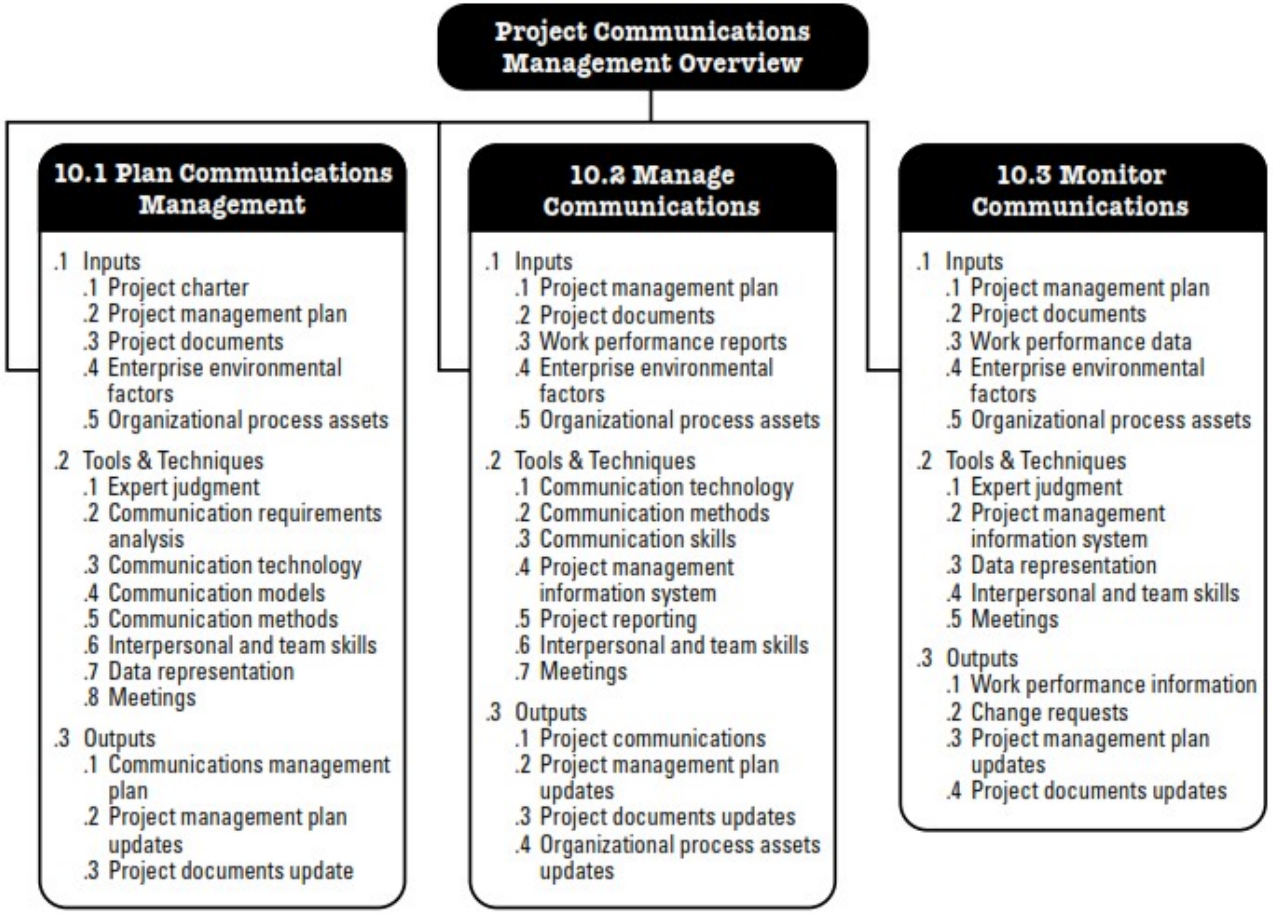
Chapter Ten-Communications management

Eskinder Mesfin Cherinet(PMP|CCNP|MCSE|CCNP|ITiL)

Chapter Ten-Communications management

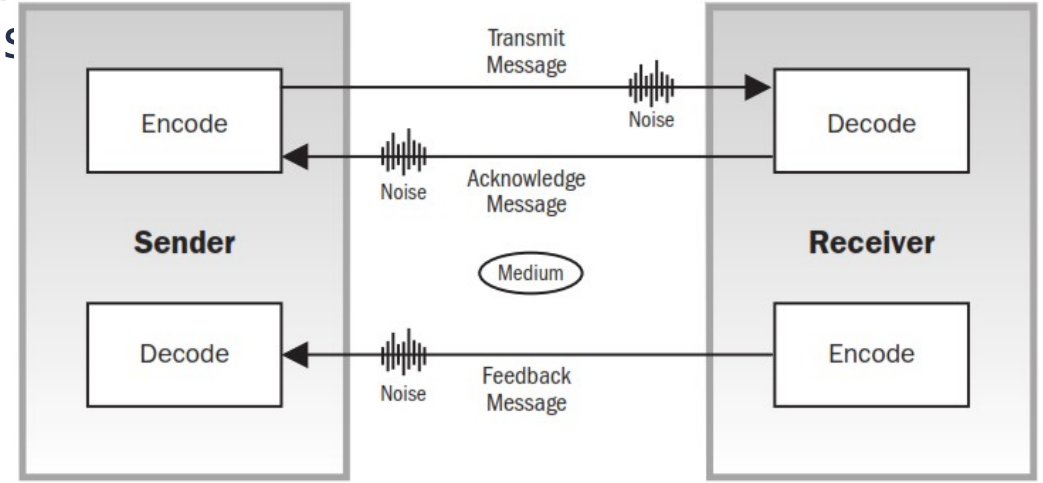
- Communications management is about keeping everybody in the loop. Have you ever tried talking to someone in a really loud, crowded room? That's what running a project is like if you don't get a handle on communications. Luckily, there's **Communications Management, which is the knowledge** area that **gets everyone talking about the work that's being done**, so that they all **stay on the same page. That way, everyone has the** information they need to **resolve any issues and keep the project moving forward.**

