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|  |

***<project name>***

**COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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| **Prepared by:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| *<name>* |  | Date |
| *<title>* |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Approved by:** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| *<name>* |  | Date |
| *<title>* |  |  |

***[Notes to the Author]***

 *[This Project Communications Management Plan template has been written to include guidance for formulating a communications plan, template instructions for creating the final document, and sample verbiage for each section.*

* *Blue italicized text enclosed in square brackets (****[text]****) provides instructions to the document author, or describes the intent, assumptions and context for content included in this document. Delete before submission.*
* *Blue italicized text enclosed in angle brackets (****<text>****) indicates a field that should be replaced with information specific to a particular project.*
* *Text and tables in black are provided as boilerplate examples of wording and formats that may be used or modified as appropriate to a specific project. These are offered only as suggestions to assist in developing project documents; they are not mandatory formats.]*

Revision History

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Version | Date | Release Notes / Version Description |
|  |  |  |
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# Document Summary

## Purpose

*[This section should provide a high-level explanation of the purpose of this particular Communications Management Plan. Generally, the purpose of the Communications Management Plan is to outline and define the requirements for all communication and information distribution associated with the project in order to ensure project success. Specifically, it defines:*

* *Communication requirements based on roles*
* *What information will be communicated*
* *How the information will be communicated*
* *When will information be distributed*
* *Who does the communication*
* *Who receives the communication*

*Clear, consistent, effective communication is a key to successful project management and project completion. Without detailed plans for communications activities that identify the organizational, policy, and material resources needed to carry them out, a project will not be able to plan or secure needed resources, coordinate efforts with other groups, or ensure appropriate reporting of activities and results to key stakeholders.]*

The overall objective of a Communications Management Plan is to promote the success of a project by meeting the information needs of project stakeholders and outline the goals of the communications efforts to reach and inform each group.

The purpose of this document is to define the specific communications goals and strategies of the *<Project Name>* project, and to provide an overall framework for managing and coordinating the wide variety of communications that will directly or indirectly take place as part of the project.

The high-level strategies and goals are intended to provide guidance in planning and measuring results of the current and future communications efforts.

The communications framework defines the communication requirements, media, frequency and distribution in order to ensure that relevant, accurate information is conveyed through proper channels in a timely and consistent fashion. This framework:

* Identifies all internal and external project stakeholders and characterizes the communication needs of each.
* Defines the project’s structure and methods of information collection, screening, formatting, and distribution.
* Defines, and creates a mapping between, all project communicators, audiences, messages (or methods), communication channels (or means), message timing (frequency), and feedback mechanisms.

This plan will serve as a catalyst for successful project completion by facilitating the information flow required for timely decision-making, action item tracking, status updates, and overall understanding of the project goals and deliverables.

The intended audience of this plan is the project manager, project team, project sponsor, senior leaders, and any other stakeholders whose support is needed to carry out the project.

## Scope

*[This section should describe the range of communications and stakeholders covered by this plan. Generally, it should be a comprehensive plan covering the entire project; if not, describe how this plan integrates into a larger, coordinated plan. This section may also include a general roadmap of what is contained in the subsequent sections.]*

This Communications Management Plan will serve as a guide for communications throughout the lifecycle of the project and will be updated as communication needs change.

COMPLETE AFTER CONTENT IS DONE

This plan identifies and defines the roles of persons involved in this project. It also includes a communications matrix which maps the communication requirements of this project. An in-depth guide for conducting meetings details both the communications rules and how the meetings will be conducted, ensuring successful meetings. A project team directory is included to provide contact information for all stakeholders directly involved in the project.

This plan includes the following elements:

* Project Stakeholders
* Communication Plan
* Communication Calendar
* Communication Formats
* Communication Principles

Communicating cross-agency decisions, questions, and other information to stakeholders….

A significant number of project stakeholders are involved in this project. By effectively communicating with them the project can accomplish its work with support and cooperation of each stakeholder group.

## Change Authority

This is a *<Project Name>* Category 1 document requiring approval from the full Configuration Control Board for all class I changes.

## Reference Documents

Documents in Table 1 contain supplemental information for the understanding and application of the content of this document.

