time management consists of many different aspects on your project. It can range from project activities start and end dates to resource allocation, such as equipment used on a construction

project. Time management also includes schedule development and resource schedule management. Each of these activities is a component of time management.

Cost management

Cost management includes all aspects of managing the costs of your project. It is another key component of your project and is one of the core areas managed tightly by most project managers. Because cost management can be challenging, every project manager should watch it closely and regularly throughout the life of the project.

Successful cost management will require cost estimating and tracking tools. Without tools in place, cost management can be difficult, and in some cases impossible to manage. It is important that all companies provide the appropriate cost estimating tools for their project managers. If the project is cost driven, you must perform cost management activities on the projects.

Quality management

All the aspects of managing quality of your project are included in *quality management*. Quality can be a subjective measurement on a project, but by putting metrics in place, it can help quantify these measurements. In software development projects, a common measurement of quality is the count of the bugs in a program based on their severity level, for example, 10 severity 1 bug, 23 severity 2 bugs. A software project manager measures quality by measuring the number of bugs in the Severity 1 level. If a project has 5 severity 1 bugs, and the measurement of quality is 3, then the project would have failed its quality measurement.

All areas of the project should measure quality, and project documentation is no exception. All projects will have numerous documents as part of the lifecycle of the project, and those documents should be of the highest quality. The project team members review each document for content as well as acceptable levels of quality before giving their final approval.

On the majority of projects, quality management is one of the concept areas that is often overlooked. A project manager's main responsibility is to ensure the highest acceptable level of quality on a project. Quality should equal but never exceed what is in the scope of the project. For example, the manager should never approve the building of a more expensive project than what the scope requires. Quality can also refer to documentation, validation, final approval. Quality management plays an important role on all projects.

Human resource management

Human resource management includes all aspects of managing the team members who are working on a project. On most projects, managing project team members can be challenging because often, the project manager is not the team member's direct supervisor. Therefore, the project manager is working under a weak matrix structure and must continually work closely with the functional manager for their resource's time. This can be a difficult situation for project managers, but unfortunately, it is the norm in most companies.

NOTE

A weak matrix structure is a structure where the project manager does not have any formal reporting responsibilities or authority, but acts more as a coordinator when leading the project. A weak matrix structure organization is not a project-driven type of organization, but more of a functional-driven organization.

An important aspect of human resource management is consultant management. Project managers often have consultants working on their projects as regular members of the team. Consultants assigned to projects need to be managed in a different way than a team member who is an employee of the company. Project managers must be aware of these differences and look to their own human resource rules and policies to determine their management responsibilities. For example, consultants do not normally receive end-of-the-year formal performance reviews. These are usually associated with employees only.

Project human resource management is not the equivalent of the standard human resource manager in every company. A human resource manager in a company is concerned with the rules of hiring, firing, categorizing positions, and other human resource administrative aspects of people management. A project's human resource manager is responsible for the allocation of the right team members to the right activities at the right time.

Communication management

Communication management includes all aspects of managing the communication of your project. Communication management consists of the following areas: communication planning, distribution of project information, and the management of the recipient's information.

Communication management is the most important concept area on your project. Project managers who fail to communicate effectively negatively affect their projects; and in some cases this can lead to failure. All projects require constant communication to their stakeholders.

The reason that communication management is so important is that it covers every aspect of the project. For example, from the initial approval of the project to the final closeout, a project manager will consistently be communicating various aspects of the project to the team members, upper management, and their customers. If a project manager is unable to communicate effectively, in most cases they are going to struggle in this type of role. Constant communication with team members and customers will increase the chance of a project succeeding. This ongoing communication will give customers the information they need to make project level decisions.

Communication management consists of

- **Communication planning:** Plans the project information and communication of the team members and other stakeholders
- **Project information distribution:** Defines the distribution of the needed information and makes it available to the team members and other stakeholders in a timely manner

- **Performance reporting:** Identifies and reports all progress status, measurements, forecasting, and analysis on the project
- **Managing communication of internal and external stakeholders:** Managing all communication to satisfy the requirements of the project stakeholders while addressing all communication issues occurring during project execution

TIP

Communication management is providing the right information to the right people at the right time.

The acquisition and distribution of project information is the most important aspect of communication management. For example, a project manager may create a weekly project status report generated by end of day Friday, and then send it to the stakeholders for review and comments. Project managers are fully responsible for deciding what project information is created and distributed to their stakeholders.