Overvi


Project Communications Management Overview
10.1 Plan Communications Management
.1 Inputs
.1 Project charter
.2 Project management plan
.3 Project documents
.4 Enterprise environmental factors
.5 Organizational process assets
.2 Tools & Techniques
.1 Expert judgment
.2 Communication requirements analysis
.3 Communication technology
.4 Communication models
.5 Communication methods
.6 Interpersonal and team skills
.7 Data representation
.8 Meetings
.3 Outputs
.1 Communications management plan
.2 Project management plan updates
.3 Project documents update
10.2 Manage Communications
.1 Inputs
.1 Project management plan
.2 Project documents
.3 Work performance reports
.4 Enterprise environmental factors
.5 Organizational process assets
.2 Tools & Techniques
.1 Communication technology
.2 Communication methods
.3 Communication skills
.4 Project management information system
.5 Project reporting
.6 Interpersonal and team skills
.7 Meetings
.3 Outputs
.1 Project communications
.2 Project management plan updates
.3 Project documents updates
.4 Organizational process assets updates
10.3 Monitor Communications
.1 Inputs
.1 Project management plan
.2 Project documents
.3 Work performance data
.4 Enterprise environmental factors
.5 Organizational process assets
.2 Tools & Techniques
.1 Expert judgment
.2 Project management information system
.3 Data representation
.4 Interpersonal and team skills
.5 Meetings
.3 Outputs
.1 Work performance information
.2 Change requests
.3 Project management plan updates
.4 Project documents updates

Anatomy of communication

- When you communicate with your team, you need to **encode your message into** a phone call, a document, an IM chat, or sometimes even a different language for them to understand. Your team then **decodes that message so they can get its** content. If something happens to your message along the way (static on the phone line, your printer inserts garbage characters, your Internet connection is spotty, or your translation isn't very good), then your team might not get the intended message. The kind of interference that can alter your mess



