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IMPROVING THE PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT DURING PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION: TOOLS AND METHODS

ВДОСКОНАЛЕННЯ ПРОЦЕСУ УПРАВЛІННЯ КОМУНІКАЦІЯМИ ПРИ ВИКОНАННІ ПРОЕКТУ: ІНСТРУМЕНТИ ТА МЕТОДИ

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The relevance of the research topic lies in the fact that the implementation of any project and its implementation algorithm is a complex multi-component process, the violation of ensuring the viability of a certain element of it, the fulfillment of its task, causes negative consequences for the entire project and its team involved in its implementation. Successful completion of all project tasks and achievement of the goal for which it was created is possible subject to the minimization of all possible risks that may affect its implementation, as well as effective coordinated functioning of the communication system during project implementation. Accordingly, it is important to improve the communication management process, especially for complex, large-scale projects that can be of one or more directions, such as, for example, projects related to the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. In the article, the authors researched topical issues regarding the role of communications at the project implementation stage, as well as ways to improve it. The authors focused attention on the fact that communication is an important element throughout the entire life cycle of the project since a violation of their process between project participants can cause not only imperfect, ineffective, or delayed execution of one or more of its tasks, the consequence of a violation of the algorithm of project functioning can be its untimely and ineffective implementation without achieving the planned goal. The authors of the article substantiated the opinion that the tools and methods of communication management during project implementation, as well as the mechanisms for their improvement, should be chosen by its leaders depending on the planned goal of the project, available financial and human resources, terms and deadlines, as well as the area in which this project will be implemented. According to the authors of the article, the most effective way to improve the communication management process is to establish effective work of all project participants taking into account the developed and detailed communication management plan.

Keywords: project, communication process, management, project implementation, project life cycle.

Актуальність теми дослідження полягає у тому, що виконання будь-якого проекту й алгоритм його реалізації є складним багатокomпонентним процесом, порушення забезпечення життєздатності його певного елемента, виконання його завдання, спричинює негативні наслідки для всього проекту та його команди, яка задіяна у його реалізації. Успішне виконання всіх завдань проекту та досягнення мети, заради якої він був створений, можливе за дотримання умов мінімізації всіх можливих ризиків, які можуть вплинути на його реалізацію, а також ефективного узгодженого функціонування системи комунікації при виконанні проекту. Відповідно до цього, важливим вдосконалення процесу управління комунікаціями, особливо, для складних, масштабних проектів, які можуть бути одного або декілька спрямувань, як, наприклад, проекти щодо повоєнної відбудови України. У статті авторами досліджено актуальні питання щодо ролі комунікацій на етапі виконання проекту, а також шляхи його вдосконалення. Авторами акцентовано увагу на тому факті, що комунікації є важливим елементом протягом всього життєвого циклу проекту, оскільки порушення їх процесу між учасниками проекту може спричинити не лише недосконало, неефективно або відтерміноване виконання одне або декілька його завдань, наслідком порушення алгоритму функціонування проекту може стати його несвоєчасна та нерезуль-

тативна реалізація без досягнення запланованої мети. Авторами статті обґрунтовано думку про те, що інструментарій і методика управління комунікаціями при виконанні проекту, а також механізми їх вдосконалення повинні бути обрані його керівниками залежно від запланованої мети проекту, наявних фінансових і людських ресурсів, термінів і строків виконання, а також сфери, у якій цей проект буде реалізовано. На думку авторів статті, найбільш ефективним способом вдосконалення процесу управління комунікації є налагодження результативної роботи всіх учасників проекту з урахуванням розробленого та деталізованого плану управління комунікаціями.

Ключові слова: проект, процес комунікації, управління, виконання проекту, життєвий цикл проекту.

Problem statement. Post-war reconstruction of Ukraine, its political, economic, and social life assumes implementation of projects of various directions in technical spheres, such as construction and reconstruction of infrastructure objects or restoration of those industries which suspended their activities due to military actions in our state, in humanitarian spheres. Given the limited resources, both human and financial, and the need to implement such projects in the shortest possible time, there is an obvious need to develop mechanisms for their management, which will ensure their high level of performance at minimal cost.

