Communications Management

SWEN 256 – Software Process & Project Management

Types of Communication

Internal	External
Formal	Informal
Vertical	Horizontal
Official	Unofficial
Written	Oral
Verbal	Nonverbal
Open/Plain	Paralingual

Sender

Receiver

Channel / Noise

Technology?	Meeting?
From Who?	Context?

Communication Concepts

- Interactive vs. Push vs. Pull Communication
- Meeting Success
  - Good advanced notice / Time limit for the meeting
  - Regular but not too frequent
  - Clear purpose and agenda announced beforehand
  - Assign deliverables/action items from the meeting w/ clear time limits and distribution channels
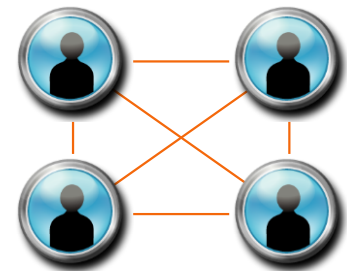 - Document and publish meeting minutes
- Communication Channels

# Communication Channels	$\dfrac{N\,(N-1)}{2}$	N = the number of people

- Communication Blockers

Plan Communications

- Consider: culture, expectations, technology, methods, established policies and procedures

- Plan to Communicate: Who, when, what channel, and with what frequency

- Plan to Communicate: What

Type	Examples
Project Documents	Charter, PM Plan
Schedule/Resources	WBS, Resource needs, Meeting Schedule, Work Assignments (upcoming and current)
Status	General Status, Impacts to/from other projects, Performance Reports
Risks	New Risks, Uncertainties, Realized Risks (problems)
Change Control	Scope changes, CCB communications

Ethical Responsibility

As a PM or Team Member, communication is at the heart of ethical and honest behavior and responsibility.

- Try to understand the truth
  - Be careful – your perception of the truth may be false
  - Seek the whole truth
- Be truthful in all communications
  - Communicate honestly, even if the project is in trouble
- Create an environment where others tell the truth
  - Telling the truth consistently lets project team members know that only the truth is acceptable

Professional Responsibility

- Only accept assignments you are qualified to complete
  - Lack of qualification presents a major risk to the project
- Protect proprietary information, Report unethical behavior and violations
- Maintain an attitude of mutual cooperation
  - Consider other projects and operational work when asking for resources
  - Protect reputations of your team members as it relates to project work
  - Ask what communication method is favored by your stakeholders/team
- Be direct in dealing with conflict
  - Openly discuss conflict with the other party, not behind their back
- Continuously look for conflicts of interest and disclose them
  - Treat the search and resolution of conflicts of interest like risks

Communications Management Plan

ॐ Primary output of Plan Communications

What needs to be Communicated	Why	Between Whom	Best Communication Method	Responsibility for Sending	When / How Often

Stakeholder Communication

Expectation Management

Identify Stakeholders

1. Analyze Stakeholders continuously
2. Create and Maintain a Stakeholder Register
3. Create and execute a Stakeholder Management Strategy

Stakeholder Register – Project Title: Project Number:

