

COMMUNICATION TOOLS

PMGT 502 WBS 2.2 Blog

“Communication Tools”

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Effective Communication for Managing Projects

PMGT-502

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2.2 - Deliverable: Blog

After completing the assigned readings of Chapter's 2 and 3, I decided my first blog would be to address what new communication tools I might consider using and how I would use them, and the problems associated with communications overload, in my work environment, and how I could mitigate these problems.

Communications tools vary between those associated with knowledge areas and those associated with process groups. As part of the process Project Management Service Team within Textron Aviation my primary functions rest within the Executing and Controlling Processes and closing process associated with the project life cycle. Areas I would consider using are project status meetings, issue lists, risk assessment forms, and the daily status report. Each of these communication tools is designed to include the team and customer throughout the process. Status meetings provide a communication point where members of the team can bring to light any issue(s) that might become a hindrance to the project timeline, or perhaps might be something that requires risk assessment, whereas it might not have been in the beginning phases of the project. The daily status report is something I already provide to my customers, but perhaps should also include the project team. I believe the inclusion of the team within the whole process might better equipment them when it comes to their flow and decision making process.

Today's technological advancements make it possible to communicate while driving, at dinner, or perhaps even in the rest room. Email, Twitter, Slack, Facebook, a simple phone call, and a host of other means make it possible for each of us to reach the world at a touch of a finger but, in today's project management environment, that can lead to a manager spending more time trying to dig out from under a sea of messages than they spend managing the project itself. The

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establishment of a communications plan helps establish “who”, “what”, “where”, “how”, and “when”, which drives communication needs throughout the project life cycle (Dow & Taylor, 2015, Pg. 49).

In my work environment, the two biggest problem areas involve an international clientele, which require differing types of communication, and their location (time zone) which also creates an issue as to when. Project complexity is one issue, but this complexity also includes the communication process. Example: I have customer from Nigeria who is 5 to 6 hours ahead of my facility. Their questions on Monday morning won't be my Monday morning questions until their afternoon. In their minds, a day has been wasted waiting for information. It is not easy to establish reliable timely communications via phone, IM, or email. Email is often blocked by company firewall and is not often received until much later than when it was sent. When faced with these issues, I often refer the customer to establishing a Drop Box account where we can both share and edit communication from just about anywhere. The methods had to change to meet the situation; It was the only way to mitigate the issue of time (when) and communication. In the end, establishing a clear set of rules and understandings help eliminate confusion, frustration and, ultimately, overload.

References

Dow, W. & Taylor, B. (2015). *Project Management Communication Tools*. Dow Publishing LLC., Renton, WA