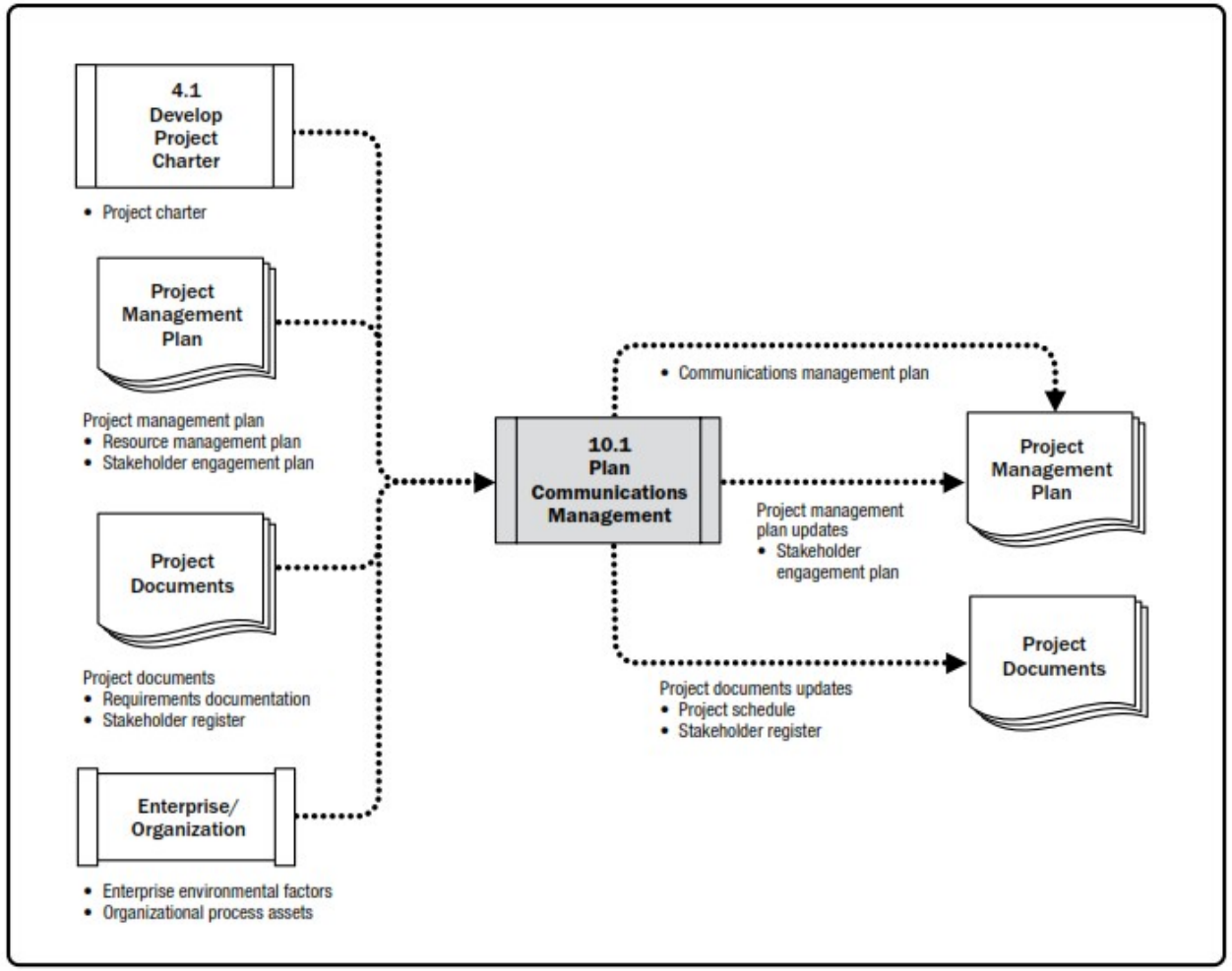
Get a handle on communication

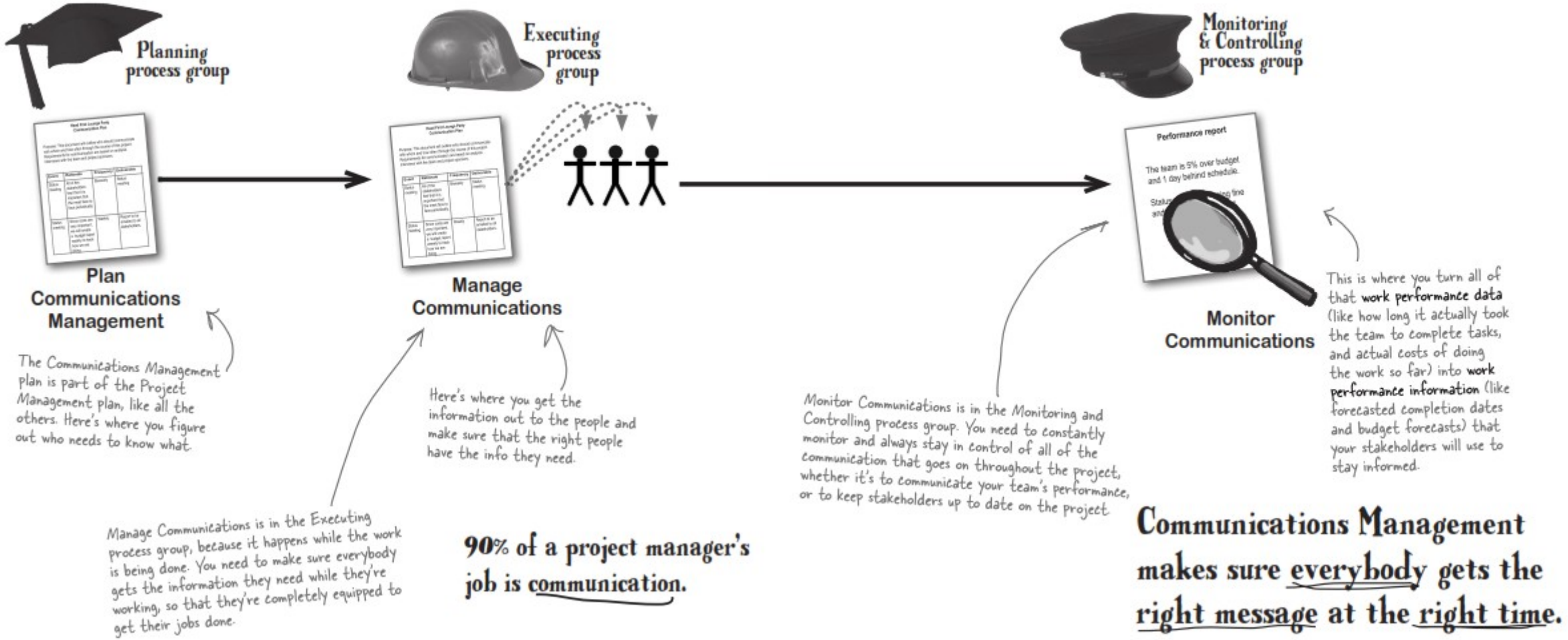
- Any kind of communication can have interference. The wrong person can get the message; noise can garble the transmission; you can make mistakes decoding or encoding the message. It turns out that 90% of a project manager's job is communication, which is why there's a whole knowledge area devoted to it. The **Communications Management processes are here to help you avoid these** common kinds of errors, through planning and careful tracking of stakeholder communications on your project. Just like every other knowledge group we've covered so far, it all starts with a plan.