Table 1: Reference Documents

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Document No.** | **Document Name** |
| *<PIP Doc. No.>* | Project Implementation Plan |
|  | <Other> |

# Communications Management Approach

*[Approximately 80% of a Project Manager’s time is spent communicating: reporting on status and performance, composing and reading emails, conducting meetings, writing plans, and talking with team members. So how you want to manage communications on this project should be given considerable thought. By having a solid communications management approach you’ll find that many project management problems can be avoided. In this section, give an overview of your communications management approach: how you’ll plan and track communications; what media and channels you’ll use; and how you’ll gather, sort, process and disseminate information.]*

The Project Manager and project management staff will take a proactive role in ensuring effective communications on this project.

The process used in formulating this plan was:

[insert process steps]

The communications requirements are documented in the Communications Matrix presented in this document. The Communications Matrix will be used as the guide for what information to communicate, who is to do the communicating, when to communicate it and to whom to communicate.

A variety of methods may be used to communicate with project stakeholders. Common methods include status reports, correspondence, meetings, and formal presentations. Communication methods will vary from project to project. The Communication Plan describes the specific communication methods that will be used to communicate with project stakeholders.

To ensure effective and appropriate communications, all project stakeholders and their unique needs or considerations are contained in the Stakeholder Analysis… , the Project Manager needs to develop a good understanding of the unique needs of each stakeholder group. This is accomplished with several ‘tools’ that are included in the Communication Plan, including the Chart of Stakeholders and the Stakeholder Communication Matrix. These tools describe all project stakeholders, providing a clear understanding of the specific interests of each stakeholder group, their vested interest in the project, and their expectations.

Lastly, the communication methods are correlated to the specific needs of each stakeholder group, and specific individuals are assigned the responsibility of providing the communication described in the Communication Plan.

The Project Manager will appoint a Communication Process Owner to develop the communication materials and to support the delivery of communications. The Process Owner will also verify distribution of communication materials. An additional and important task for the Communication Process Owner is the measurement and analysis of the effectiveness of the Program Communication Plan.

Actual delivery of many of the communication messages will be through designated ‘communicators’ - presenting and facilitating briefing sessions, delivering communication locally and soliciting local feedback. The resources required to develop the communication materials and to support the delivery of communications will be included in the work plan for the specific materials.

Communications planning activities identify the appropriate level of communication for each project stakeholder, what information should be distributed and the frequency of communications. This plan should also include the vehicle of communications (email, face to face meetings, etc). The risk of insufficient planning could result in failure to accomplish key project objectives, duplication of effort, and reduced stakeholder confidence.

<Project Name> communications efforts should be based on this explicit, detailed Communications Management Plan, with a matrix of specific actions addressing communications needs of each stakeholder group. Success for <Project Name> project communications should be measured against planned objectives and the IT Project Manager should provide regular updates to the Business Owner on each objective.

The Communications Plan describes the information that must be disseminated to all project stakeholders, to keep them regularly informed of the project’s progress.

To begin, you first need to identify all of the stakeholders who require regular information about the status of the project. Then, identify the information requirements of each stakeholder group. Create a schedule for the dissemination of that information to those stakeholders throughout the Online Project Management Lifecycle. And finally, define the process for delivering communications throughout the project.

Whether or not your project or your customer requires a delivered Communications Plan, you should still have one…especially if you are dealing with an external customer rather than an internal organization. Every time I’ve delivered a project plan to the customer, they have been pleasantly surprised and pleased that the communications on the project have been put in writing at the earliest possible point and in sufficient detail.

The Communications Plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of project participants in the review, approval and dissemination of information about key project processes, events, documents and milestones.

Why is this important? Implementing a well-thought-out Communications Plan will:

* Help manage expectations regarding the project.
* Ensure methods used for communication will be most effective.
* Assure appropriate levels of communication with internal and external project stakeholders.
* Provide relevant, accurate, consistent information at all times.
* Generate and sustain enthusiasm and support for the project.

## Communication and Feedback Channels

Or: Communication Instruments

This section identifies and defines communication and feedback channels that will be used throughout this project. Communication and feedback channels fall into three broad categories: face-to-face, paper-based and technology-based.