In addition, when managing projects in a particular area at all stages of their life cycle, it is necessary to consistently and effectively perform the tasks provided by them. To provide such a coherent algorithm of action under such conditions is seen through the further improvement of those tools and methods of communication management in the implementation of projects that will be able to ensure the technical and economic efficiency of even the most large-scale and complex projects.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Important theoretical and practical aspects of tools and methods of communication management, as well as features of the communication process, have been studied by scientists as Cristófol F. [1], Widiанти, et.al. [2], Ye, et.al. [3], Skubilina & Makeeva [4], Bril et al. [5]. However, despite the scientific value of these works [6], the issue of improving the mechanism of communication management in the implementation of the project has not been studied in detail.

The purpose of the article is the study of the features and mechanisms of communication management in the implementation of projects, the difficulties encountered in the process of communication, as well as ways to overcome them and improve the whole process of communication management in the implementation of the project.

Main material. At all stages of the project lifecycle, the most important element of a

project is communication – the multistructural process of information exchange between its participants. “An effective communication system requires appropriate inputs, technologies, and management interactions” [1], and communication itself is the fundamental basis for the formation, adoption, and implementation of certain management decisions. [1], and communications themselves are the fundamental basis for the formation, adoption, and implementation of certain project management decisions. Each project is unique, with its own specific features, it has, firstly, its own specific goal, the achievement of which involves obtaining a predetermined result. Unlike, for example, business processes, the project is usually of one-time nature, in addition, the choice of the optimal mechanism for its management at all stages of its life cycle takes place in conditions of limiting factors for achieving the end result. We are talking about the timing of the project, its budget, other costs associated with its implementation, as well as its quality and result. Accordingly, “therefore, when deciding which method of project management to use, it is necessary to take into account the needs of stakeholders, the risks associated with the project, the size of the project” [2].

Both during the implementation of the project as a whole, and when making decisions on its individual tasks, in particular, timely and effective feedback between the participants is necessary, the communication process between its participants and the effectiveness of its management are important. Thus, communication in the implementation of the project is a polystructural mechanism of bilateral and multilateral exchange of information, which involves a mutual understanding between its participants. Communication is an integral element of the project of any direction at all stages of its life cycle, for this reason, all project participants, its leader, managers, and executors should have the appropriate professional competencies and understanding of the basic concepts and methods of application of communication technologies. Obviously, the ability to properly and effectively manage project communications

is one of the main requirements for the project manager, as well as other project participants.

Given the fact that communication during project implementation can be defined as the process of collecting and systematizing information needed to coordinate and synchronize, regulate and coordinate the actions of project participants; making effective and optimal management decisions; application and interpretation of the information obtained, the right choice of one or another method of communication management, which in its content is a management practice aimed at creating effective partnerships, achieving co-operation with the project participants, is necessary. Exactly for the mentioned reason, the improvement of the communication process during the project realization is urgent and important, that is why "the aim of the project management system creation is: improvement of the quality and effectiveness of separate project works, projects and project portfolios in general; providing the project managers and project participants with the effective methods and tools of project management" [3].

Any participant of a certain project: its leader, manager, or executor spends a significant amount of time on communications, which have both external and internal nature. The process of project communication management itself has five stages: initiation, planning, organization and control, analysis during implementation and completion. The first initial stage forms the general requirements, goals, objectives, and constraints of the project (e.g., financial or human resources), and determines the project's communication management strategy, duration, and composition of participants. This stage concludes with the approval of the project's communications management concept.

Regarding the stage of communications planning, at this stage the information and technological model of communication is developed, as well as a study of the information needs of the project participants in the technical support is carried out. At the same time, at this stage, the rules of information exchange between the project participants are developed and the communication management plan, which is a key document of communication management during the whole life cycle of the project, is drawn up; it facilitates interaction with all project stakeholders by creating controlled and controllable information flows. In particular, the communications management plan provides a detailed description of the expectations and

requirements of communications for the project; the type and method of information exchange; assignment of responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation of each stage, and the successful completion of the task(s) envisioned by them.

At the third stage of organization and control of information support of the project, the distribution of information is organized, the control of the functioning of the communication system is carried out, the information on the project is collected and interpreted, the reports on the management of project communications are formed. At the stage of project participants' current activity, analysis and regulation of communications, the reasons of disturbances and failures in providing the necessary information to the project participants are analyzed, the necessary corrective measures are defined, requests for appropriate changes in the communications management system are made, approved in the order established by the project, and the future functioning of the communications management system is forecast based on the changes made. The final stage of project communications management is closure, the primary task of which is the final evaluation of the existing communications system, its effectiveness, summarizing the results, compiling a consolidated report on the project communications management, archiving the project documentation.