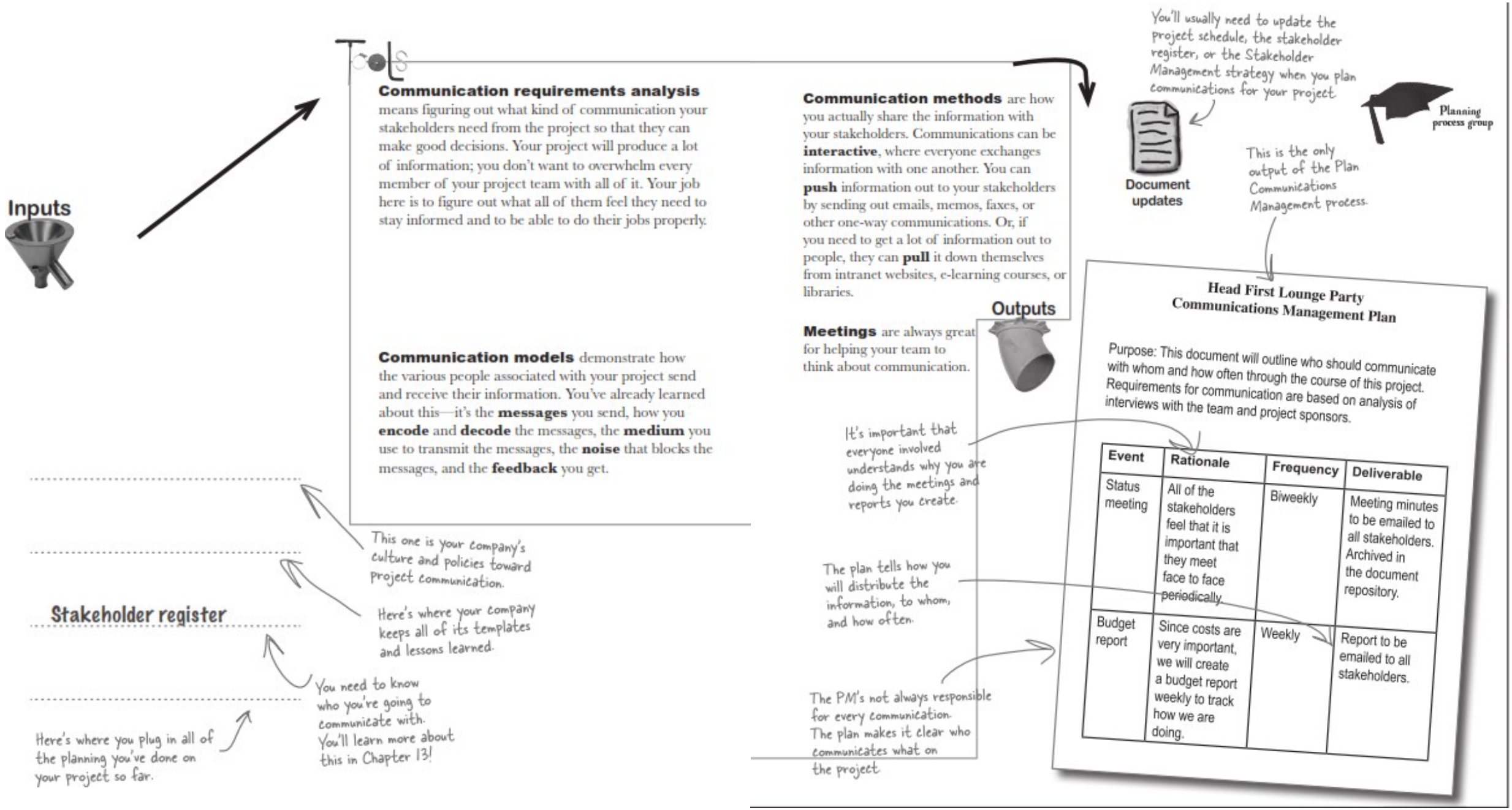
Data Flow

Plan Communications Management

Inputs	Tools & Techniques	Outputs
.1 Project charter .2 Project management plan • Resource management plan • Stakeholder engagement plan .3 Project documents • Requirements documentation • Stakeholder register .4 Enterprise environmental factors .5 Organizational process assets	.1 Expert judgment .2 Communication requirements analysis .3 Communication technology .4 Communication models .5 Communication methods .6 Interpersonal and team skills • Communication styles assessment • Political awareness • Cultural awareness .7 Data representation • Stakeholder engagement assessment matrix .8 Meetings	.1 Communications management plan .2 Project management plan updates • Stakeholder engagement plan .3 Project documents updates • Project schedule • Stakeholder register



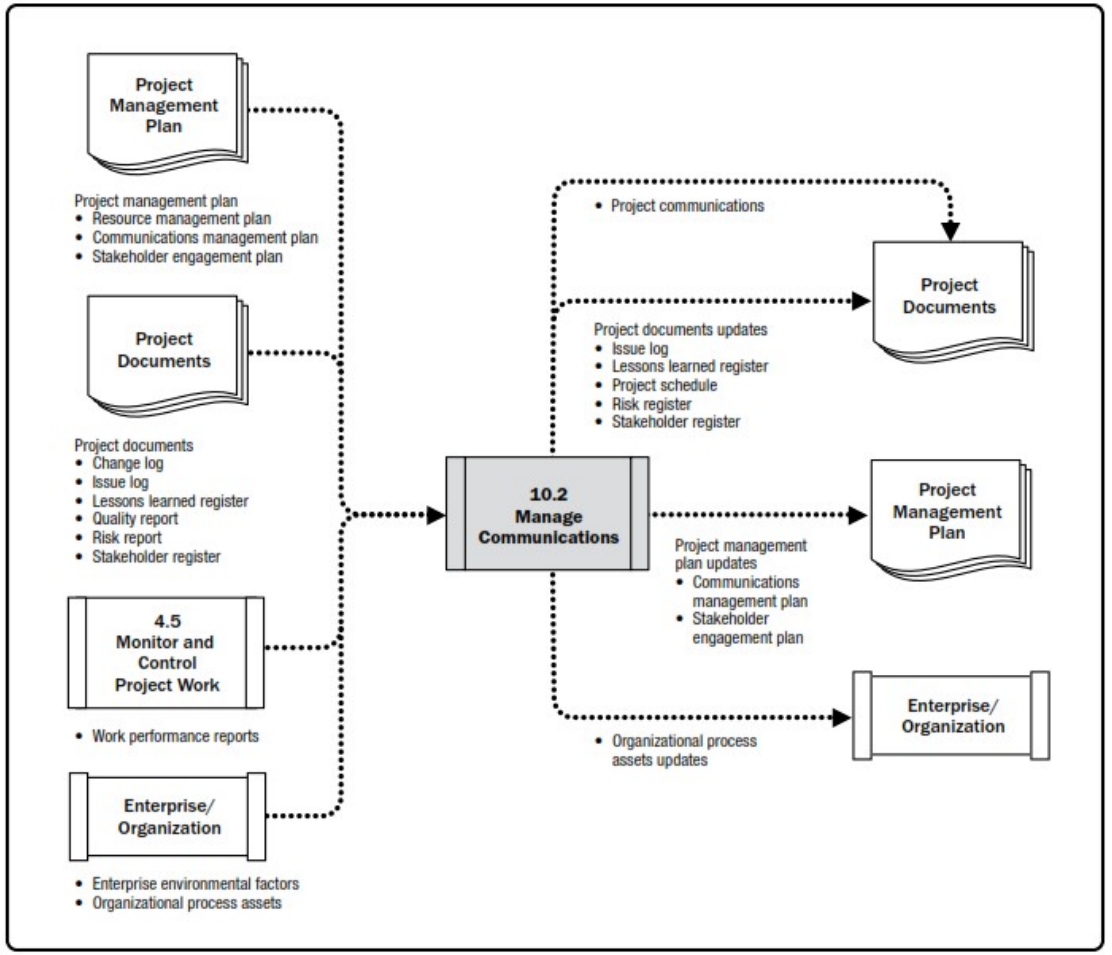

Planning process group
Executing process group
Monitoring & Controlling process group
Plan Communications Management
Manage Communications
Monitor Communications
Performance report
The team is 5% over budget and 1 day behind schedule.
The Communications Management plan is part of the Project Management plan, like all the others. Here's where you figure out who needs to know what.
Here's where you get the information out to the people and make sure that the right people have the info they need.
Manage Communications is in the Executing process group, because it happens while the work is being done. You need to make sure everybody gets the information they need while they're working, so that they're completely equipped to get their jobs done.
90% of a project manager's job is communication.
Monitor Communications is in the Monitoring and Controlling process group. You need to constantly monitor and always stay in control of all of the communication that goes on throughout the project, whether it's to communicate your team's performance, or to keep stakeholders up to date on the project.
This is where you turn all of that work performance data (like how long it actually took the team to complete tasks, and actual costs of doing the work so far) into work performance information (like forecasted completion dates and budget forecasts) that your stakeholders will use to stay informed.
Communications Management makes sure everybody gets the right message at the right time.


