Dispersed & Virtual Teams

Dispersed and Virtual Teams

- Team members need to communicate

- Concentration needed for effective flow

- Flow is what you get when you concentrate for 15 minutes

- IBM:

    - 100 square feet of dedicated space

    - 30 square feet of work surface

    - Noise protection in the form of enclosed offices or partitions atleast 6 feethigh

- 77% - atleast some staff – Work From Home

    - Internet based communications

    - Broadband

- Temporary Teams

    - Contract Employees

    - Short time

    - Cost effective

    - Graphic designer

- OffShore

    Advantages

    - ✓ Reduction in staff cost- salary lower

    - ✓ Overheads reduction-accomodation, social security payments, training

    - ✓ Flexible use of staff

    - ✓ Productivity higher

    - ✓ Specialized staff

    - ✓ Different time zones-(code n test)

Challenges

  ☐ Work distributed to contractors- Careful

  ☐ Procedures-formally expressed

  ☐ Coordination- difficult

  ☐ Payment(fixed price/piece-rate)

  ☐ Lack of trust

  ☐ Quality Assesment

  ☐ Differenct time zones Communication and coordination

Communication plan

Communication is important in all projects but a vital matter in case of dispersed projects. Because of this, consideration of the way that project stakeholders will communicate ought to be a part of the project planning process.

- **Communication Genre**
  - Refers to the method of communication
- Communication Plan
  - Arrangements for communication between project stakeholders can be documented

Time/place constraints on communication

- One way of categorizing types of communication.

	Same place	Different place
Same time	**Meetings, interviews**	**Telephone, Instant messaging**
Different times	**Notice boards Pigeon-holes**	**Email Voicemail Documents**

Other factors influencing communication genres

- Size and complexity of information – favours documents

- Familiarity of context e.g. terminology – where low, two-way communication favoured

- Personally sensitive – it has to be face-to-face communication here

Best method of communication depends on stage of project

- Different stages of a project would favour different modes of communication

- Early stages

  – Need to build trust

  – Establishing context

  – Making important 'global' decisions

  – *Favours same time/ same place*

- Intermediate stages

  – Often involves the paralled detailed design of components

  – Need for clarification of interfaces etc

  – *Favours same time/different place*

- Implementation stages

  – Design is relatively clear

  – Domain and context familiar

  – Small amounts of operational data need to be exchanged

  – Favours different time/different place communications e.g. e-mail

- Face to face co-ordination meetings – the 'heartbeat' of the project

Communications plans

- As we have seen choosing the right communication methods is crucial in a project

- Therefore, a good idea to create a communication plan

- Stages of creating a communication plan

  – Identify all the major stakeholders for the project

  – Create a plan for the project

  – Identify stakeholder and communication needs for each stage of the

project
– Document in a communication plan

Content of a communication plan

For each communication event and channel, identify:

- *What.* This contains the name of a particular communication event, e.g, 'kick-off meeting', or channel, e.g. 'project intranet site'.

- *Who/target.* The target audience for the communication.

- *Purpose.* What the communication is to achieve.

- *When/frequency.* If the communication is by means of a single event, then a date can be supplied. If the event is a recurring one, such as a progress meeting then the frequency should be indicated.

- *Type/method.* The nature of the communication, e.g., a meeting or a distributed document.

- *Responsibility.* The person who initiates the communication.