Green Communication Plans

Recap of Green Project Management:

Green Project Management (GreenPM) integrates environmental thinking into all of the project management decisions. It is a way to ingrain "greenthink™" into every project management process.

The point about green project management is <u>not</u> that you make every decision in favor of the one that is most environmentally friendly. The point is that you start to take the environment into account during the decision-making process. You might make most decisions the same as you do today. But there might be some decisions you would make differently.

Communication Plans

Creating a status report and holding status meetings are essential for managing expectations on a project. However, they are also the minimum expectations for a project manager. If your project is larger or it if requires culture change (changing how people do their jobs) then you should be communicating proactively and utilizing a Communications Plan. A Communications Plan allows you to

- Identify each stakeholder (or stakeholder group)
- Determine what kind of communications they need
- Define the medium best suited to provide the information
- Determine the timing, frequency, who is responsible, etc.

This is a classic way to make sure that you communicate the right information to the right people in the right timeframe.

Green Communication Plan

If you are thinking green, you simple ask if there is any environmental impact for each communication option. Generally speaking you will probably find that most of your communications plan does not have any impact on the environment. However, sometimes you will find some impact. This also does not mean that you automatically change your mind. However, after evaluating any environmental impact, you might find other options that are as equally effective and do not have the same environmental impact.

Here are a few examples of how this might play out.

- You decide that you will hold a quarterly status meeting of all management stakeholders. Normally this is in your office conference room. However, on your project you decide to have the meeting offsite. There are advantages to being

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able to get people away from their offices so they can concentrate on your project for a couple hours.

After asking the simple GreenPM question, you realize that holding the meeting offsite will result in 12 people having to drive 10 miles each way to the offsite facility. This has some impact on gasoline supplies and air pollution. (In fact, it also requires each person to be driving in their car for 30 minutes each way, which is also an additional 60 minutes away from work.) After identifying this environmental impact, you might decide to leave the meeting in the off-site facility. However, now that you are more aware of the environmental impact, perhaps you will decide to have the meeting in the normal office conference room instead.

- You decide to hand out sample CDs to all of the employees attending a training class. The CDs are cheap – less that $.25 each. After doing a quick environmental impact check, you see that there is a small impact to the environment from the CDs that will generally be thrown in the trash within 30 days. Faced with this reality you no longer just consider costs. This leads you to think a little more and realize that it is just as effective to send people an email with a link so that the material can be downloaded – eliminating the CD altogether.

- You want to create a project dashboard for your sponsor and other senior executives. The initial requirements state that this will be available online. After looking quickly from an environmental impact you do not see any implications. So you quickly move on.

Does this make sense? Green Project Management does not require you to change how you create a Communications Plan. You simply ask a quick question on whether there is any environmental impact associated with each communication option. If there is not, you move on. If there is, you determine what the impact is and whether this knowledge makes any difference. If it does not, you quickly move on. However, maybe, just maybe, you will make some different decisions based on this additional environmental impact.

Save the World – Use Green Project Management™

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