

FUKUSHIMA ACCIDENT REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Control Communications

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Capstone Project

PMGT-690

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Fukushima Daichii Reactors Accident Request for Proposal

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Anatomy of Project Organizations

PMGT-612

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Plan Communications Management

Process Summary

The process for planning communications management is based on the stakeholders need for information throughout the project. When creating the communications management plan, all types of communications need to be considered such as: internal, external, formal, informal, vertical, official, unofficial, written, oral, and/or verbal (PMBOK, 2013). There are several inputs for this process that need to be considered to develop an effective and complete plan for communications management, those inputs are the project management plan, stakeholder register, enterprise environmental factors, and the organizational process assets (PMBOK, 2013). During this process, a communication requirements analysis should be utilized to develop the plan along with communication models, methods, and meetings (PMBOK, 2013).

The end goal of this process is to create a communication management plan that will guide the required communications for the success of the project. By the conclusion of this process the project documents will be updated to reflect the information developed for the communication management plan. As the project progresses, there might be a need for changing this plan and updating the project documents to reflect these changes, this will be managed by the change process outlined in the project plan documents.

Plan Communications Management in a Global Setting

Communications management is paramount in traditional project management and can be considered critical for project management in a global setting. Considering the possibility of teams being spread out across, not only by country boundaries but cultural boundaries as well, the ability for team members to communicate between each other and the project team's ability to communicate with stakeholders is one of the keys to project success.

The inputs for creating a communication management plan within the project would remain the same as that with traditional project management. There will, however, be increased difficulty in determining the enterprise environmental factors and the organizational process assets due to the global setting. Also, since communications are based heavily on stakeholder analysis the difficulties experienced during that process will translate into difficulties in developing the communication plan.

There are three main obstacles to communication over global boundaries: politics, culture, and language (Rajkumar, 2010). Project management in a global setting is likely to involve political interests which could hinder the dialogue between the project team and its stakeholders; in order to combat this possibility, the political players should be identified and their buy-in needs to be secured to free up the communications with stakeholders (Rajkumar, 2010). The cultural differences between parties should be understood by the team and planned for in the project communications plan. The most obvious difficulty that the project management plan must account for are the linguistic differences. Not only does this concern language differences but also the differences in jargon; understanding there are different terms for the same processes and items can alleviate frustration and improve communications between team members. Keeping a glossary of these differences is one way of overcoming this challenge.

Application on a Failed Project

Communication issues tend to be at the heart of project failure highlighting the need for a formal communication plan. Project Management Institute's (PMI) *Pulse of the Profession* did research in 2013 that shows that 55 percent of project managers feel effective communications with stakeholders is a critical factor in successful project management (The High Cost, 2013). There are two major challenges facing organizations in regards to communication effectiveness:

effective understanding of the business benefit and language barriers. In order to overcome these challenges, organizations should communicate the strategic benefits to the project team frequently. This can be planned within the project communication plan by outlining the timeline and process through which this information will be disbursed. Developing an organized communication plan for the project will also ensure that communications to each stakeholder are tailored and disbursed at appropriate intervals. Organizing the information into a communications matrix allows the project team to easily streamline their communication process and ensure there are not any communication gaps. Also, it will allow for updates to the process and requirements as they are discovered while making the expectations known to the entire team through standardization.

Fukushima Daiichi Applicability

Outlining a strong communication plan is imperative for project success. For this project, we will determine stakeholder and team communication needs which will be organized into a table such as the one seen in Table 8. Considering the team will have components that are not co-located with the rest of the team, the use of technology such as e-mail, chat, video conferencing, and web sharing will need to be used to ensure that communications are available to each team member. The use of web sharing software will be utilized to ensure the information communicated between team members will be available for the rest of the team to reference. Often when e-mail is the primary means of communication the information is only available to those included in the e-mail, and therefore, information is easily lost. This makes sharing of knowledge difficult within a team environment. It is also important to note that in order to develop a sense of trust and responsibility within the team, face to face meetings will be utilized wherever possible. This will not always be possible and therefore in the place of face to face

meetings the team will utilize video conferencing. Figure 5 indicates the hierarchy of communication tools that are expected to be used.