Inputs
Tools
Communication requirements analysis means figuring out what kind of communication your stakeholders need from the project so that they can make good decisions. Your project will produce a lot of information; you don't want to overwhelm every member of your project team with all of it. Your job here is to figure out what all of them feel they need to stay informed and to be able to do their jobs properly.
Communication models demonstrate how the various people associated with your project send and receive their information. You've already learned about this—it's the messages you send, how you encode and decode the messages, the medium you use to transmit the messages, the noise that blocks the messages, and the feedback you get.
Communication methods are how you actually share the information with your stakeholders. Communications can be interactive, where everyone exchanges information with one another. You can push information out to your stakeholders by sending out emails, memos, faxes, or other one-way communications. Or, if you need to get a lot of information out to people, they can pull it down themselves from intranet websites, e-learning courses, or libraries.
Meetings are always great for helping your team to think about communication.
Outputs
You'll usually need to update the project schedule, the stakeholder register, or the Stakeholder Management strategy when you plan communications for your project.
Planning process group
Document updates
This is the only output of the Plan Communications Management process.
Head First Lounge Party
Communications Management Plan
Purpose: This document will outline who should communicate with whom and how often through the course of this project. Requirements for communication are based on analysis of interviews with the team and project sponsors.
Event
Rationale
Frequency
Deliverable
Status meeting
All of the stakeholders feel that it is important that they meet face to face periodically.
Biweekly
Meeting minutes to be emailed to all stakeholders. Archived in the document repository.
Budget report
Since costs are very important, we will create a budget report weekly to track how we are doing.
Weekly
Report to be emailed to all stakeholders.
It's important that everyone involved understands why you are doing the meetings and reports you create.
The plan tells how you will distribute the information, to whom, and how often.
The PM's not always responsible for every communication. The plan makes it clear who communicates what on the project.
This one is your company's culture and policies toward project communication.
Here's where your company keeps all of its templates and lessons learned.
Stakeholder register
You need to know who you're going to communicate with. You'll learn more about this in Chapter 13!
Here's where you plug in all of the planning you've done on your project so far.

Manage Communication

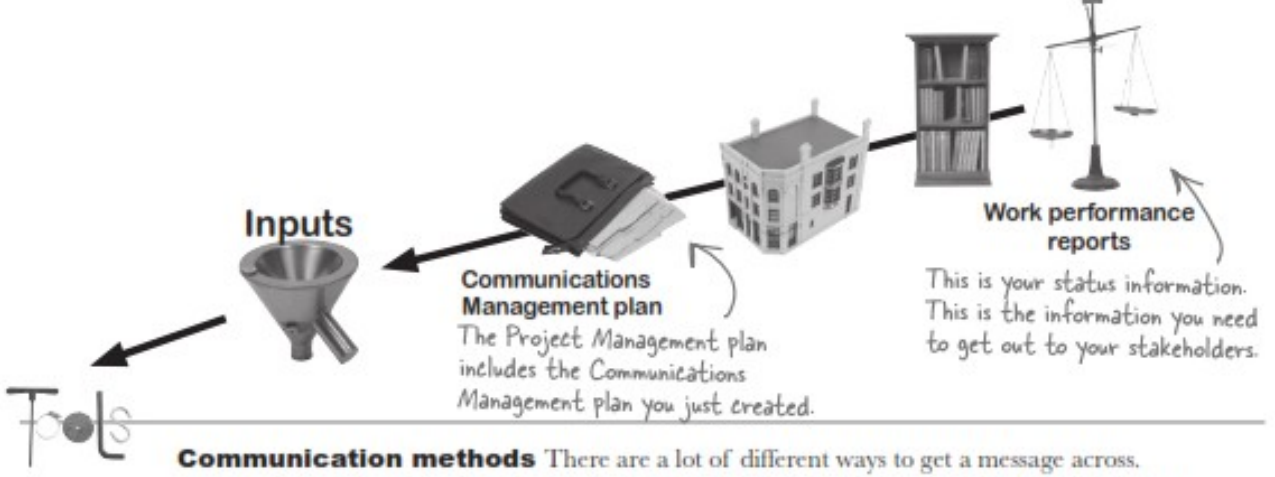
Manage Communications

Inputs	Tools & Techniques	Outputs
.1 Project management plan • Resource management plan • Communications management plan • Stakeholder engagement plan .2 Project documents • Change log • Issue log • Lessons learned register • Quality report • Risk report • Stakeholder register .3 Work performance reports .4 Enterprise environmental factors .5 Organizational process assets	.1 Communication technology .2 Communication methods .3 Communication skills • Communication competence • Feedback • Nonverbal • Presentations .4 Project management information system .5 Project reporting .6 Interpersonal and team skills • Active listening • Conflict management • Cultural awareness • Meeting management • Networking • Political awareness .7 Meetings	.1 Project communications .2 Project management plan updates • Communications management plan • Stakeholder engagement plan .3 Project documents updates • Issue log • Lessons learned register • Project schedule • Risk register • Stakeholder register .4 Organizational process assets updates



Tell everyone what’s going on

- Once you have the Communications Management plan completed, it’s time to make sure that everybody is getting the information that they need to help your project succeed. The **Manage Communications process is all about making** sure that the right information makes it to the right people.



Communication methods There are a lot of different ways to get a message across. For the test you will need to know four different kinds of communication, and when to use them.

1 Formal written

Any time you're signing a legal document or preparing formal documentation for your project, that's formal written communication.

Any time you see anything that has to do with a contract, you should always use formal written communication.

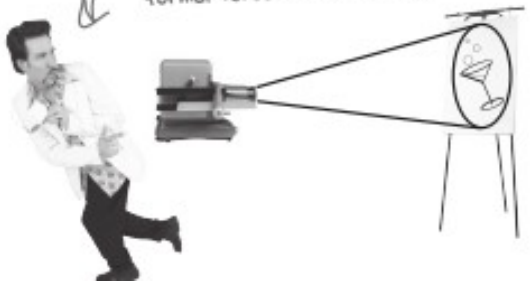
2 Informal written

Blueprints, specifications, and all other project documents are examples of formal written communication.

If you drop someone a quick email or leave her a memo or a sticky note, that's informal written communication.

3 Formal verbal

If you ever have to give a presentation to update people on your project, that's formal verbal communication.



4 Informal verbal

Speeches and prepared talks are formal. Meetings, hallway chats, and planning sessions are informal.

Just calling somebody up to chat about your project is informal verbal communication.

Try

1. You and your business analysts write a requirements specification for your project.

- [ ] Formal verbal
- [ ] Informal verbal
- [x] Formal written
- [ ] Informal written

2. You call up a supplier for materials for your project to let him know that you are a week late, so he's got a little flexibility in his delivery schedule.