It is clear that depending on the area in which the project will be executed, its duration, and size, the system of management of its communications will be complicated by its specific features, which must be considered when developing mechanisms for its improvement. For example, the improvement of innovation project management covers two components – project management, which acquires leadership positions in management activities, and innovativeness, which is a dominant characteristic of the harmonious development of economic entities, acquiring signs of systemic and large-scale [4]. However, if we are talking about the main criteria for evaluating project team communications, they are common, they include the reliability of information, the speed of data exchange, and the extent of their loss. Also common to all projects is that the effective construction of the communication system in their implementation is possible with the successful construction of organizational relations, regulation of information flows, and improve the results of the project. In order to reduce or avoid negative consequences,

such as deviation from the goal of the project, it is necessary to ensure the effectiveness of communication management, as in the project management system, the key process is the management of communication itself. If there is no well-established communication between the project participants, the normal functioning of all project processes and tasks, the implementation of which is necessary for its implementation, stops because it will entail a lack of both coordination of work and understanding between the project team members.

“The human resource in management is present in all phases of the project, such as negotiations, meetings, decision making, resolution of acute conflicts are inherent procedures of project implementation” [5]. A project team is a temporary group of specialists, which is created for the duration of the project and carries out its activities throughout its life cycle, and the task of this group, in turn, is to ensure the achievement of the project objectives, the goal for which it was created. It is obvious that another important cycle is closely related to the project life cycle, namely, the communication cycle. Project communications management covers and accompanies those processes that take place during the procedures of project initiation, planning, implementation, and completion.

As we noted above, communication can be both internal and external, occurring not only within the project team, but also with all stakeholders, and it must be as effective and efficient as possible to successfully achieve the project goal. The project manager is responsible for the dynamics and quality of interaction between the participants, but the entire communication process takes place in a direct or indirect relationship with others.

So, the main goal of interpersonal communication is to achieve mutual understanding between all participants in the project. Yes, communication is a social process, the exchange of information between people in order to identify problems and find solutions. The term “communication” itself has a double meaning, it captures the statics of the interaction, such as an act, a written document, which carries information and therefore establishes and maintains the actual contacts between people. At the same time, this term provides for the fixation of dynamics, the process of interaction, contacts, and relationships. Thus, the process of communication in the implementation of the project has an objective and subjective side, the

first of which is the relationship, independent of the characteristics of individuals mediating and controlling the content and nature of interaction; it is a system of official, service relations, determined by the status of the official, orders, instructions, rules, regulations, job descriptions of functional responsibilities, staffing schedule. While the second side is a conscious attitude of people to each other, based on their individual characteristics: people behave differently in the same status position, that is, they adhere to different patterns of behavior, different social roles.

It is clear that when project team members participate in project management, they are simultaneously ready to take responsibility for the success of the project. Such participation allows the project manager to act as an assistant to all project participants; they are transformed from individual performers into members of a cohesive project team, with four basic communication needs to be provided by them. These are responsibilities, each member of the project team needs to know what part of the project and for what tasks he/she is responsible; coordination, because the project team members depend on each other while performing the assigned work, it is the coordinating information that ensures high efficiency of teamwork of project team members and timely and effective implementation of project tasks; the project implementation process itself.

It seems that for the project to be completed successfully and the goal of its creation to be achieved, the manager's decisions should be clear and understandable for each of the project team members, so one of the important functions of project team leaders is the solution of conflict situations. To manage conflict in the team, it is necessary to take measures affecting the person or group in order to structure and constructively develop interpersonal interaction. It is the avoidance of conflict situations during project implementation or minimization of their negative consequences in case of their occurrence that is a necessary condition for successful communication management during project implementation.

Conclusions. The formation of a communication plan at the stage of project creation, which will provide for all the possible risks to its implementation, in particular, the conflict situations that may arise in the future between the participants, as well as ways to resolve them, will allow more clearly organize the interaction of project participants, quickly make management

decisions. and make the necessary changes, such as a communication plan and matrix, as well as methods of communication management, save time when transferring information, quickly find problem areas during the project, level the consequences and about Thus, the use of tools, allows for more effective project management at all stages of the project life cycle.

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