Table 1 - Template for developing the communication matrix

Type of Comm.	Objective	Medium	Frequency	Audience	Owner	Deliverable
Kickoff Meeting	Introductions review of objectives	Face to Face	Once	Project Sponsor Project Team Stakeholders	Project manager	Meeting Agenda Meeting Minutes
Team Meetings	Review project status	Face to Face Video Conference	Weekly	Project Team	Project Manager	Meeting Agenda Meeting Minutes
Monthly Status Reports	Report project status to management	Video conference presentation E-mail	Monthly	Stakeholders Project Sponsor Project Team	Project Manager	Status report

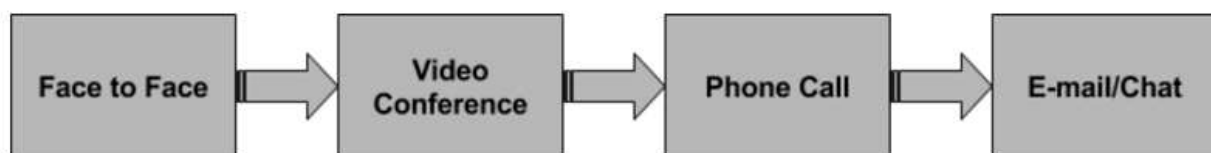


Figure 1 - Hierarchy of Communications Flow Chart

Manage Communications

Process Summary

The plan communications management process leads directly into managing communications. This process is the act of creating, collecting, distributing, storing, and retrieving project information as laid out by the communication plan (PMBOK, 2013). The inputs to this process are the communications management plan, work performance reports and indirectly the enterprise environmental factors and organizational process assets due to their input into the communication plan (PMBOK, 2013). This process is continuous and should be audited constantly; using the tools listed indications of communication difficulties which might lead to project failure can be identified and dealt with accordingly.

The act of communicating should utilize various communications technologies that are available to the team, communication models and methods, information management systems, and performance reporting techniques (PMBOK, 2013). For teams that are not co-located software that allows for video conferencing, or at the least teleconferencing, is a must. Setting up a team share point site that streamlines information sharing is crucial in any team.

This process represents the actual communications between team members and stakeholders; as communications are experienced and lessons are learned the project management plan should be updated to reflect these lessons. A failure to properly manage communications could lead to the complete failure of the project.

Manage Communications in a Global Setting

As discussed previously, there are three main difficulties for communicating globally: politics, culture, and linguistics. Often, global teams are not co-located and therefore technology

must be used to ensure there is communication between each of the team members. Face to face meetings are the preferred meeting methods for the most effective communication which also helps build relationships between the team members. Since most global teams can expect to be virtual, at least partially, this makes face to face meeting difficult; technology such as videoconferencing can help bridge that gap.

In a conference paper written for the Project Management Institute, Rajkumar (2010) outlines four tips for achieving successful communication in a team environment which apply to the global team as well. First you must recognize and understand the differences with who you are communicating. Then, once the differences are understood and acknowledged the sender must create the message to be communicated. The goal of this message should be clear and take into account the differences recognized. Once the message is created it can then be delivered, this requires the sender to consider the best delivery option based on the message and the differences between the sender and the receiver. The last step is to receive feedback from the receiver in order to check for understanding of the message.

Application on a Failed Project

Many failed projects fail in part due to communication issues. This underlines the importance of creating a communication plan early on in the project planning phase and then updating that plan as communications are distributed and knowledge is gained on which communications are less appropriate. When it is apparent communication has become a problem, there are several techniques which are useful in diagnosing and recovering from communication issues. Tools such as the fishbone diagram and root cause analysis are useful in determining what the underlying problem is, allowing the project manager and team to tackle the real issue, in turn promoting healthy communication.

When turning around a failing project, the process of managing and subsequently controlling communications is crucial; whether the root cause of project failure was indeed communication issues or some other issue, it is likely communication played a factor in allowing the issues to continue to the point of project failure. This information needs to be considered and planned for when developing the communication plan for a project that is or has failed.