- [ ] Formal verbal
- [x] Informal verbal
- [ ] Formal written
- [ ] Informal written

3. You present your project's status to your company's executive committee.

- [x] Formal verbal
- [ ] Informal verbal
- [ ] Formal written
- [ ] Informal written

4. You send an email to some of your team members to get more information about an issue that has been identified on your project.

- [ ] Formal verbal
- [ ] Informal verbal
- [ ] Formal written
- [x] Informal written

5. You leave a voicemail message for your test team lead following up on an issue he found.

- [ ] Formal verbal
- [x] Informal verbal
- [ ] Formal written
- [ ] Informal written

6. You IM with your team members.

- [ ] Formal verbal
- [ ] Informal verbal
- [ ] Formal written
- [x] Informal written

7. You prepare an RFP (request for proposals) for vendors to determine which of them will get a chance to contract a new project with your company.

- [ ] Formal verbal
- [ ] Informal verbal
- [x] Formal written
- [ ] Informal written

Anything that has to do with a contract is always formal written.

Get the message?

- Communication is about more than just what you write and say. Your facial expressions gestures, tone of voice, and the context you are in have a lot to do with whether or not people will understand you. **Effective communication takes the way you act and sound** into account. Most of the communication on your project takes place during the Manage Communication process, so you need to know how to communicate effectively. Here are the important aspects to effective communication:

You do most of the project communication when you're performing the Manage Communications process.

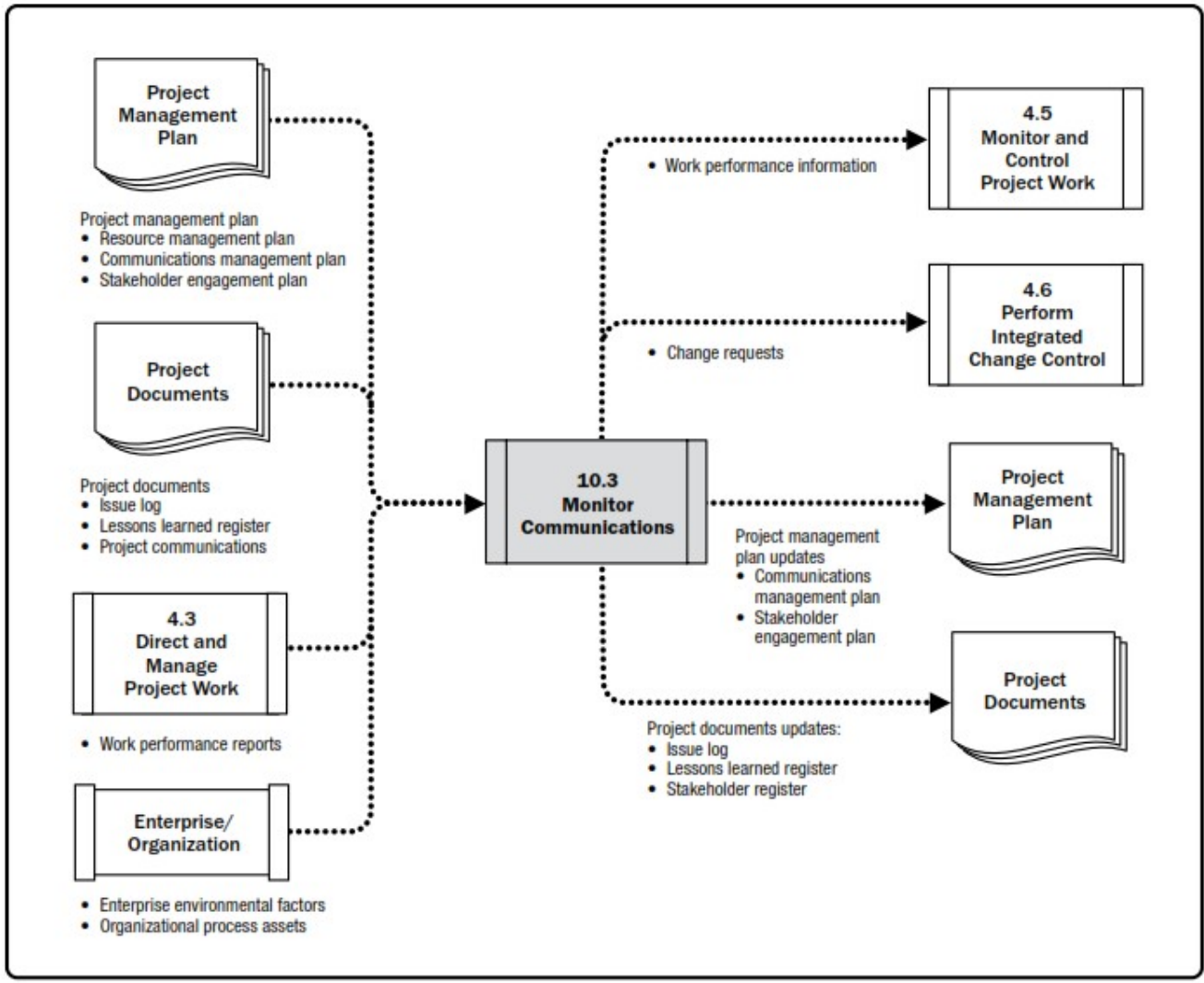
Get the message?

- **Nonverbal communication means your gestures, facial expressions, and** physical appearance while you are communicating your message. You don't always think about it, but the way you behave can say more than your words when you are trying to get your message across.
- **Paralingual communication is the tone and pitch of your voice when** you're talking to people. If you sound anxious or upset, that will have an impact on the way people take the news you are giving. You use paralingual communication all the time—it's a really important part of how you communicate. When your tone of voice makes it clear you're really excited about something, or if you're speaking sarcastically, that's paralingual communication in action.
- **Feedback is when you respond to communication. The best way to be sure** people know you are listening to them is to give lots of feedback. Some ways of giving feedback are summarizing their main points back to them, letting them know that you agree with them, or asking questions for clarification When you give a lot of feedback to someone who is speaking, that's called **active listening.**