You can communicate three ways:

- **Verbal:** Speaking to one another
- **Written:** Writing documentation or memos
- **Visual:** Presentations, body language, and video

As the project progresses, project managers need to establish a rhythm for the project and ensure that their stakeholders receive the project information in a timely manner and on a consistent basis. For example, a project manager can create a weekly performance report depicting the rate of progress on cost and schedule. Doing this allows the project manager to calculate the remaining work on the project.

Risk management

Risk management includes all aspects of managing project risks. Project managers must be observing and monitoring risks on a regular basis to ensure they do not affect the project negatively.

Risk management consists of the following areas:

- **Risk planning:** Plan for risk events and process
- **Risk identification:** Identifying possible sources of risks and risk events
- **Risk analysis:** Analyzing and qualifying risk
- **Risk response planning:** Planning the response of risk events
- **Risk monitor and control:** Monitoring, controlling, and mitigating the impacts of risk events
- **Risk closeout:** Documentation of risk events and lessons learned

Project managers must be very diligent in the tracking and managing of their project risks. Often project managers use a risk assessment form for tracking project risks; the use of this form allows for easy sharing with anyone interested in the project. Project managers need to ensure that they are tracking risks on an ongoing basis and at a minimum discussing the risks with the team members weekly. If project managers spend the time going over and reviewing project risks with their team members at weekly status meetings, it will provide the project manager with assurance that team members are still actively tracking and working the project risks. Without a weekly review, project risks can go undetected and could end up negatively affecting the project.

In the project risk management knowledge area, there are many tools available to assist project managers in planning, analyzing, and controlling project risks. These tools, such as the risk matrix, decision trees, and expected monetary value, are all available to assist the project manager in risk tracking.

CROSS-REF See Chapter 12 for more information on these tools.

Risk classification is simple: risks are normally classified as low, medium, or high, and the type of project determines the classification. For example, in the construction industry, a tilt-up building (warehouse) is a relatively low-risk project because warehouses are relatively easy to build from a construction perspective. A hospital or research lab is a high-risk project due to the number of complexities and customizations that go into these types of buildings. In construction, a medium-risk project would be somewhere in between a warehouse and a hospital; for example, a residential complex could be a medium-risk project. The project manager determines the risk level at the beginning of the project and decides the meaning of low, medium, and high. To classify a risk correctly, the project team, customers, and upper management should agree on the definitions and rating factors of these three classifications. When the classification is determined and understood, the team will work jointly to assign risk classifications to every risk event.

Procurement management

Procurement management includes all aspects of managing the procurement concept area on your project. As an example, procurement activities can include everything from when to hire team members from outside your company, to ordering weekly lunches throughout the project. On construction projects, procurement management is an important aspect of project management, with much more rigor than would be applied on a software type project. With the large number of contractors (electrical, plumbing, laborers) all working on a single project, the project manager is heavily involved in the procurement management process. Tasks such as hiring, firing, scheduling work tasks, and negotiating contracts and payouts are just a few of the activities a project manager performs in the procurement management area.

Project procurement can be a difficult area of your project to manage, especially when working with vendors or outside contractor companies. Change requests can impact the contract or budget, and every time a change is approved it can engage the project manager in the procurement area to process the change accordingly. Change requests often put strain on the relationship between the

two companies, especially when money is involved and someone is expecting payment. If one company continues to drive change requests throughout the process and expects payment for every additional work item, the relationship between the two parties may be at odds. Often an understanding exists between the two parties that not every work item is chargeable to the project; even in a fixed-bid project there is often work that is completed free of charge. When there is an expectation on both sides that not everything will be a change request, it offers goodwill between the two companies and improves the chance of future projects between them. Change requests come up most often on fixed-price (fixed-cost) contracts where additional work items are requested for the project and contractors are expecting payment, but the owner or stakeholders who requested the work expect it to be part of the original project. When such a situation occurs, it is scope creep and handled through the change request process. If the change request extends beyond the original agreement of the requirements and additional work is required, the contractor is going to expect additional payment for this work.

One important aspect of procurement management is the contract management. Contract management includes negotiating and creating contracts. Contracts can include the following:

- Labor
- Equipment
- Materials
- Agreement between two parties

NOTE

A contract is a great communication tool and is legally binding.

One aspect of the procurement concept area is administrative closeout. Administrative closeout is different from the technical aspects of closeout because administrative closeout pertains to the closing down of the activities on the project. Closing out a project includes tasks such as budget auditing, inspection and final approval, sign-off on a subcontractor's contract, archiving documents for long-term storage, and project turnover. Project managers must ensure that there is legal closeout of their project before its final turnover.

