

Communications Plan

REF 8006G

Scope

The purpose of this reference document is to establish an internal and external communication strategy and determine the information needs of all project delivery team (PDT) members and stakeholders - who needs what information, when they will need it, how it will be given to them, and by whom. The complexity of the project and impacts to the PDT and stakeholders will determine the appropriate level of detail for the Communications Plan for the project. The Communications Plan for the project is a supporting document that facilitates the implementation of the Project Management Plan (PMP), along with *Quality Management – REF8008G*, *Risk Management – REF8007G*, *Safety and Occupational Health – REF8016G*, *Change Management – REF8009G*, and *Value Management – REF8023G* Plan. Plans are developed concurrently in the iterative Project Planning Phase.

Responsibility

- The Project Manager (PM) is responsible for:
 - Initiating and facilitating the development of the Communications Plan.
 - Incorporating the Communications Plan into the project's Project Management Plan (PMP); the PM will ask for Public Affairs Office support, as a member of the PDT, for the development of the Communications Plan based on the complexity and sensitivity of the project.
- The Project Delivery Team (PDT) is responsible for assisting the PM in determining all stakeholder project communications requirements, as well as internal communications needed.

Distribution

- Project Manager (PM)
- Project Delivery Team (PDT)
- Public Affairs Office (PAO)

Ownership

The PMBP Program Manager is responsible for ensuring that this document is necessary, that it reflects actual practice, and that it supports corporate policy.

Communications Plan Content

The Communications Plan could include, but not be limited to, the following:

- PDT Communication Requirements.
- Project Stakeholder Communication Requirements - An analysis of communication requirements of all project stakeholders such as Partnering.
- Project Stakeholders Communication Strategy.
- Key Messages for Project Stakeholders.
- Method to evaluate Effectiveness of Communication Strategy - Document in AAR/lessons learned during project execution and project closeout.
- Reporting Relationships - Describe in sufficient detail project reporting relationships.
- Collection and filing - How will project information be gathered and stored. To include describing the criteria to be used to determine the frequency that Project Delivery Team will progress and update project activities.
- Communication Distribution Structure - Who gets what type of information, what methods will be used to distribute various types of information. If applicable, discuss the use of web sites and other technology.
- Description of information to be distributed - What is the content of information distributed.
- Production schedules - When will each type of communication be produced.
- Criteria to determine the frequency to conduct Project Delivery Team performance review meetings.
- Method of accessing information between scheduled communications.
- Methods for updating and refining the Communications Plan as the project progresses and changes.

Communications Plan Methodology

1. Identify project stakeholders.
 - The PDT needs to determine the following:
 - Who is affected by the project?
 - Who affects the project?
 - How, when and why?

- Consider geography, economics, quality of life, and political sensitivity when determining internal and external interested parties. Document this information for easy access by the PDT, review and update as needed.
2. Identify the problems, concerns and/or issues.
Issues to be considered include, but not limited to:
 - Technical
 - Institutional
 - Political (Tribal, Federal, State, Local)
 - Environmental
 - Economic/Fiscal
 - Cultural
 - Safety and Health
 - Legal
 - OtherHow do these problems/concerns/issues affect the project?
 3. Listen, understand, and verify expectations, problems, concerns, and issues.
How to get to the issues:
 - Talk with local sponsors/customers.
 - Review existing documents.
 - Talk with interest groups.The customer has a significant role in the development of the Communications Plan.
 4. The PM initiates the development of a draft communication requirements document that outlines and analyzes information needs of project stakeholders, then designs a communication strategy for each stakeholder with linkages to appropriate project milestones.
Determine key decision points in the project/study, according to the following:
Information requirements/expectations.
Project schedule milestones.
 5. Note impacts, and risk (addressed in Risk Management Plan)
 6. Analyze the relationship between key decision points in the project and the stakeholders' concerns.
 7. Develop key messages for each key decision point that consider the following characteristics for an effective message (ensure a match with project goals and objectives):
 - Timeliness
 - Clarity
 - Honesty
 - Sensitivity
 - Relevance
 - Openness
 - ConsistencyConsider use of the following:
 - Request professional assistance, such as facilitators to conduct meetings.
 - Note potential schedule/budget constraints.
 - Plan for 360-degree feedback with interested parties.
 - Use of partnering during the design phase (Design Charrettes) or the construction phase.
 8. PDT reviews and comments on draft stakeholder communication requirements document.
 9. PM consolidates PDT review comments of communications requirements document, and adds enough additional information to address the recommended Communications Plan contents.
 10. PM submits Communications Plan to the PDT for review.
 11. PDT reviews the Communications Plan.
 12. When the Communications Plan is finalized, the PM incorporates it into the project's PMP.
 13. Evaluate effectiveness and document in *After Action Report (AAR)/Lessons Learned – PROC3020*, as required throughout the life-cycle of the project.

Effective: May 2009