Monitor Communicat

Monitor Communications

Inputs	Tools & Techniques	Outputs
.1 Project management plan • Resource management plan • Communications management plan • Stakeholder engagement plan .2 Project documents • Issue log • Lessons learned register • Project communications .3 Work performance data .4 Enterprise environmental factors .5 Organizational process assets	.1 Expert judgment .2 Project management information system .3 Data analysis • Stakeholder engagement assessment matrix .4 Interpersonal and team skills • Observation/conversation .5 Meetings	.1 Work performance information .2 Change requests .3 Project management plan updates • Communications management plan • Stakeholder engagement plan .4 Project documents updates • Issue log • Lessons learned register • Stakeholder register

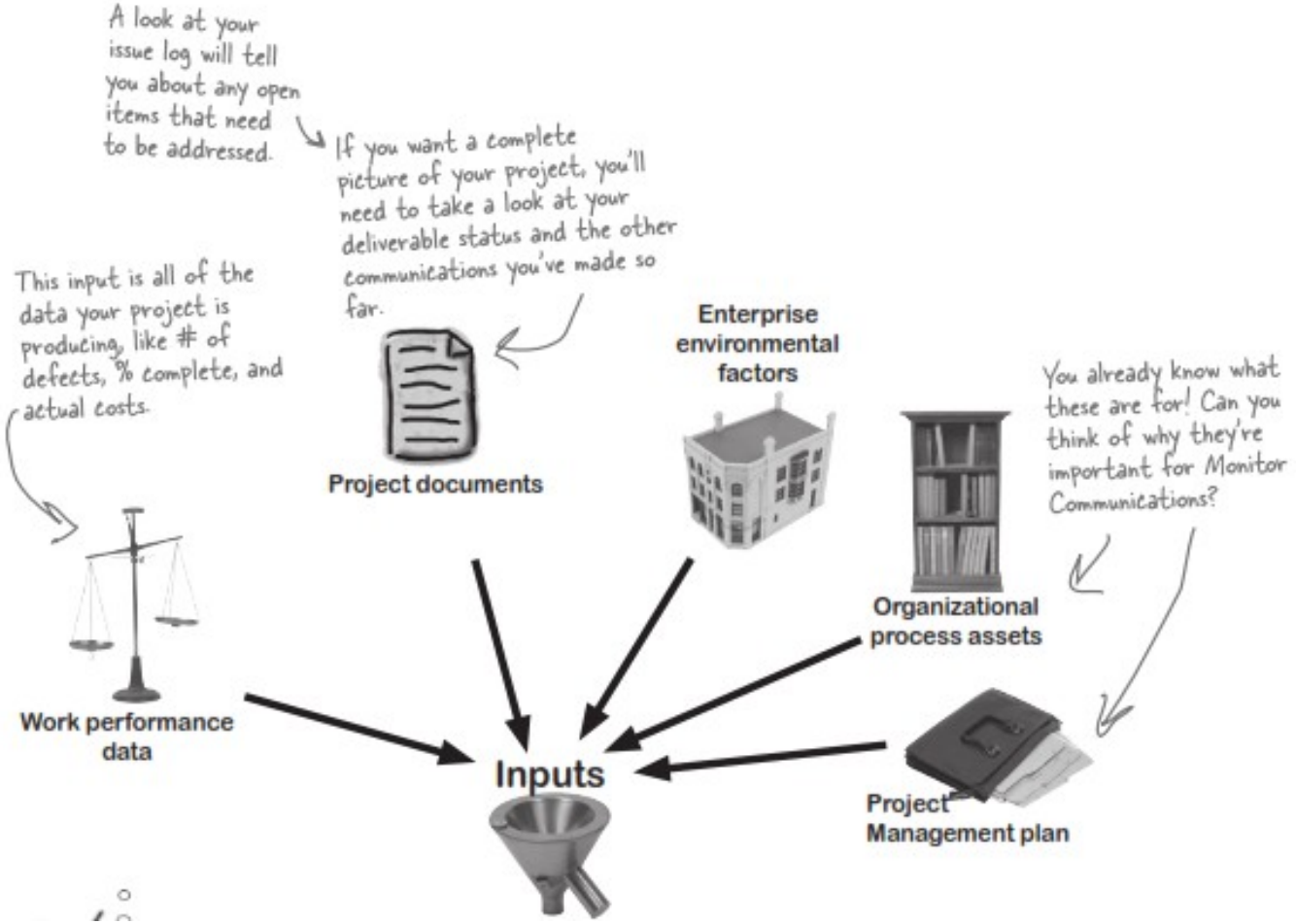


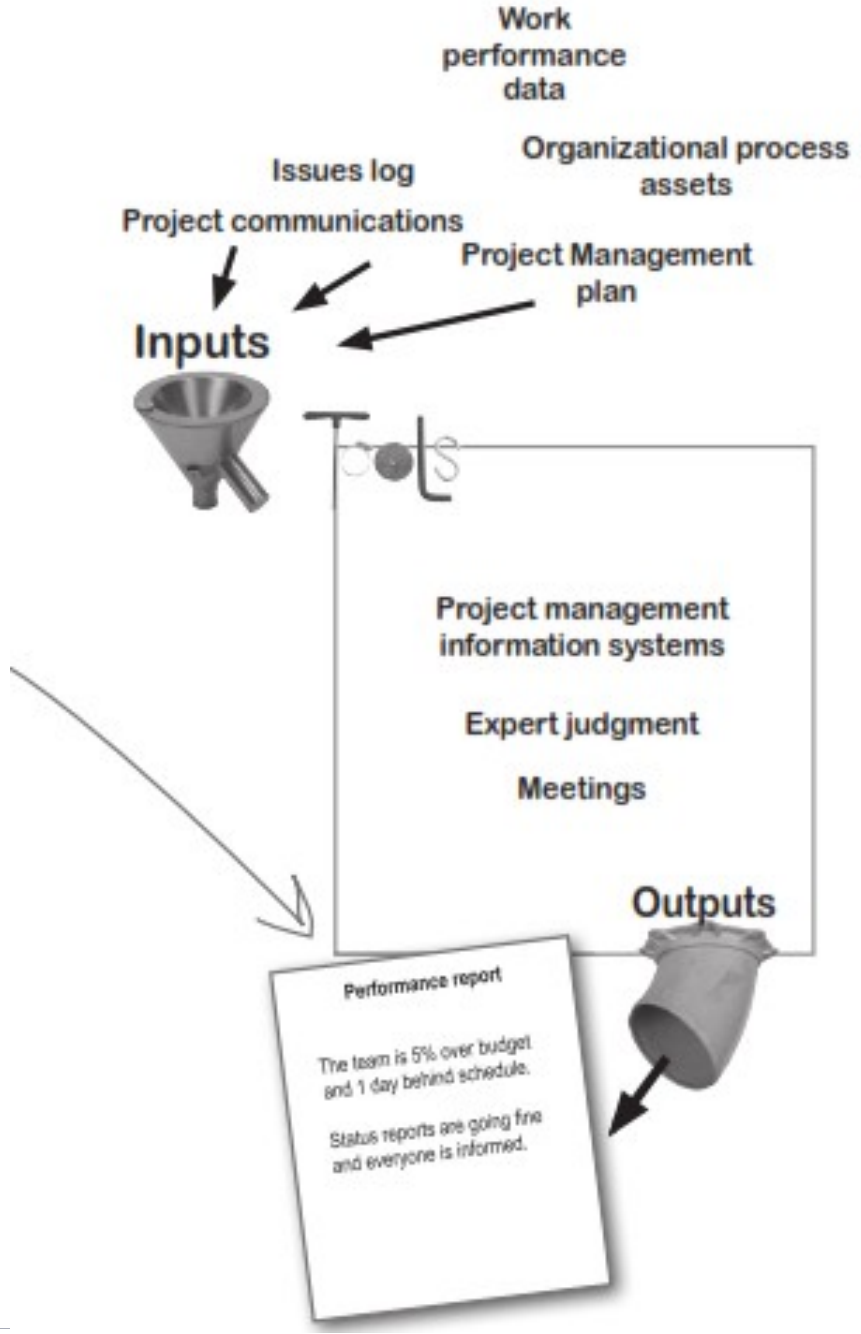
Let everyone know how the project’s going