Contract administration includes the activities to start the engagement process between two parties and manage it throughout the project until closure. After the project is completed, contract administration includes the activities to formally accept and close the contract.

CAUTION

Ignoring one concept area, or leaving it for someone else to take care of, may hurt your project's chances of success.

TIP

Knowledge areas are not all created equal. As a project manager, you may not spend equal time on all areas. Therefore, your time needs adjusting accordingly when working in each knowledge area.

Explaining the Project Lifecycle Process

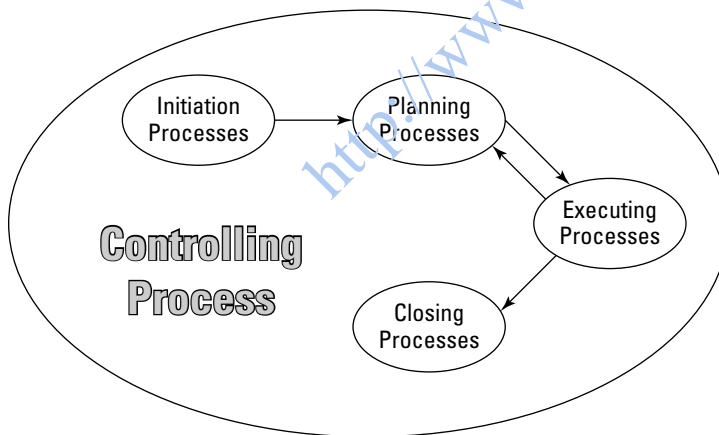
Project managers can use many different methodologies to manage projects, and each industry has a unique methodology for managing projects. For example, a software development project has an industry-specific methodology, and each methodology has a unique project lifecycle process. Regardless of the particular lifecycle process, common processes exist among them. These processes may have different names across the industry or methodology, but the core phases remain the same. The descriptions and details are below.

There are five process groups within the PMBOK. The groups are Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Controlling, and Closing. Every project has these process groups.

Figure 1.1 shows a graphical presentation of the *project lifecycle* process. As you can see, the five processes in this chart all relate in one way or another. The Initiating process starts a project and then moves to the Planning process, and the Executing process starts at the actual creation of the product. A back-and-forth process occurs between the Executing process and the Planning process throughout the project, and finally, the Closing process completes the project. During the lifecycle, the Controlling process oversees the activities occurring in each process area and provides rigor and structure to how the team accomplishes each task.

FIGURE 1.1

This is an example of a typical project lifecycle process chart and all the interactions between the processes.



TIP

It is critical for a project manager to understand the project lifecycles process, and it will certainly increase your chances of success.

Initiating progress group

The project initiation activities are the startup tasks required on every project to get it under way. A wide range of activities is included in project initiation tasks for every project. These activities include initial project setup documents, creating budget forecasts, hiring consultants, and project schedule creation. In most cases, it takes time to start up a project correctly, so do not rush through creating the work deliverables; it will only hurt your project. If you forget something important early on in the project, it may be difficult to go back and make corrections. The schedule baseline is a good example of something that, if missed initially, cannot be re-created easily. Schedule baselines are taken before any process is recorded on the project. When the project moves to the executing phase, it is next to impossible to go back and take a baseline snapshot. Ensure every deliverable you complete is the highest level of quality the project can sustain. To ensure a high level of quality, the project manager will describe the quality standard for the team for each deliverable. For example, when completing a requirements document, all sections of the document must be either completed or noted as not applicable to the project. When doing so, this improves the quality of the document because it does not look like sections are missing; they just may not be needed for this type of project.

Depending on the methodology selected for your project, these activities can take weeks or months to complete. On larger construction projects, the start-up activities can sometimes take years before the project actually starts. In software projects, the small to medium size projects can often take a couple of weeks to a month to begin. Most methodologies define in detail the start activities required to move to the next phase. In many cases, the start-up activities for project managers are consistent across the same industry and project type. The different methodologies have different start-up activities, and that information is available to anyone interested in the methodologies documentation or training materials.

Planning progress group

Project planning activities include the expansion of the project charter and the gathering of the necessary information to plan and design the product of the project. The project manager and the team members plan the project execution. During the planning phase, the project manager performs the following:

- Plans and defines project scope
- Develops work breakdown structure
- Creates the project schedule and assigns resources
- Creates a project budget
- Generates a risk plan and analysis
- Develops a quality plan
- Creates a communication plan
- Develops a procurement and contract administration plan

NOTE

Each of the preceding activities is applicable to the planning area. The project manager decides what order to perform these activities, but each needs completing before finishing the planning phase.

