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| Description: Approved shield 25mm | | BPM Community  Stakeholder communications analysis Guideline | | |
| **Author** |  | | **Date** |  | |
| **Company** |  | | **SBU** |  | |
| **Issued to** |  | | **Version** |  | |

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| **Purpose of guideline/template** |
| The accompanying spreadsheet shows a fairly common way of identifying the communications approach to be used on major projects. BPM projects are typically regarded as major projects regardless of scale due to the sensitivity of the subject matter and the senior level of many key stakeholders.  The template can be used at the project initiation stage to identify interested parties, document the interests of different groups and ensure that mechanisms are put in place to keep them informed about project progress and issues once the project is underway.  At the project initiation stage it allows the sponsor and project team to ensure they have communicated the rationale for the project, its impact, and the resources needed to all the appropriate stakeholders. Without this it is unlikely that the business case wild receive uniform approval.  As the project progresses, the stakeholder communications analysis will need to be updated and as good practice it should be revisited by the senior steering committee on a regular basis ( approximately quarterly). |

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| **Why is a communications approach needed?** |
| Without a thought through communications approach, it is unlikely that your BPM project will succeed. Success in most projects comes from effective sponsorship, the absence or management of blockers, a consistent delivery and strong project management. BPM projects are used by senior people to drive the organisation forward and this involves creating an environment where difficult issues can be surfaced, debated maturely and effective actions agreed. Unless all stakeholders are regularly updated on the project, have their concerns addressed and can identify with the expected benefits, then their support cannot be taken for granted. |

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| **How should attached template be used?** |
| The template should be a living document that is regularly updated and is owned by the project or programme manager. It should be initially populated by the programme manager, usually in conjunction with the prime sponsor. **It is used to guide project actions and can be supported by other documents which describe the key messages, delivery formats and target audiences in more detail.** |

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| 1. **Stakeholder groups** |
| In BPM projects, the likely stakeholder groups are:   * Chief executive * Other executive directors of heads * IT groups – may be responsible for business intelligence but will also be concerned with data availability, definition, control and accessibility as well as concerned re software and hardware needs. A degree of discussion between finance and IT over ownership and responsibility is common in BPM projects. * Data providers - BPM projects need raw data and without support it may not be provided * Data commentators – data needs to be interpreted and often the commentators are a separate group from the data providers * Divisional or business unit heads - will want consistency between their own reporting and any consolidated reporting * Head office departments – often have interest in ensuring common data definitions, accounting methodologies and software choices |

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| 1. **Target audience** |
| A stakeholder group may need to be broken down into different target audiences - some can be an audience of one but some can be generic such as “all middle managers”.  For BPM projects, it is usual to treat each senior executive or functional head as a separate audience. If the BPM system will drive personal assessments, salary increases, bonuses etc. then more extensive communications exercises are normally appropriate. |

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| 1. **Role** |
| In BPM projects, common roles are:   * Project sponsor * Project leader * Information provider * Commentator * Information consumer   + As executive   + As functional head   + As specialist   + As accountant concerned with external or statutory reporting   + As management accountant or business intelligence analyst   + As business partner * Delivery team – e.g. IT designer, coder, tester etc   The above will not be an exhaustive list. |

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| 1. **Why important?** |
| For each audience, it is necessary to identify why they are important to the project – recognising that there are some groups who can make the project succeed and some who can be blockers. T |

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| 1. **When** |
| Lots of projects start with a fanfare which is followed by silence – which leads to presumption of problems or failure – so it is important to have a rolling programme of communications. Outputs from the template are usually recorded on a timeline document which is used as a control tool to ensure that the planned delivery schedule is met |

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| 1. **Value to our success** |
| Categorising stakeholders ensures that high value stakeholders who may have minimal project involvement, but who can influence success, are not overlooked and that communications resources are applied where there is the greatest return. |

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| 1. **Issues** |
| Identifying the main issues of concern to each stakeholder enables you to group communications activities together but more importantly ensures that you proactively address those issues. However, recognise that some issues or concerns can remain unspoken so unless you engage actively with your stakeholders you may not get a good understanding of all their concerns. |

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| 1. **Communication level** |
| The level of communication you adopt depends on the preferred style of each stakeholder, their involvement and influence over the project and the judgment of your sponsor and programme manager. |

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| 1. **Frequency** |
| Most BPM projects will have a weekly progress meeting for key involved individuals and will involve an extensive communications exercise at initiation stage. Outside of this it is more difficult, which is the reason why it is usual to be explicit about the frequency of communications to each stakeholder group. As a generalisation, most projects under-communicate.  For senior stakeholders an agreed “elevator pitch” or coffee machine briefing often works. |

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| 1. **Summary** |
| The template represents a common sense approach to communications in a BPM project – so use it as that rather than a slavish tool. It can be supported by other communications analyses and you will find many different variants used - if there is a house standard or preferred style then go with that as long as it provides adequate coverage of these areas. |

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