Face-to-Face (primary mechanism for communication)

* Meetings
	+ Formal - with critical stakeholders
	+ Informal - with team members and other stakeholders
* Presentations/Briefings
* Workshops
* Brown Bag Sessions
* One-on-one Discussions

Paper-Based

* Newsletters
* Internal Memos
* Reports and Status Documents
* Project Schedules, Issues Lists and Risks Lists
* Project Planning and Control Documents
* Bulletin Boards
* Information Displays (public venues)
* Feedback Forms/Questionnaires

Technology-Based

* Virtual Meetings
	+ Teleconferences
	+ Videoconferences
* Electronic Bulletin Boards
* E-mail
* Wikis
* Web Pages
* Web Portals

## Communication Tools

This section identifies and defines the high-level tools that will be used in exercising the communication and feedback channels.

* Mailing Lists
* Self Service Web Sites
* Tours and Demonstrations
* Public Forums
* Media Releases
* Advertisements and Postings
* Liaison Committee? (representatives of larger groups)

## Elements of Communication

The following outlines our approach to identifying the communication elements to support the project.

Communicators

The deliverer (or communicator) of a message is as important as the message itself. It is important that the communicators have credibility with their audience for the information they are delivering. It is also important that the communicators are supported and trained in communication skills.

Types of Communication

**Mandatory** - These types of communication are required. This information is “pushed” (sent directly) to recipients.

* Team status meetings
* Steering committee meetings
* Visits, conference calls and videoconferences with remote stakeholders
* Required reports to stakeholders
* Required financial reporting such as budget status and EVM metrics.
* Other government-required reports and information such as CADRe updates

**Informational** - This is information people want to know or that they may need for their jobs. This information is made available for people to read, but requires them to take the initiative, or “pull” the communication.

* Project status reports
* Awareness-building sessions (these are not meant as training – just to build awareness of the project)
* Project deliverables placed in a common repository, directory, website or library that people can access
* Frequently-asked questions

**Marketing** - These are designed to build buy-in and enthusiasm for the project and the deliverables. This type of communication is “pushed” to recipients.

* Project newsletters
* Meeting one-on-one with key stakeholders on an ongoing basis
* Traveling road shows to explain the project and benefits
* Informal (but purposeful) walking around to initiate discussions about all the good things the project is accomplishing
* Celebrations to bring visibility to the completion of major milestones
* Project memorabilia such as pins, patches and brochures
* Publicizing accomplishments

## Formal Project Communication Matrix

The formal project communication matrix is basically a visual representation of the distribution structure for any formal project communications. This can be through the use of a graphic or table that provides the delivery team and the customer with a quick reference of the communications that happen on the project.

## Feedback and Measuring Effectiveness

Feedback is key to ensuring the ongoing effectiveness of project communication. In addition to determining whether people feel the communicators are doing a credible job, the feedback process will focus on answering questions that will help gauge the impact. For example:

* Do people understand the societal benefits of the project?
* Do people understand what the project will deliver and when?
* Do people understand the current status and progress of the project, and how that relates to the end objectives?
* Do people understand the issues of the project, and how exactly the project is addressing them?
* Do people feel they are involved in what is happening and have a chance to voice their opinions?
* Do people feel their questions have been taken seriously, and answered?
* Do people believe in the project and feel ownership of it?

Feedback is solicited and evaluated throughout the project to enable continuous improvement of the Communication Plan and its adaptation to the evolving needs of the audience. Face-to-face communication events (whether scheduled sessions or simply management walkabouts) will provide an opportunity for people to give feedback directly to the communicators. Other channels will include physical feedback forms and an on-line bulletin board for posting feedback or asking questions.

# Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

*[This section should provide a list of all stakeholders (or at least stakeholder groups) involved with the project and an assessment of the communication needs (or goals) for each. Communication goals are set to address stakeholders’ specific interests and expectations so that the project runs as smoothly as possible.]*

Effective communication is the *<Project Name>* project’s primary tool for promoting cooperation, participation, coordination and understanding between all stakeholders. *<Project Name>* has *<three>* primary stakeholder groups and has specific communications goals for each.

