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IMPORTANCE OF ON-LINE COMMUNICATIONS FOR IT-PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Problem Statement

Communication management is one of the essential functions that can dramatically affect the outcome of IT-project. Communications failures top the list of reasons IT projects fail, according to poll results from the Computing Technology Industry Association, moreover, about 28% of 1,000 respondents identified poor communications as the main cause of project failure [1]. That's why, the task of effective IT-project communication providing is essential. Main approach is focused on analyses of tools and techniques that project teams can use to build an effective communication.

Organization of Project Communication

Project Communications Management includes the processes required to ensure timely and appropriate generation, collection, distribution, storage, retrieval and ultimate disposition of project information [2].

Project Communication can be divided by phases (Fig.1) and consists of such essential components as: Communication Planning; Information Distribution; Performance Reporting etc.

Necessity of applying communication defined such factors as: IT responsibilities and IT relationships with user's

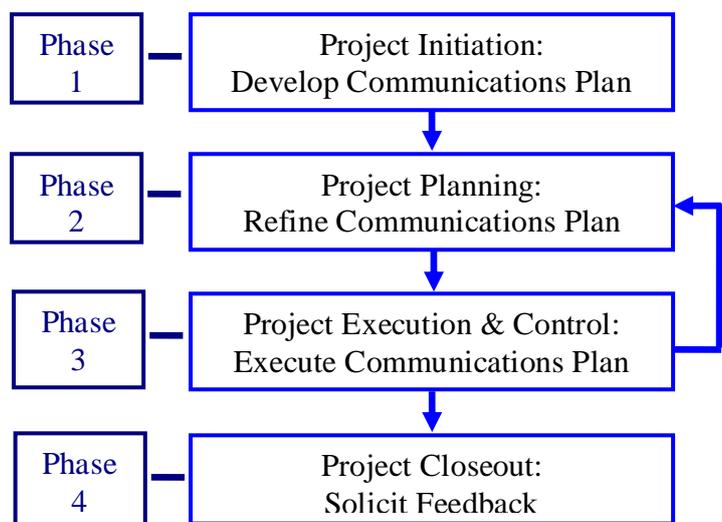


Fig.1. Communication by Phase

application are not consistent; funding issues may require essential lead time; change management can be complex [2].

The analysis of just defined aspects of project communication and depending on experience of leading IT specialists allow to generate the basic recommendations for organization of effective project communication (Fig.2).

