

WBS 8.2 Blog

Communications Tools

Benjamin Srock

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Worldwide Campus

Effective Communication for Managing Projects

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Ki-Young Jeong Ph.D.

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Thinking about Chapter 16 of the Project Management Communication Tools, answer both of the following questions:

Welcome to my Week 8 Blog!

This week's blog deals directly with using communication tools during the initiating process.

While there are many tools to choose from, we can all agree that the beginning, or initiating, phases of the project plan are critical for starting the project correctly (Dow & Taylor, 2015)

This week, I visit the following two questions:

- 1. Consider the work that you do on a daily basis. What are a couple of tools and techniques you could implement to make your life easier? How could these tools help with communications?**

On a daily basis, I work with internal and external customers in support of aircraft maintenance projects. Some of these internal customers are interdepartmental personnel from within our organizations location, while others are within the factory service center support structure. External customers include those vendors who provide services our facility is not rated or equipped to handle. Communication and coordination are key to utilizing various vendors on any project, and as such I think a couple of tools that could make my life easier are:

- **Mastering the kick-off meeting**

The kickoff meeting sets the tone and serves as a source of motivation. Bringing together those team members and various stakeholders helps everyone understand the project, risks, timeline, and what role they play within the project plan. This

helps with communication by establishing a clear understanding of where each stakeholder comes into play and with whom they will be working. Building a team begins with helping everyone understand who the team members are and how they help each other. Since coordination is the most difficult thing I deal with day-in and day-out, a successful kick-off will help eliminate confusion that typically surrounds projects requiring more than one vendor or stakeholder.

- **Mastering the customer requirements document**

The customer requirements document answers questions such as:

- What are you trying to accomplish?
- What are the project goals?
- What are your business needs?
- What are the critical success factors for this project?

Thinking back to the kick-off meeting, it would not be possible to have a successful meeting without the answers to these questions. You have to understand what you are trying to do, if you ever expect to accomplish what that might be. The Customer Requirements Document can be provided by the customer, but it's important to remember who will be using this document and who it is intended to help. Since the team will be those who utilize this document, it must help them in the accomplishment of their tasks. Once this document is agreed to, it will serve as the road map.

2. Consider that you will be developing a professional portfolio as a final project before you complete this program. What tools might you use to show competency and proficiency within the PMBOK® Guide knowledge area/ process group matrix?

This is a very difficult question to nail down. I would think the tools I would use to show competency and proficiency are those tools associated with initiating, planning, executing, monitoring & controlling, and closing. Displaying an understanding proficiency with the Project Charter would certainly help solidify my understanding of the initiating phase of the project. For planning, I would use the Project Management Plan. It helps address the plan for the aspect of time, cost, risk, and quality. This plan is the roadmap for the team to follow. For executing, I would demonstrate understanding of the stakeholder management plan. The stakeholder management plan documents how you will work with and manage your project stakeholders (Dow & Taylor, 2015, Pg. 381). For monitoring and controlling, I would utilize the communications plan. The Communications plan help you decide, document, and plan the project's information needs (Dow & Taylor, 2015, Pg. 268). Gathering and documenting information is key to making the decisions necessary to manage and control any project. Lastly, for closing, I would utilize the lessons learned as this document helps reflect upon those aspects of the project that could be improved upon. Learning from mistakes and for successes help provide a sense of accomplishment and education.

References

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