Table 2 Stakeholder Groups

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Group** | **Goals** | **Objectives** |
| Management, staff, customers, media, community, finance |  |  |
| Project leaderProject team membersUpper managementProject customerResource ManagersLine ManagersProduct user group |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

Table Project Customer & Stakeholders

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Title** | **Name** | **Contact Info?** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

## Stakeholder Assessment

The interests and expectations of the stakeholders have to be identified and met

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Stakeholder** | **Type** | **Class** | **Peak Interest** | **Preferred Method** | **Power** | **Interest** | **Strategy** |
| Sponsor | Internal | Positive | Initiating | PhoneEmailPresentationIn-Person | High | Low | Keep Satisfied |
| Steering Committee | Internal | Positive | Initiating |  | High | Low | Keep Satisfied |
| Team Members | Internal | Positive | Execution |  | Low | High | Keep Informed |
| Customers | External | Positive | Execution |  | High | Low | Keep Satisfied |
| PMO | Internal | Positive | Planning & Control |  | High | Low | Keep Satisfied |
| Media & Newspapers | External | Neutral | Initiating & Control |  | Low | Low | Monitor |
| Vendors & Suppliers | External | Positive | Execution & Closure |  | Low | High | Keep Informed |
| EPA | External | Negative | Initiating & Closure |  | High | Low | Keep Satisfied |
| SMEs | Internal | Positive | Planning & Execution |  | High | High | Manage Closely |
| Procurement Team | Internal | Positive | Initiating & Planning |  | Low | Low | Monitor |

# Information Gathering & Storage

[This section is for identifying how the formal and informal communication information will be collected and stored.]

Formal communication includes weekly status meetings and the collection of information through weekly status reports, revised (statused) project schedules and updated issues and risks lists. Informal project communications include email and phone ad-hoc transactions required to update or clarify relevant project status information.

# Formal Information Distribution

This section identifies how the formal communication on the project will happen and who will be involved. The distribution structure contains sub-sections for each type of formal communication and outlines specific information for each type. For each of these formal communication items, the plan identifies how each is delivered, who receives them and how often they are delivered and reviewed.

## Project Status Documents

The Project Office uses a variety of reports for communicating project status:

(just refer to spreadsheet?)

Project Status Report

This report shows task accomplishments, milestones, upcoming tasks, and issues. ITD Management will summarize the project status at WSP IT Executive Steering Committee meetings.

* Status Summary
* Accomplishments Achieved
* Project Plan Deviations
* Schedule
* Effort/ Cost
* Key Project/ Policy Decisions
* Significant Project Problems and Issues
* Risk and Mitigation Plan

Project Resources Report

This report identifies resources assigned to all projects, the roles they play, and percentage of a resource’s time spent on each project. This report is generated from a project tracking database maintained by WSP Project Managers.

Portfolio Project Summary Report

This report summarizes the status of each project tracked in the project tracking database. The report describes each project, identifies the business owner, shows the progress of each phase, and indicates whether the project is within budget and on schedule.

Schedule of Deliverables/Milestones Report

This is a report of the major project phase deliverables and milestones which are due to be completed each month and the status of each deliverable and milestone.

## Project Planning and Control Documents

There are several project documents used to control or plan certain activities that will also be used for communicating with project stakeholders:

<Document Number> Project Management Plan

Defines the project scope, project goals and objectives, assumptions and constraints, methodology and deliverables, resources, roles and responsibilities, project-reporting structure, and project guidelines. This serves as is a formal agreement between the principle sponsors and the project team.

<Document Number> Project Implementation Plan

Outlines the management strategy, implementation approach, resources requirements and project schedule.

One-Page Master Schedule

Shows a by-WBS breakdown of major tasks, deliverables, milestones and inter-WBS dependencies by phase.

Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan

Identifies potential project risks and their impact, mitigating actions that can be used to minimize or prevent those risks, and contingency actions that can be taken in the event the mitigating actions are not successful.

Issues List

Tracks issues through formal issue statements, which include impacts, responsibility assignments and plans for resolution.

\*\*more\*\*

## E-mail

E-mail is used extensively for communicating with a broader audience of project stakeholders. It is used for informal status updates, “pushed” document distribution and project announcements.

## Meetings

Along with ad-hoc meetings, regularly scheduled project team meetings allow the Project Manager to effectively communicate project status with the team. Meetings may be used to communicate many aspects including project accomplishments, milestones, planned tasks, and issues.

