Communications in Project Management
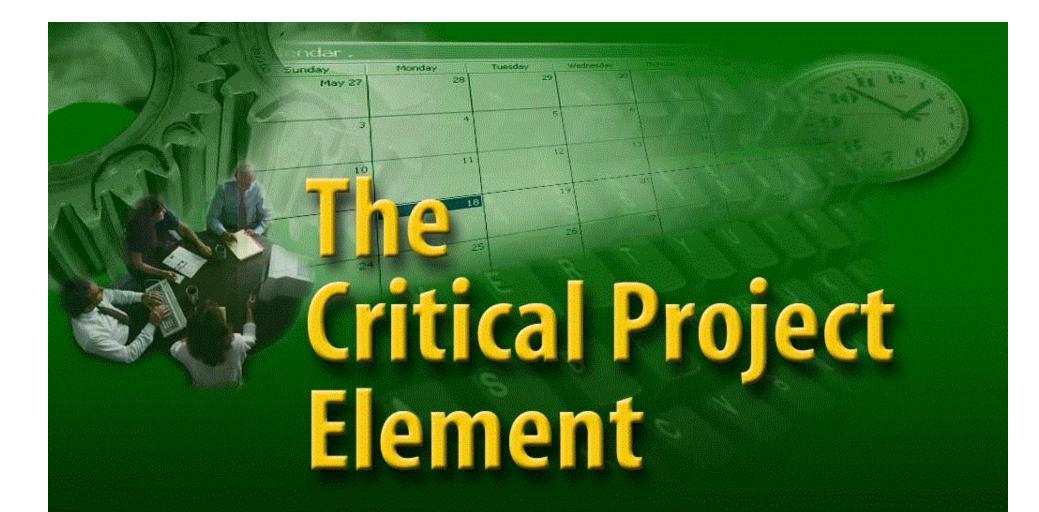
PMP Professional Development Seminar

Jim Marshall

April 23, 2003

Communications in Project Management

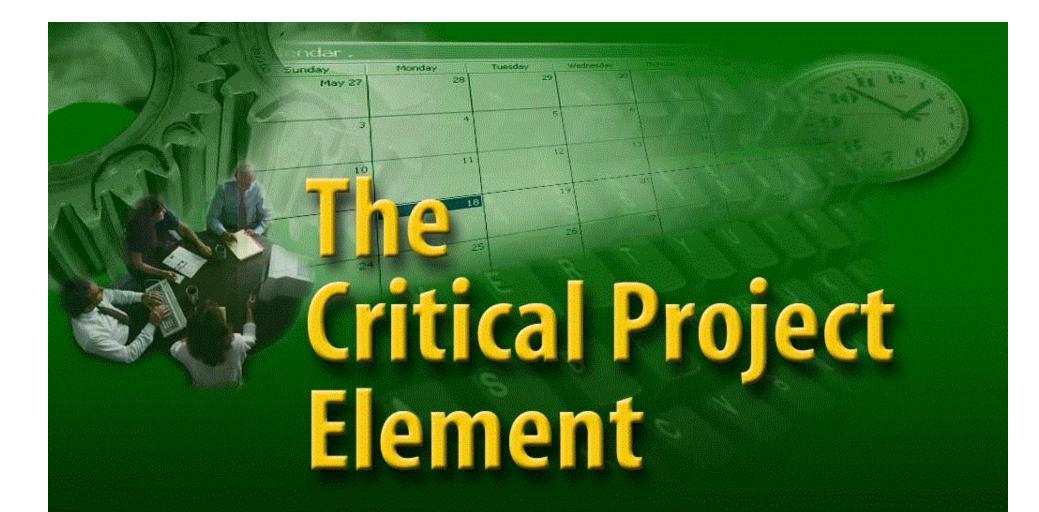InFocus Enterprises Inc.

Agenda

- The Critical Project Element

- Applying Communications

- The Successful Communicator

- Becoming a Better Communicator

Facts and Figures

Projects

- Failure rate

- Cost overruns

- Late delivery

What Makes a Project Successful?

- On time

- On budget

- Deliver on scope/objectives

  Healthy, effective communications

Communications: What is It?

- **Oral Communications**
  - Presentations
  - Meetings
  - One-on-one: influencing & motivating others
- **Written Communications**
  - Project Charters
  - Status Reports
- **Silent Communications**
  - What is not said/written

Communications in Project Management

InFocus Enterprises Inc.

Why Does Communication Fail?

- Message was not clear

- Too much/too little information

- No context

- Sharing of information was not two way

- Timing was wrong

- Audience was wrong

Communications in Project Management

InFocus Enterprises Inc.

Why Does Communication Succeed?

Communicate

- At the right time

- With the right information

- Through the right medium

- To the right audience

Communications in Project Management

InFocus Enterprises Inc.

When Do I Use Communications?

- Leading a team

- Chairing meetings

- Presenting solutions

Communications
in Project
Management

InFocus
Enterprises Inc.

When Do I Use Communications?

- Issue Resolution

- Conflict Resolution

- Project and Organizational Politics

- Change Management

With Whom?

- Users/Customers

- Project Sponsors

- Project Team

- Peers

- External Stakeholders

- Vendors

Skills of the Effective Communicator

- Clear
  - What Language Do I use?

- Concise

- Honest

- Proactive

- Listen

What Language Do I Use?

Avoid clutter and buzz words

Don't Become a Dilbert Cartoon!

- "burning platform"

- "rationalize"

- "metaphor"

Communications
in Project
Management

InFocus
Enterprises Inc.

Keep it Simple

- Leave your emotions at the door

- Leave your title at the door

- Stick to the facts

Keep it Honest

- Deal frankly and directly

- Don't make inferences

- Ask for the same in return

Be Optimistic

Be Proactive

- Don't avoid difficult communications

- Keep the emotion out of it (again!)

- Anticipate opportunities for communications

Listen

- Listen more than you talk

- Key to conveying empathy and understanding

- Provides you with useful information to effectively communicate back

Tools of the Trade

- Project Plans/Timelines

- Status Reports

- Issue Logs

- Post-Implementation Checklist

Tools of the Trade

- PowerPoint

- E-Mail (use it wisely!)

- Bulletins, WEB Sites

- Information Sessions
  - Regional Meetings
  - Department Meetings
  - Phase Kickoffs

Communications
in Project
Management

InFocus
Enterprises Inc.

How Do I Get Better?

- Lay down your ground rules early on

- Set expectations with your team

- Ask for feedback & listen

- Be accessible

- Be a self critic

- Be honest: both with yourself & others

- Be direct

Communications
in Project
Management

InFocus
Enterprises Inc.

How Do I Get Better?

- More is mostly better

- No communication is miscommunication

- Admit when you don't have an answer

- Find communication opportunities
  - Within your project or organization
  - Conferences, Boards....

How Will I Know if I've Been Successful?

Buy-in, Commitment, Ownership

- People are listening and understanding

- People feel that they are part of the change

- People feel that they "own" the project outcomes

Ask and find out!!!

Communications in Project Management

InFocus Enterprises Inc.

What Does It Buy You?

- Easier implementations

- More successful negotiations

- People will want to be part of your team (especially when the going gets tough)

- You'll get more projects!

- You and your team will enjoy the work!

Communications
in Project
Management

InFocus
Enterprises Inc.

Communications in Project Management

PMP Professional Development Seminar

Jim Marshall

April 23, 2003

Communications in Project Management

InFocus Enterprises Inc.