Fukushima Daiichi Applicability

The communication plan that will be developed for use in the Fukushima Daiichi project will outline communication expectations for the project team and stakeholders. The template outlined previously in *Table 8* will contain the requirements for communications throughout the project but will be subject to updating as the project progresses and communications requirements change. Developing the communications plan may encounter challenges due to cultural and language barriers between the project team and the stakeholders; it is expected that new information will be discovered and will require updating of the communication plan. A root cause analysis will be used to get a handle on the communication issues that lead to the failure of the project in the first place. Figure 6 is the basic template to be used for a root cause analysis of communication issues for the Fukushima Daiichi Project.

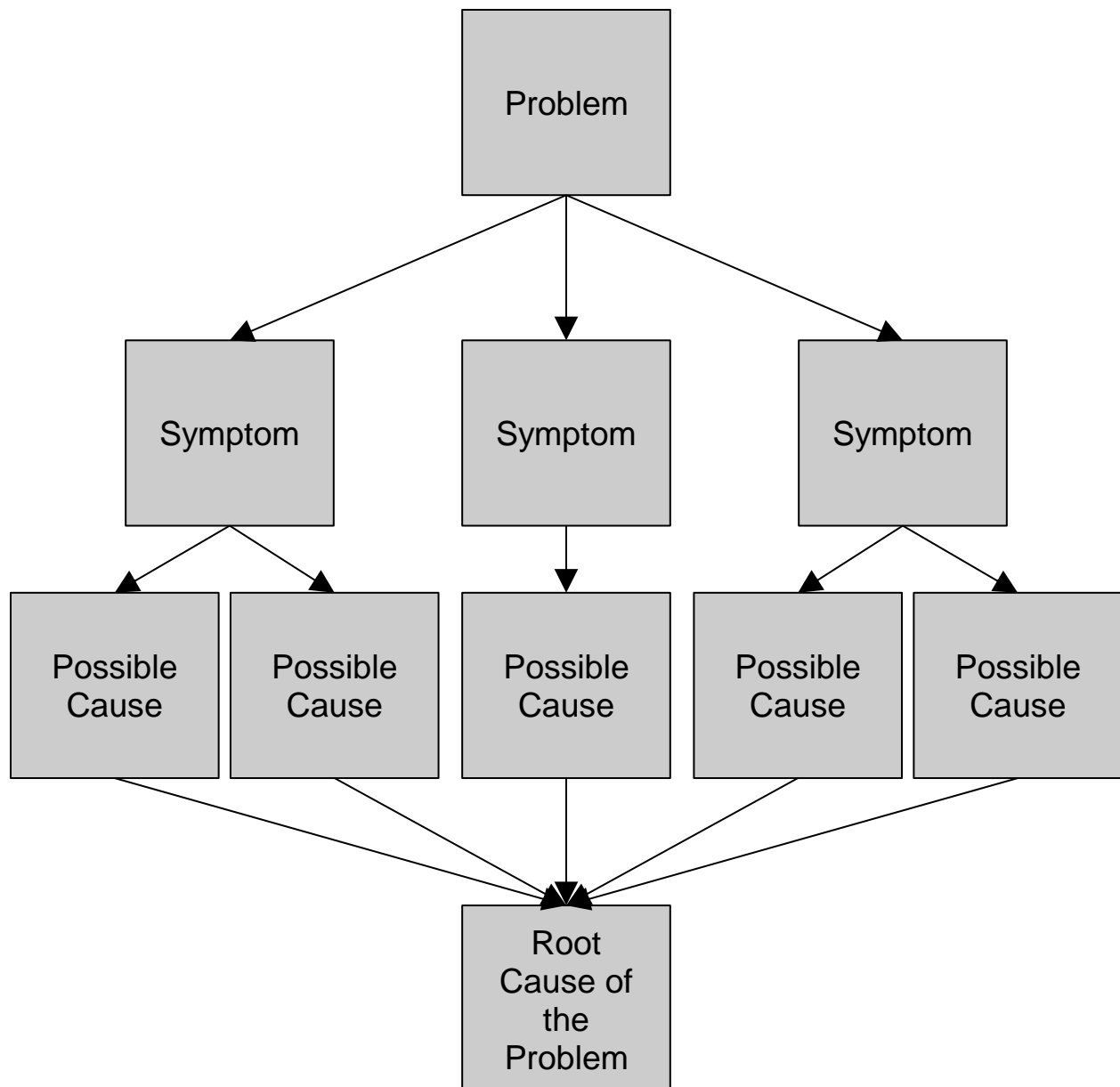


Figure 2 - Basic Template for Root Cause Analysis

The goal of communications during the Fukushima Daiichi Project is to target the correct messages to the right people, at the right time, using the correct channel. This will be done by adhering to the communications responsibilities outlined by the communication plan. The understanding of this plan will be fostered within the project team and among the stakeholders in order to promote healthy communications.