Team Meetings

* Review Project Status
* Review Key Policy/ Project Decisions
* Review upcoming project activities

Steering Committee Meeting

* Review Project Status
* Discuss Project Problems and Issues
* Review Policy Recommendations
* Review Communication Plan

## Presentations

Periodic, formal presentations are used to communicate major milestones, project accomplishments, budget status and issues to project stakeholders.

# Project Roles and Responsibilities

*This section describes the roles and responsibilities of all key project personnel. In order to facilitate effective communication it is imperative that these roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. If they are not, the project runs the risk of multiple team members overlapping and performing the same functions or, worse, some tasks going unassigned resulting in communication gaps. The resulting miscommunication can result in significant schedule delays, cost overruns, or project failure. This section should include a list of all key personnel (with names where appropriate), titles, and what their roles and responsibilities are.*

In order to ensure the successful completion of the Building Expansion Project, the roles and responsibilities of all key project personnel must be clearly defined with regards to project communication. In order to prevent overlap or gaps in project communication, the following roles and responsibilities have been identified:

Table 3 Project Roles and Responsibilities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Responsibility** |
| **Project Sponsor** | The project sponsor is the champion of the project and has authorized the project by signing the project charter. This person is responsible for the funding of the project and is ultimately responsible for its success. Since the Project Sponsor is at the executive level communications should be presented in summary format unless the Project Sponsor requests more detailed communications. |
| **Program Manager** | The Program Manager oversees the project at the portfolio level and owns most of the resources assigned to the project. The Program Manager is responsible for overall program costs and profitability as such they require more detailed communications than the Project Sponsor. |
| **Key Stakeholders** | Normally Stakeholders includes all individuals and organizations who are impacted by the project. For this project we are defining a subset of the stakeholders as Key Stakeholders. These are the stakeholders with whom we need to communicate with and are not included in the other roles defined in this section. The Key Stakeholders includes executive management with an interest in the project and key users identified for participation in the project. |
| **Change Control Board** | The Change Control Board is a designated group which is reviews technical specifications and authorizes changes within the organizations infrastructure. Technical design documents, user impact analysis and implementation strategies are typical of the types of communication this group requires. |
| **Customer** | *You should identify the customer if the project is the result of a solicitation. In such a case, the customer will be involved in reviewing prototypes, approval of designs and implementation stages and acceptance of the final project the project generates.*The customer for this project is <Customer Name>. As the customer who will be accepting the final deliverable of this project they will be informed of the project status including potential impacts to the schedule for the final deliverable or the product itself. |
| **Project Manager** | The Project Manager has overall responsibility for the execution of the project. The Project Manager manages day to day resources, provides project guidance and monitors and reports on the projects metrics as defined in the Project Management Plan. As the person responsible for the execution of the project, the Project Manager is the primary communicator for the project distributing information according to this Communications Management Plan.The Project Manager is responsible for establishing communication requirements for the project, chairing all project meetings, and submission of all written reports. The Project Manager may delegate communication tasks to appropriate technical representatives or subject matter experts (SMEs) but is responsible for the timely completion of such tasks. The Project Manager is responsible for all information dissemination. |
| **Project Team** | The Project Team is comprised of all persons who have a role performing work on the project. The project team needs to have a clear understanding of the work to be completed and the framework in which the project is to be executed. Since the Project Team is responsible for completing the work for the project they played a key role in creating the Project Plan including defining its schedule and work packages. The Project Team requires a detailed level of communications which is achieved through day to day interactions with the Project Manager and other team members along with weekly team meetings. |
| **Steering Committee** | The Steering Committee includes management representing the departments which make up the organization. The Steering Committee provides strategic oversight for changes which impact the overall organization. The purpose of the Steering Committee is to ensure that changes within the organization are effected in such a way that it benefits the organization as a whole. The Steering Committee requires communication on matters which will change the scope of the project and its deliverables. |
| **Technical Lead** | The Technical Lead is a person on the Project Team who is designated to be responsible for ensuring that all technical aspects of the project are addressed and that the project is implemented in a technically sound manner. The Technical Lead is responsible for all technical designs, overseeing the implementation of the designs and developing as-build documentation. The Technical Lead requires close communications with the Project Manager and the Project Team. |
| **Contractor Team Lead** | Contractor Team Lead is responsible for providing status updates for contract execution and any other contract-related details to the Project Manager for use in project communications. |
|  |  |
|  |  |

# Project Communication Matrix

*There are many forms of communication which take place during a project. Meetings, reports, and gate reviews are some of the means by which information is shared and distributed during the life of a project. These are formal events which must be conducted effectively and efficiently in order to ensure the right people receive the right information and that the project continues to move forward smoothly.*

The communication requirements for the Project are listed in the following matrix. As the project proceeds, it may be necessary to modify the communication requirements. Any modifications to the communication matrix must be approved by the Project Sponsor.