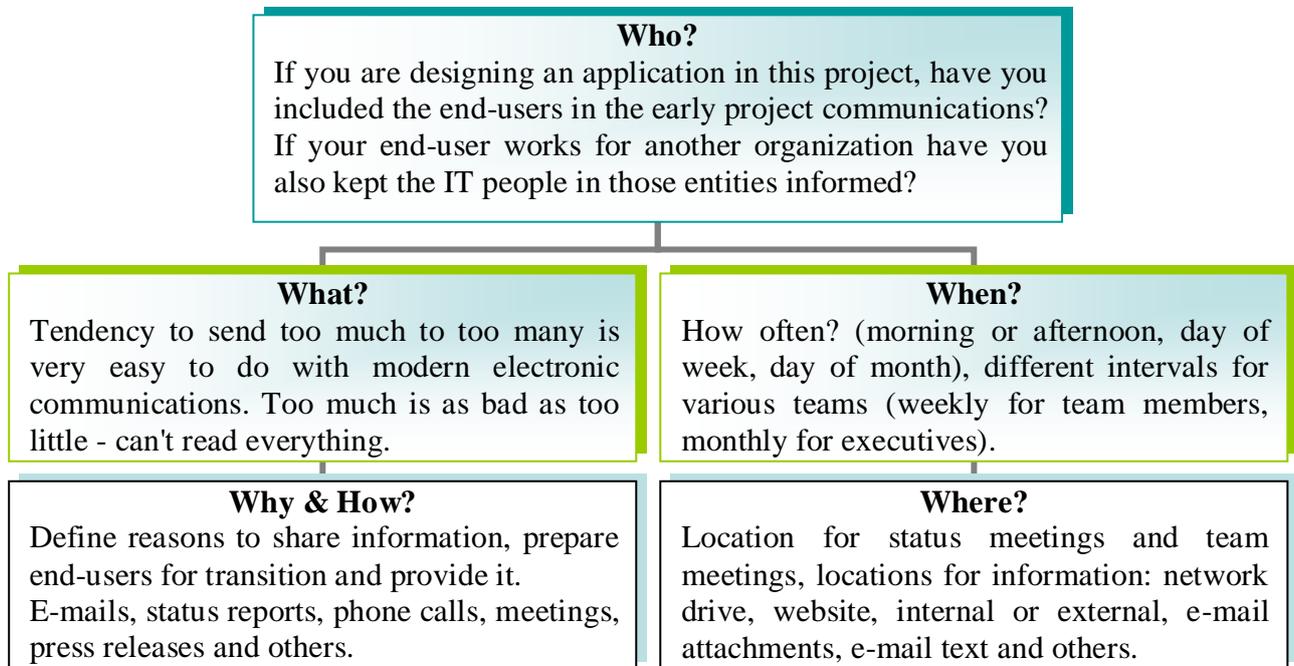


Fig.2. Basic Recommendations to Organize an Effective Communication

The method of creating the communication matrix proved to be efficient for solving a problem of providing the reliable project communication (Table 1). The communication matrix is a tool of applying above-listed recommendations.

Table 1. Communication Matrix

Audience	Vehicle	Frequency	Medium	Source	Delivery by	Date delivered	Expected result
All, Part of Team etc.	Meeting, Report etc.	Monthly, Scope change etc.	Meeting, Hard Copy etc.	PM, Report etc.	Team, PM, Customer etc.	As needed, monthly etc.	Impact of project etc.

As can be seen in Table 1 the communication matrix defines item, object and resources of IT-project communication (Fig.3).

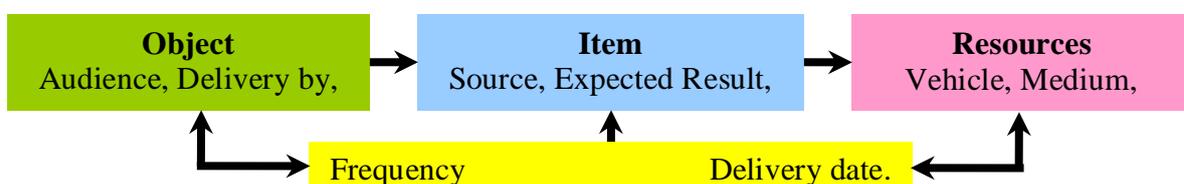


Fig.3. Item, Object and Resources of IT-Project Communication

Effective Communication Tools

Contemporary information technologies are able to provide effective communication between project's participants. Web-technologies and video conferences can be used for complete or partial problem's solution. Also network pagers, IRC-chats, Web-chats and combined on-line communication programs, which allow holding conferences with the participants of project and communicating with the use of IP telephony, are essential. Table 2 demonstrates the comparison of on-line messengers by most critical functions: VoIP, PSTN, Video, SMS, Log and File [3].

Table2. The Comparison of On-Line Messengers

	VoIP	PSTN	Video	SMS	Log	File
Yahoo Messenger	+		+	+	+	+
Windows Live Messenger	+		+	+	+	+
Skype	+	+	+	+	+	+
Google Talk	+				+	
ICQ	+		+	+	+	+
Apple iChat			+		+	+

It is necessary to make a conclusion about using different kinds of communication such as: on-line messengers, e-mail, phone and personal contact on IT project. Fig.4 demonstrates the usability of different communications.

