Communication Planning

by Sophia

In this lesson, we'll discuss how to plan out a project's communications:

1. Elements of a Communication Plan

Every project needs a **communication planning** with stakeholders and team members, and to define the details each group needs.

The project manager will communicate varying levels of project status throughout a project's life cycle, and communication plans cover the rules and routes of this communication.

It's the project manager's responsibility to both create the communication plan and to ensure that all communications are clear and timely.

COMMUNICATION PLAN				
Type	**Recipients**	**Frequency**	**Methods**	**Created By**
Status Report	Project Sponsor, VP of Development	Monthly	Status Meeting, Email	Project Manager
Mini Status Report	Team	Daily	SharePoint Site	Project Manager, Team Leads

As you can see in the image above, the elements of a communication plan are as follows:

1. Types of Communication
Some examples of types reported on with each project are **status reports**, budget schedule, and risks.

2. Providers and the recipients of each communication.
Key stakeholders in groups on the team should be documented according to the level of communication they will need. Not every group needs the same detail about a project, so break down the communication plans by the groups involved.

3. Frequency with which communication should occur.
Some communications recur on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis; others occur at the end of phases or gates, or after key project dates. Websites, bug reporting software, and project logs work well when

information is requested intermittently.

> ↗ EXAMPLE Status reports might be shared with team members daily, but only with key stakeholders at weekly or monthly meetings.

4. Communication methods

There are a wide variety of **communication methods**, so the project manager should use the tool that helps convey the detail needed in the best manner. For consistent communication, each of these communication methods should use templates to build communication.

> ↗ EXAMPLE Reports, meetings, or emails are excellent for information that needs to be pushed out to groups.

5. Individual or group responsible for creating the communication.

For each type of communication, the plan should also list who is responsible for communication.

📄 TERMS TO KNOW

Communication Planning
   The process for identifying communication requirements for a project.

Status Reports
   Communication reviewing a project's progress at specific points in time over the life of a project.

Communication Methods
   Methods for communicating to various project stakeholders and is used to identify the best methods to use in communicating with stakeholders.

2. Communication Governance

Since governance is an important part of a project's success, the communication plan should include rules and channels for ongoing communication with key decision makers.

> ↗ EXAMPLE A critical element in project communication is a feedback channel that provides stakeholders with methods of contributing opinions during the project's life cycle. By documenting this channel, stakeholders know whom to approach about project issues.

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Feedback	Project Manager	When Needed	Bug Report	Stakeholders

3. Communication Logs

Because questions may arise about how issues and project status were discussed, the project manager should keep communication logs (also sometimes called a communication record).

The project manager should set up these logs early in the planning stage.

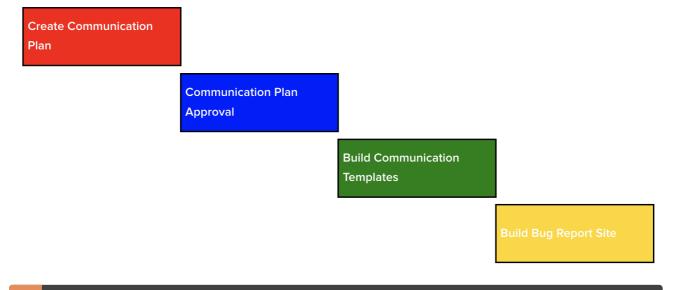| Communication Log	
Jan. Status Report	1/31
Feb. Status Report	2/27
Mar. Status Report	3/29
1st Quarter Budget Report	3/30

In addition to the communications discussed, meeting agendas and minutes should also be tracked in the log.

4. Managing the Communication Plan

Lack of communication is one of the key reasons a project might fail, so it is important that the project manager creates a detailed communication plan, and then follows it diligently.

> ⚑ **HINT**
>
> Because communication should be managed as well as any other project deliverable, experienced project managers often include details about communication activities in the project schedule.

Create Communication Plan

Communication Plan Approval

Build Communication Templates

Build Bug Report Site

> ☑ **SUMMARY**
>
> In this lesson, you learned how to create a communication plan. You now understand the **elements of communication plan**, such as frequency and methods. **Communication governance** was also discussed as well as the concept of a feedback channel, that provides stakeholders with methods of contributing opinions during the project's life cycle. Meeting agendas and minutes (meeting notes) are

tracked in the **communication log**.

Source: THIS WORK IS ADAPTED FROM SOPHIA AUTHOR JEFF CARROLL.

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