The following table identifies the communications requirements for this project.

Stakeholder Communication Matrix - This chart identifies communication methods and the stakeholders that need to be reached with a particular method.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Communication Type** | **Description** | **Frequency** | **Format** | **Participants/ Distribution** | **Deliverable** | **Owner** |
| Weekly Status Report | E mail summary of project status | Weekly | E mail | Project Sponsor, Team and Stakeholders | Status Report | Project Manager |
| Weekly Project Team Meeting | Meeting to review action register and status | Weekly | In Person | Project Team | Updated Action Register | Project Manager |
| Monthly Project Review | Present metrics and status to team and sponsor | Monthly | In Person | Project Sponsor, Team, and Stakeholders | Status and Metric Presentation | Project Manager |
| Weekly Construction Status | Report outlining weekly progress and issues | Weekly | E Mail | Project Team | Construction Status Update | Contractor Team Lead |
| Project Gate Reviews | Present closeout of project phases and kickoff next phase | As Needed | In Person | Project Sponsor, Team and Stakeholders | Phase completion report and phase kickoff | Project Manager |
| Technical Design Review | Review of any technical designs or work associated with the project | As Needed | In Person | Project Team | Technical Design Package | Project Manager |

# Communication Principles

*This section should discuss the conduct expected of all team members when participating in meetings or other project communication. It is vital to establish guidelines so that communication flow is understood and remains consistent throughout the project. Additionally, if no rules are established to control communication, then meetings and other forms of communication may become inefficient and obstruct progress.*

This section provides guidance to all project participants for conduct expected in meetings and other forms of communication. All participants are expected to adhere to these guidelines at all times to prevent unnecessary or ineffective communication.

From program team experience and from communications best practices, a number of common principles emerge which should be followed to ensure successful communication. These have been used in defining the Program Communication Plan to support SKIES Implementation Project. They are described in the following table.

|  |
| --- |
| Table Five - Communication Principles |
| **Principle** | **Reason** |
| Credibility | Without a credible communication approach or credible communicators, individuals will simply not believe in the end goal. |
| To involve not inform | Promotes ownership of the program, feeling a necessary part of the program |
| Communicators whom people trust/respect | If the staff does not trust or respect the communicators, the messages ‘fall on deaf ears’. |
| Visible management support | Active management commitment gives credibility to communication. Must be seen to demonstrate support. |
| Face-to-face communication | Audience is involved, communication is two-way and provides a feedback mechanism. |
| To avoid information ‘overload’ | Too much information leads to confusion and irritation. Accurate and timely information is key. |
| Consistent messages | Inconsistency loses credibility in the program. Without consistency, audiences are confused and frustrated about what to expect. |
| To repeat messages and vary mechanisms | The more ways a message can be communicated, the more likely it is to be internalized. Using different mechanisms ensures repetition without individuals ‘switching off’. |
| To create demand: Encouraging team to pull for information, rather than management pushing it at them. | Ensures buy-in to the change.  |
| Tailor communication to audience needs: Give information which audience wants, not what you want to tell | Makes information ‘real’ to the audience. The audience is more likely to listen if the information is pertinent to their current frame of reference. |
| Central co-ordination | Ensures consistent approach. |
| Manage expectations | Encourages audience to believe in what you to tell them. Preparing shows you understand their needs. |
| Listen and act on feedback | Encourages support in the approach by being responsive to the needs of the audience. Ensure approach meets changing audience needs. |

## Meetings

*This section discusses expected meeting conduct*

The Project Manager will distribute a meeting agenda at least 2 days prior to any scheduled meeting. All participants are expected to review the agenda prior to the meeting. During project meetings the timekeeper will ensure that the group adheres to the time allotted for a given topic and the recorder will take all notes to be distributed to the team upon completion of the meeting. It is imperative that all participants arrive to each meeting on time and all cell phones and blackberries should be turned off or set to vibrate mode to minimize distractions. Meeting minutes will be distributed no later than 24 hours after each meeting is completed.