Control Communications

Process Summary

The control communications is the process of continual monitoring and controlling of the project's communications (PMBOK, 2013). The inputs are shaped largely by the communications management plan and include project management plan documents, issue logs, work performance data, and the organization process assets (PMBOK, 2013). As progress continues throughout the project, adjustments will need to be made to the communications plan to ensure healthy communications are promoted.

The tools and techniques available to the project manager for oversight in this process include the information management system in use by the project team, expert judgement, and meetings. The use of these tools will be outlined in the manage communications plan. Since this is an ongoing process throughout the life of the project this process will result in various updates and information that needs to be used to update the project documents. Such outputs are work performance information, change requests, along with updates to the project management plan, project documents and organization process assets (PMBOK, 2013). Healthy communication is crucial to project success and therefore, the process of controlling project communication should be closely monitored.

Control Communications in a Global Setting

Business in a global setting presents the project manager with many challenges and communication is no exception. The cultural differences and language barriers can cause a multitude of communication issues. In setting up the communication plan for a project in a global setting, the project manager must consider the challenges they might face such as differences in terminology, local preferences, and even the differences in preferred

communication channels (Linton, 2013). Even the work habits of the workers within that culture can create challenges that need to be overcome using appropriate methods laid out in the communication plan for the project.

The control communications process is managed by the project communication plan but the communication plan will not identify each possible issue that might arise from communications in this setting, therefore, monitoring this process is critical so issues can be identified and changes enacted before the issue grows. Potential barriers that need to be considered are, but not limited to: cultural frames, ethnocentrism, false attributions, stereotypes, and cultural etiquette (Dzenowagis, 2008). The key to successful communication in the global setting is awareness of the intercultural communication process (Dzenowagis, 2008).

Application on a Failed Project

According to the Project Management Institute (PMI), poor communication is the number one factor in failing projects (Monkhouse, 2015). There are three basic parts to project communications; first is the method of communicating, second is the content that is being communicated, and third is the business language that is being used (Monkhouse, 2015). Project managers may have little control over the method of communication but they do have the ability to control the content and language being used.

In the context of a failing project, the project manager must take stock of the issues that have put the project into this position. One method for getting a handle on the shortcomings is to perform a gap analysis. With a gap analysis, the team must first examine the project documents and then determine where there are gaps in what was expected and what was completed. This analysis should include interviewing stakeholders and in turn will encourage communication between the team and key stakeholders (Kliem, 2011). This will allow for the project manager

and project team to assess the communication plan, determine what went wrong, and make adjustments to ensure project success.

Controlling communications is an ongoing process. A project that finds itself failing should be assessing the communication plan and process throughout the entire process, and therefore making updates as issues arise; a failure to do so will result in project failure.

Fukushima Daiichi Applicability

The process of controlling communications throughout the duration of the Fukushima Daiichi Project is driven by the project communication management plan. The communication management plan must clearly outline the who, what, how, and when of project communications. This will be done using a matrix indicating the type of communication, the objective of that communication, the delivery method, and frequency for which the communication should be delivered. An example of the communications matrix can be seen in *Table 8*. This matrix also indicates the owner of that particular communication type and the deliverables they are expected to produce. This allows for failures to be identified easily and clearly outlines responsibility among the team. During the process of controlling communications, the project manager and team must be open for identifying issues within the communication process and make adjustments accordingly.

This process requires the cooperation and input from the project team to identify issues and update the process. When there is a need for adjustment to the communication process a change request will be used to initiate the process of updating, this change request process is to be outlined in the project documents under the communication plan.

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