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PROJECT COMMUNICATION & NEGOTIATION

Project Communication and Conflict

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Project Communication and Conflict

- **Aims**
 - To understand the causes of conflict in project communication.
 - To disseminate conflict resolving strategies.
- **Expected Outcomes**
 - Causes of conflict in project communication can be understood.
 - Conflict resolving strategies can be understood.
- **Other related Information**
 - Importance of assertive communication in project management
- **References**
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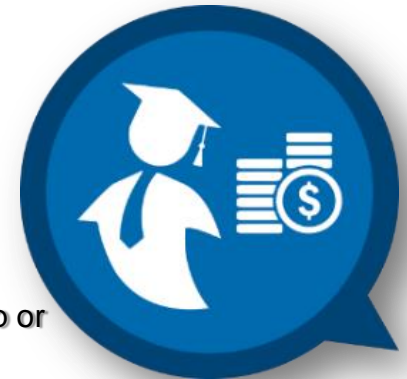
Project Communication and Conflict

- **Conflicts in Project**

- Conflict refers to differences leading to tension between two parties.
- Any incompatibility or contrast ideas, needs, wishes or interests between two parties leads to conflict.
- Conflict arises due to goals, values or behavioural incongruence.
- Fundamental differences between project manager and team member leads to conflict. Emotional conflict is also there which impacts dynamics in a project.
- There is always conflict. The conflicts may be intrapersonal , interpersonal, intergroup or inter-organizational.
- The traditional view of conflict does not favour conflict. As per this view, conflicts are unhealthy and should be avoided. But the modern view favours conflict as it helps in solving problems and does energize a system.
- It is essential to solve tension between two parties . In this context, causes of conflict s need to be understood. understood.

- **Causes of Conflict**

- The interdependency of tasks in project.
- Diversified project team composition from cultural perspective.
- Poor communication among team members in a project.
- Substantive or emotional conflicts arise in project.
- Different role ambiguities lead to conflict.
- Overlapping of different work activities lead to conflict.
- Lack of proper understanding between two project members on any idea, process, intention, activity or strategy to be implemented.
- conflict may also be due to implementation of any change management strategy in a project.



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Resolution of Conflict

- Project Managers have to understand the nature and dynamics of conflict.
- Process model of conflict is developed by Pondy (1967).
- There are five stages in conflict a per Pondy.
- The stages are latent, perceived, felt, manifest and conflict consequence.
- The conflicts should be resolved and appropriate approach should be applied. If any conflict is resolved to the satisfaction level of both parties then it would not trigger any other conflict to come in future. Efforts should be taken to consider expectations of both parties and if possible, win-win approach should be followed in resolving conflict.

Modes for Resolving Conflict

- There are two dimensions of conflict resolution. Concern for self and concern for others are the two dimensions.
- There are five modes viz; avoidance, competing, collaboration, accommodation and compromise.
- Avoidance mode is the situation where none of the parties in conflict avoid the conflicting situation.
- Competing is one mode in which one party is concerned for him/herself. One party does not concern for other party. One party becomes winner and other party becomes loser.
- Accommodation is one mode of conflict resolution in which one party is concerned for other party . One party is cooperative with other party and not concerned about him/herself.
- Compromise is another mode in which both parties in conflict are medium level of understanding and have been willing to share with each other.
- Collaboration is the best mode of conflict resolution in which both conflicting parties are concerned for one another. Both parties think in such a way that both work with strengths of each other for the success in long run. It is also considered as win-win pattern of conflict resolution.
- Avoidance mode should not be adopted in conflict resolution. By applying this mode, conflict is never resolved.
- As per requirement, a project manager has to apply the best mode to resolve conflict in the management of project activities.



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- **Assertive Communication**

- It is essential for a personnel in a project to be assertive in communication skill.
- If one person is expressing oneself effectively and sticks to one's points/views/logic, it is assertive communication.
- The self-esteem of a person is boosted by such assertive communication.
- There is nothing wrong in making assertive communication as it does not disrespect to other person.
- While making assertive communication, one should be careful for one's non-verbal communication.
- Standing for one's self which is good to streamline the project activities. It should be considered positively and accepted by others. Such communication should not be aggressive and should not create any awkward feeling or discomfort for others..
- Assertive communication should not hurt other's emotions.
- In project activities, it is not possible to have smooth running of the works. When the real problems are not portrayed properly following assertive communication, magnitude of problem cannot be realised.
- The behaviour of sender and receiver in assertive communication should not be constraint in maintaining long-term relationship.
- The situation where to assertive communication to be applied, should be taken care by the project personnel.
- The politeness, professional etiquette should not be compromised in assertive communication.
- In assertive communication, discussion becomes focused which is helpful in the pursuance of project activities.



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Assertive Communication

- It is the ability of a person to share or express both positive as well as negative ideas, feelings and significant points or views in an honest and open way to others.
- It is direct way of communication with other party.
- In such communication, rights are properly respected and equally expressed.
- The advantages of assertive communication are: respecting to self values, belief, goals and expressions.
- One justifies one's points without any feeling that what other party would think of the points.
- Such communication helps in focusing one's own goals without any ambiguity. It enables one to drive one's goals in a particular direction.

Conclusion of The Chapter

- **Conclusion #1**
 - Conflicts are there in project communication.
 - Conflict causes are either internal or external to an organization.
- **Conclusion #2**
 - Conflicts can be resolved by win-win approach.
 - Parties in conflict should follow collaboration approach which is benefit for both the parties and also in maintaining long-term relationship.
- **Conclusion #3**
 - Assertive communication has its advantage.
 - Assertive communication should be followed but such communication should not hurt emotionally to the receiver in communication process.
 - Assertive communication generally helps in making discussion focused and pin-point.



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