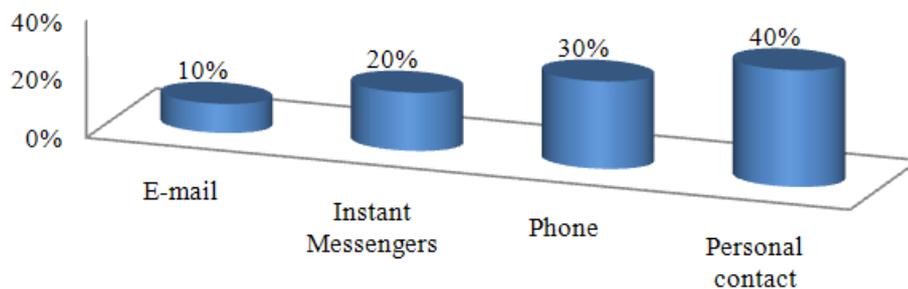


Fig.4. Parts of Usability of Different Communication

The data about dependency of the main project's successful components is classified on Fig.5 and demonstrates critical aspects of applying communications.

The mutual understanding between project participants is one of the critical characteristics to producing the successful IT product that directly connected with selection of project communications. The highest degree of mutual understanding can be provided by phone and personal contact, the lowest – by e-mail.

The distractibility of communications is the next critical characteristic to producing the successful IT product that influences on project efficiency. E-mail is

less distractible communication tool than instant messenger and phone, but it provides the least efficiency. Personal contact, compared to e-mail, provides the highest project efficiency, but it has also the highest degree of distractibility of project participants. Instant messengers are the alternative tool that supplies the effective IT project communications because of the low degree of distractibility and middle degree of mutual understanding.

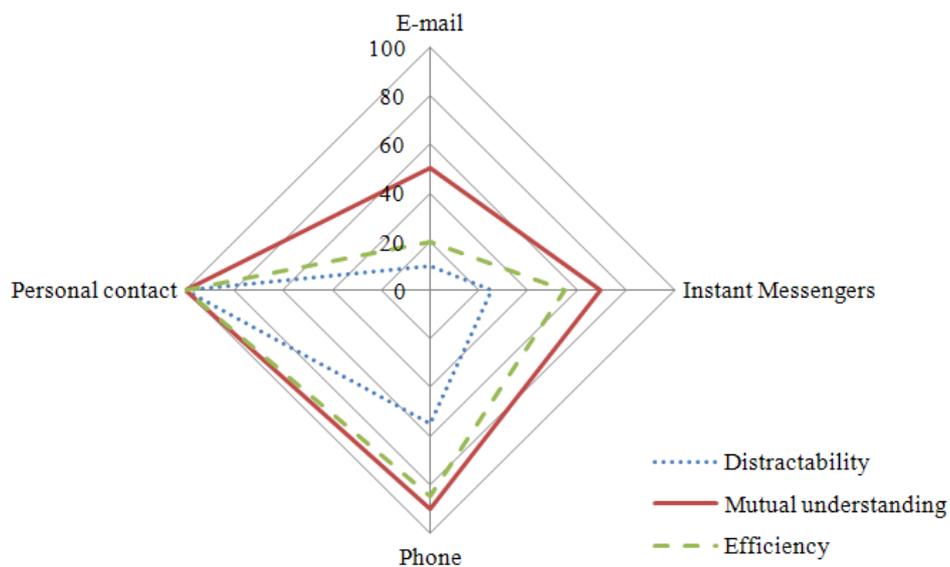


Fig.5. The Impact of Communication to Project Succeed

Conclusions

Contemporary informational technologies are able to provide an effective communications between the project team members. The critical aspects of applying different kind of modern communications define dependency of the main project's successful components such as mutual understanding and distractibility. As a result of using different communications the instant messengers are determined as an alternative tool that supplies the effective IT project communications because of the low degree of distractibility and middle degree of mutual understanding.

References

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