

Project Management

Topic 3.4

Communication Tools



Communication Tools

- 90% of PM's time is spent communicating
- PM's must use every tool and technology available
- Websites and video conferences are particularly useful for large and widely dispersed teams

Formula for communication channels between participants,
where N = number of participants

$$\text{Number of communication channels} = [N(N-1)]/2$$

Example for 3 teams of 10 people each (i.e. 30 participants)

$$\text{Number of communication channels} = [30(30-1)]/2 = 435$$

Website Value

- Aids communication
 - Within teams, between teams, with all stakeholders
- Aids global teams
 - Facilitates communications across multiple time zones
 - Minimizes effects of varying verbal skills
- Promotes information sharing
- Enables threaded discussions
- Facilitates project documentation

Website Selection Criteria

- ✓ Easy to access and use
- ✓ Highly flexible to meet project needs
- ✓ All users have ability to input information
- ✓ Automatically generates activity reports
- ✓ Supports file capacity for transmittal of documents and drawings
- ✓ Facilitates information transfer to project documentation

3.4.1 Team Exercise



Project Website

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Video Conferencing

- Primarily for dispersed project teams
- Avoids cost & time traveling to meetings
- Facilitates more communication
- Follows protocol of effective meetings
- Requires an appropriate hardware and infrastructure to implement (ie: Skype[®] or other free video conferencing services)

Before Video Conference

1. Identify meeting locations
2. Set time considering varying time zones
3. Send out meeting notice and agenda
4. Make topic assignments
5. Follow up creation of presentations
6. Send out presentations prior to meeting

BEFORE

During Video Conference

1. Silence cellphones and pagers
2. Cease texting and smartphone email check-ups
3. Be courteous & avoid interruptions
4. Avoid side bar discussions
5. Speak clearly & deliberately into microphone
6. Speak slowly with pauses
7. Mute phone while others are speaking
8. Repeat assignments and decisions to ensure understanding

DURING

After Video Conference

1. Thank host and clean up the room
2. Send out minutes within 24 hours
3. Incorporate and distribute any changes to the presentations
4. Follow up on decisions and assignments
5. Post new and update old items to the open issues list

AFTER

3.4.2 Simulation



Video Conference Call

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3.4.3 Roundtable Exercise



Meetings & Video Call

- What value does the agenda add to a meeting?
- What experience have you had with meeting minutes that were never made or late? What was the result?
- What's your experience with video calls? What do you like? What do you dislike?

Share your thoughts in roundtable discussion

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