- You spend a lot of time collecting valuable information about how your projects are doing. So what do you do with it? You *communicate it. And* that’s what the **Monitor Communications process is for: taking the** information you gathered about how work is being done and distributing it to the stakeholders who need to make decisions about the project.

Monitor Communications takes the outputs from the Executing process in Manage Communications and turns them into work performance information.

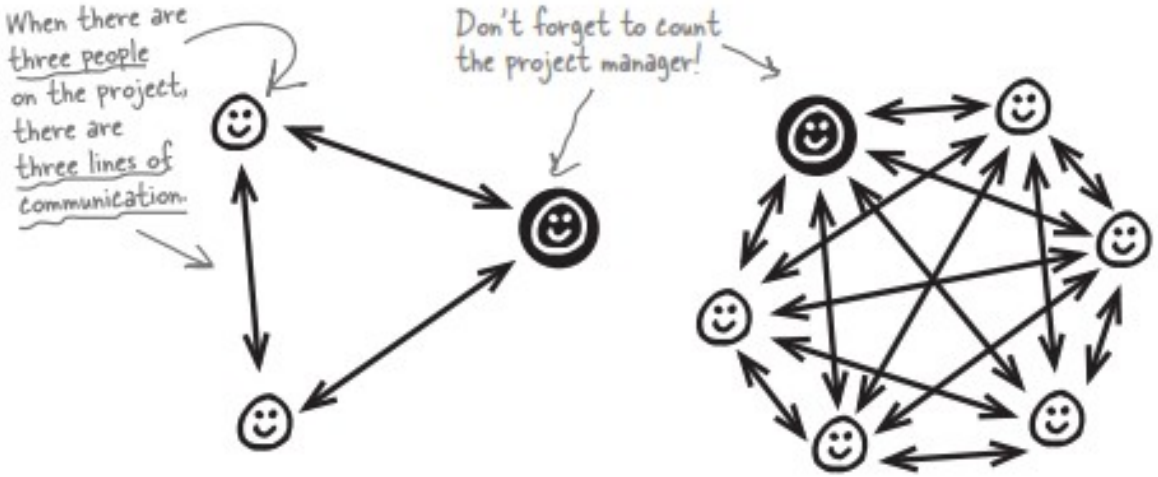
Monitor Communication




Work performance data
Organizational process assets
Issues log
Project communications
Project Management plan
Inputs
Tools
Project management information systems
Expert judgment
Meetings
Outputs
Performance report
The team is 5% over budget and 1 day behind schedule.
Status reports are going fine and everyone is informed.

Count the channels of communication

- How many people need to talk to one another? A good project manager needs to get a handle on all this communication, because it’s really easy to lose track of it. That’s why you need to know how to **count the channels of communication** on any project.



Counting communication lines the easy way

It would be really easy to get overwhelmed if you tried to count all the lines of communication by hand. Luckily, there's a really easy way to do it by using a simple formula. Take the total number of people on the project—including the project manager—and call that number n. Then all you need to do is plug that number into this simple formula:

$$\text{\# lines for n people} = \frac{n \times (n - 1)}{2}$$

You'll need to know this formula on the PMP exam. Just keep using it, though, and you'll get it down in no time.

So, how many more lines of communication were added when three more people joined the three-person project above? You know there were **three lines** to start with. So now just figure out ***how many lines*** there are ***for 6 people***:

$$\text{\# lines for 6 people} = \frac{6 \times (6 - 1)}{2} = (6 \times 5) \div 2 = 15$$

When you added three more people to the three-person project—that had three lines of communication—the new team has 15 lines. So you **added 12 channels of communication**.

Try?

1. You're managing a project with five people on the team, plus one additional stakeholder—the sponsor. Draw in all the channels of communication on this picture.

2. Wow, that was a lot of work. Luckily, you won't need to do that again. Now do it the easy way: use the formula to figure out how many lines of communication there are for seven people.

$$\text{\# lines for } 7 \text{ people} = \frac{7 \times (7 - 1)}{2} = (7 \times 6) \div 2 = 21$$

3. OK, now let's say that you've added two team members and two more stakeholders, so there are now 11 people on the project who need to communicate with one another. How many lines did you add?

First figure out how many lines there are for 11 people:

$$\text{\# lines for } 11 \text{ people} = \frac{11 \times (11 - 1)}{2} = (11 \times 10) \div 2 = 55$$

So how many lines were added when four people joined the seven-person project?

$$\text{\# lines added} = \text{\# lines for 11 people} - \text{\# lines for 7 people}$$

$$= 55 - 21 = 34$$