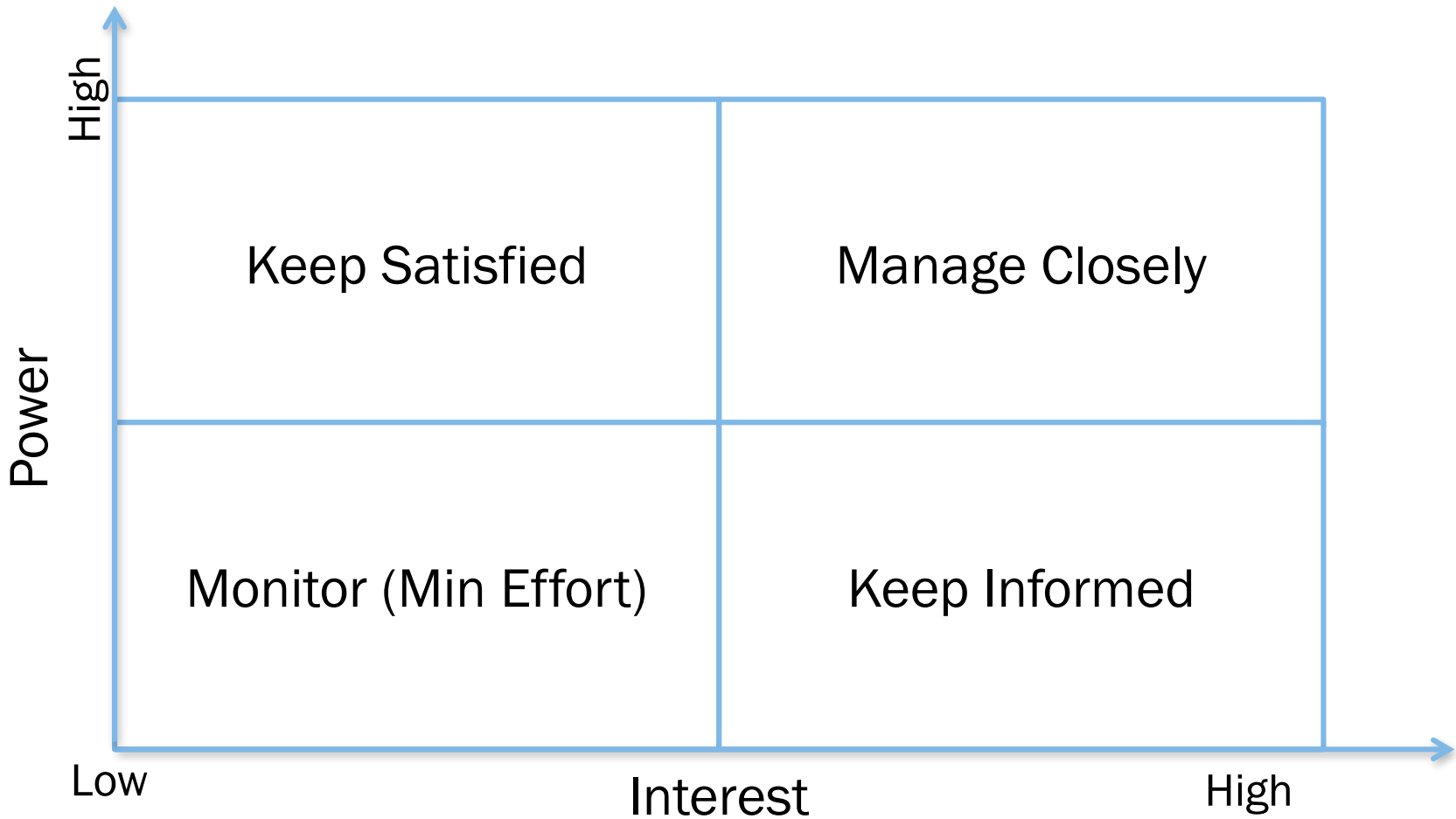| ID	Name	Title	Department(s) /Supervisor	Contact Info	Impact					Classification
					Major Req'ts	Main Ex-pectations	Influence (1-5)	Role(s) in Project	Responsibilities in Project	
1										
2										

Power / Interest Balance

Manage Stakeholders Expectations

- Items that may need regular communication
  - Schedule, Budget, Forecasts
  - Risk Register, Issue Log, Change Log
  - Items outside of the control of the project that affect the project
- Involves the application of Communication Methods, Interpersonal Skills, and Management Skills to manage expectations of people important to the project.

Performance Reports Types

- **Status Report** – Where is the project is against the performance measurement baseline?

- **Progress Report** – What has been accomplished?

- **Trend Report** – Is performance improving or deteriorating?

- **Forecasting Report** – What are the predictions for the future?

- **Variance Report** – How do the actual results compare to the baselines?

- **Earned Value Report** – Where is the project in pure Earned Value/Cost Management terms?

- **Lessons Learned** – What information could be useful for future projects?

Making Reports and Metrics Useful

ℬ Collecting information, analyzing it, packaging it, and sending it to Stakeholders.

- ○ Level of Detail
- ○ Appropriate communication channel
- ○ Don't let reports prevent you from managing the project
- ○ Are measurements against a consistent baseline
- ○ Truthful with accurate metrics
- ○ All three sides of the project triangle plus quality
- ○ Can and should be enhanced with forecasts
- ○ Get feedback
- ○ Use multiple types of reports

Conclusion

- Communication concepts must be applied to both stakeholder and team communication
- Communication is not effective unless it is ethical and honest
- Stakeholder Expectation Management starts with understanding each stakeholder, then deciding what communication is best for them
- Make reports and metrics useful by viewing them from the Stakeholder's perspective