Executing progress group

Project execution is the process of performing the activities assigned to all stakeholders of the project. These stakeholders include the project manager, project team member, and other individuals who are assigned work tasks for the project. Only the work activities executed and documented in the project management plan should be included in the project. The executing phase of the project is one of the project manager's top responsibilities.

One of the tasks of the project manager at the beginning of the executing process is the creation of the project team. Throughout the executing phase, the project manager mentors the project team members. It is the project manager's role to ensure that team members execute their work activities in a timely manner while maintaining a high level of quality. The execution phase is also the most difficult and time consuming for a project manager; as the team members execute their work activities, and as problems and issues arise, the project manager needs to be on top of the problems and drive them to successful completion.

Quality assurance monitoring is also an important aspect of the executing phase of the project. All project team members who have work assignments complete quality assurance activities. The project manager has the ultimate responsibility to see that the quality meets the project requirements.

Controlling progress group

Project monitoring and control includes the process of performing the activity of oversight and control of all the work necessary to complete a successful project. The monitoring and controlling of work on the project spans all lifecycle activities. Portions of work from the initiating process to the closeout process require constant monitoring to ensure a successful completion. This aspect of the project lifecycle is the most time consuming for any project manager because of the need to understand every component of the project and to know whether the individual project activities are under control. If not, the project manager would step in and take control of the process until it has recovered and is back under control.

TIP

The controlling process spans across the entire lifecycle of the project.

Monitoring and controlling the process requires the active engagement of the project manager at all times. All projects will have the monitoring and controlling process integrated within them to ensure there is oversight by the project management team. The monitoring and controlling of a project is where project managers either do a great job or fall down and perform miserably. The constant monitoring and controlling of your project is an area where a project manager who is on top of their project can enhance the chances of success.

Closing process group

The project closeout process includes the finalization of all activities across all of the knowledge areas of the project. These activities include everything from finalizing contracts, reassigning staff, archiving documents for long-term storage, final documentation audits, and other shutdown activities.

There are two types of closeouts on a project:

- Technical closeout is the activities performed to complete the delivery of the product. The product delivered must meet the agreed-upon technical specifications. Therefore, to confirm this requirement, the project team must refer to the technical documentation and the final product to ensure it meets the required specification. During this phase, the project manager and team members must continually verify the quality of the project.
- Administrative closeout is the signing and archiving of all final documents and contracts and turning over of the product to the owner. An important aspect of administrative closeout is capturing the final approval and acceptance on all contract conditions by the project owner and team members. It also includes the reassigning of project staff and any final budget transfer or closeout processes. Many times during the administrative closeout process, an audit of the work's activities is required.

One of the important aspects of project closeout, specifically administrative closeout, is the capturing of the lessons learned information. Normally captured at the end of the project, lessons learned information is invaluable for the future projects that are of a similar nature. The information compiled and reported to the project team and stakeholders is historical knowledge of the project's events. It is important to store the lessons learned information as part of an overall knowledge base repository for other project teams to review.

CROSS-REF See Chapter 2 for more information on the lessons learned document.

Finally, project managers should remember how important the warranty period is on a project. The warranty period starts after delivery of the product to the owner. Project managers should be alert and have the project's maintenance team ready to respond to any issues or problems with the delivered product after the warranty period begins. The warranty period is going to differ for each project based on the industry, priority, and the impacts to the customers. A lower-priority project may not have a long warranty period, where a high-priority, high-criticality project would. Another example would be a construction project's warranty; in most cases this would be longer than a warranty period for a software development project. Warranty periods are not applicable to every project.

Summary

This chapter covered the importance of project communication. Successful project managers utilize both knowledge areas and lifecycle processes to communicate effectively their project information. Understanding and using the knowledge areas and lifecycle processes are fundamental to your success as a project manager. It is important that project managers and team members understand their roles and are comfortable with their responsibilities of communicating project information.

The most important aspect this chapter covers is the planning of communication tools used on your project. In most cases, this is a paradigm shift for the project management industry and to project managers in general. Project managers should spend the time at the beginning of the project to select the communication tools that they plan to utilize. The tools selected can affect the overall outcome of the project. This selection process includes both the project manager and the customer selecting the tools they feel are necessary for communicating effectively. A lack of communication planning can have the team scrambling and producing information that may or may not be valuable and potentially become a time waster.

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