Meeting Agenda

Meeting Agenda will be distributed 5 business days in advance of the meeting. The Agenda should identify the presenter for each topic along with a time limit for that topic. The first item in the agenda should be a review of action items from the previous meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes will be distributed within 2 business days following the meeting. Meeting minutes will include the status of all items from the agenda along with new action items and the Parking Lot list.

Action Items

Action Items are recorded in both the meeting agenda and minutes. Action items will include both the action item along with the owner of the action item. Meetings will start with a review of the status of all action items from previous meetings and end with a review of all new action items resulting from the meeting. The review of the new action items will include identifying the owner for each action item.

Meeting Chair Person

The Chair Person is responsible for distributing the meeting agenda, facilitating the meeting and distributing the meeting minutes. The Chair Person will ensure that the meeting starts and ends on time and that all presenters adhere to their allocated time frames.

Note Taker

The Note Taker is responsible for documenting the status of all meeting items, maintaining a Parking Lot item list and taking notes of anything else of importance during the meeting. The Note Taker will give a copy of their notes to the Chair Person at the end of the meeting as the Chair Person will use the notes to create the Meeting Minutes.

Time Keeper

The Time Keeper is responsible for helping the facilitator adhere to the time limits set in the meeting agenda. The Time Keeper will let the presenter know when they are approaching the end of their allocated time. Typically a quick hand signal to the presenter indicating how many minutes remain for the topic is sufficient.

Parking Lot

The Parking Lot is a tool used by the facilitator to record and defer items which aren’t on the meeting agenda; however, merit further discussion at a later time or through another forum. A parking lot record should identify an owner for the item as that person will be responsible for ensuring follow-up. The Parking Lot list is to be included in the meeting minutes.

## Email

*This section discusses expected email conduct*

All email pertaining to the Building Expansion Project should be professional, free of errors, and provide brief communication. If the email is to provide a status report, it should be distributed to the correct project participants in accordance with the communication matrix above. All attachments should be in one of the organization’s standard software suite programs and adhere to established company formats. If the email is to bring an issue forward then it should discuss what the issue is, provide a brief background on the issue, and provide a recommendation to correct the issue. The Project Manager should be included on any email pertaining to the Building Expansion Project.

## Informal Communications

*This section discusses the conduct expected when communicating informally*

Informal communication is a part of every project and is necessary for successful project completion. However, any issues, concerns, or updates that arise from informal discussion between team members must be communicated to the Project Manager so the appropriate action may be taken.

# How to Scale

Like other project management artifacts, the Communications Plan is scaleable. The plan for a very large or high risk project may be quite complex. More stakeholders will mean more information needs and that may mean more delivery mechanisms. There may be several individuals with responsibilities for the different types of communications required by a project. There may be many steps involved in the process of developing and approving communications on a large project in order to ensure communication is accurate, effective, and sensitive to the needs of the project. Highly visible projects may require separate public information or communications expertise. For example, if the Legislature is a stakeholder on a project, an Agency Public Information Officer may need to approve all communication prior to it being sent from the project to the stakeholder. They may be the resource assigned responsibility for developing communications going to the Legislature.

Most projects will require some form of both internal and external communication on a regular basis to sustain momentum on the project and to fulfill organizational reporting requirements. For small projects that have only a handful of stakeholders who are intimately familiar with all project details, it may be sufficient to provide a standard status report to all stakeholders on a regular basis. Be sure to include an open invitation for feedback on even such small projects.

# Communications Planning Checklist

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Have all internal and external stakeholder information needs been assessed?  | 🞎 |
| Are their long and short term information needs identified? | 🞎 |
| Have responsibilities for communication been assigned, including who must approve the various types of communications? | 🞎 |
| Are processes in place for dealing with ad hoc communication needs? | 🞎 |
| Are feedback mechanisms identified and planned for? | 🞎 |
| Have communication tasks been inserted into the project schedule? | 🞎 |
| Has the plan been communicated to the Project Team? | 🞎 |