

<p>Lens:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Project Communication</p>	<p>Summary Question:</p> <p><i>“What questions do I need to ask in order to understand and achieve success in carrying out effective communications within my project?”</i></p>
<p>This lens is about effective project communications</p>	
<p>Questions you should ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why are you bothering to communicate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you captured specific objectives in your plan? • What do you expect the audience to do as a result of the communication? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Carry out some specific task? b. Be more supportive? • Have you been absolutely clear about what the audience is being asked to do and when it should be completed? 2. Who are you going to communicate with? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you carried out a stakeholder analysis and identified all the key stakeholders? • Have you determined their varying interest and influence over project deliverables? 3. What are we going to communicate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the information relevant to the stakeholders you are communicating with? • Will they be interested? • If not how can you engage them? 4. What are you going to use to plan your communications? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have a communication plan in place with timeline for meetings etc? • Do we have a method to track stakeholders as their influence or interest in the project varies over time? 5. How are you going to communicate? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Face to face may be the preferred choice but do you really want to be flying to the States every Wednesday? • What are the limitations of the other types of media and can you overcome them? • Does culture play a part? • If you are dealing with the Far East then a personal relationship and trust is highly valued and face to face may be the only option • Have you factored this into your communications plan and budget? 6. How do you role model effective communications? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employ active listening - shut down background conversations • empathise with the person • use body language 	

7. **How do you deal with conflict resolution within your team?**

8. **When do you need to communicate?**

- Regular vs ad hoc
- Calendar vs milestone
- Frequent vs infrequent
 - Reflecting stakeholder influence and interest variability
- Have you considered time zones?

9. **Where** are you going to communicate?

- hold meetings,
- video conference/teleconference,
- face to face

How you might use this:

- This will help you and your team in putting together a project communications plan which should identify stakeholders, the objectives of communications and a timeline for meetings and communication milestones
- It will assist you with a checklist of questions you should ask yourself when in doubt about how effective communications are within your project.
- Clarity of project objectives and targets across the team
- To minimise misunderstandings and conflicts with your project
- To monitor and influence the interests of key stakeholders at the appropriate time.
- In relationship building with key stakeholders
- Increasing stakeholder confidence and trust in the programme/ project management team.

Issues this will help you address:

- **Understanding of political issues** with the project, programme or organisation. Key managers may have "hidden agenda's which you should be aware of.
- **Understanding of Cultural issues within organisations**, which are the values and beliefs that an organisation holds. This varies between organisations and communication between two organisations with vastly differing cultures can be difficult. E.G. one might expect some differences of opinion at a joint project planning session involving a very risk averse organisation and one that was happy taking risks/large risk appetite.
- **Linguistic:** Organisations and departments will use language and acronyms that will require clarification. Make sure that before any meetings take place ground rules are in place regarding jargon, language and acronyms. As the meeting facilitator it is your job to make sure that all parties adhere to the ground rules and that they are enforced. This will lead to clarity within the staff in attendance.

APM References:

- APM BOK