

American Library Association
Core Interest Group Week
Project Management Interest Group
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Transparent Library Project Management

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Good afternoon and Happy IG Week. My name is Dennis Smith and I'm going to be discussing Transparent Library Project Management.

Project Management at WVU Libraries



Why did we start to look at Project Management at WVU? Like many libraries, WVUL is an organization of doers. We complete many successful projects. Because of this, our focus is tied to the project and getting the job done. But what often happens in this type of culture is that the process of the project and the collaboration/relationships are not often considered.

Themes

- Collaboration
- Transparency



WVU Libraries continue to strive to be a learning organization. Learning organizations want to facilitate the learning of the staff and continuously transforms itself. So our goals are just to complete great projects but work on collaborating better, communicating better and bringing transparency to our decision making. This is important to encouraging development of our teams and have impact on future projects. So we looked to project management methods to help increase success of projects while focusing on our project processes and building better collaboration. This is partnered with helping to provide transparency to our organization.

Project management vs. project collaboration

They're siblings, not twins

(atlassian.com)

As we began to introduce project management to the libraries, we focused on our project collaboration. Focusing on improving how we collaborate fosters an environment where people feel like they are included and are more open to adding to efforts rather than sitting on the sideline.

This quote talks about PM vs Project Collaboration. Many people think that they are one and the same. Twins. But the truth is that they are related but not identical. Many of the processes in PM are geared to the Goal (completing the project) while project collaboration is all about the process and how we work as a team and how we collaborate.

Project Management at WVU Libraries

- Project Plan
 - Scope
 - Stakeholders
 - Communications Plan

Project Plan (Draft)
(Project plan name)

Suggestions (delete this after reading)

Use the approved Project Proposal as the outline for the plan.
Project Plans are a collaborative effort. Seek input from those you plan to have on the team, those who may work with the team and those who may be affected by the project.
Include as much information as you need to understand the project and the work to be completed, but briefly is ok when appropriate.
Make sure the project team understands everything you want to accomplish.
Seek examples of other project plans if you feel overwhelmed or don't know where to start.

Overview

Scope Statement – Overview of project scope
(Describe the project and what is "in-scope", you may also list things that are "not in scope" if there is potential for confusion)

So for the sake of time, I'm going to just highlight a couple of areas in our process that focused on building collaboration and transparency.

Project Management at WVU Libraries

- Scope
 - In Scope
 - Out of Scope
 - Scope Creep



The first and one of the most important aspects of transparent PM is collaboration. That begins with the project team and beyond. When working on the project planning, we needed to make sure that everyone was on the same page. That starts with scope. The project team collaboratively develops what the scope of the project. We then discussed this scope across the leadership and departments for additional input before finalizing.

Collaboration



Shared Understanding, Expertise,
Buy-In, etc. (Transparency)

As you collaborate and communicate, knowing what the project's goals are is important. It is also part of collaborating the project team knows what is not part of the project to prevent additional work or goals for creeping into the project. Knowing this allows the project team to communicate clearly on what the project is trying to accomplish.

Project Management at WVU Libraries

Stakeholders

- Project Team
- Leadership Team
- Library Team
- Campus Team
- Other Teams



Another key element of our project plan is the stakeholders. Often I think that people think of stakeholders as having a direct connection to the project, which is true. But often there are stakeholders who have an indirect connection. Transparency is when both groups are informed and kept up to date.

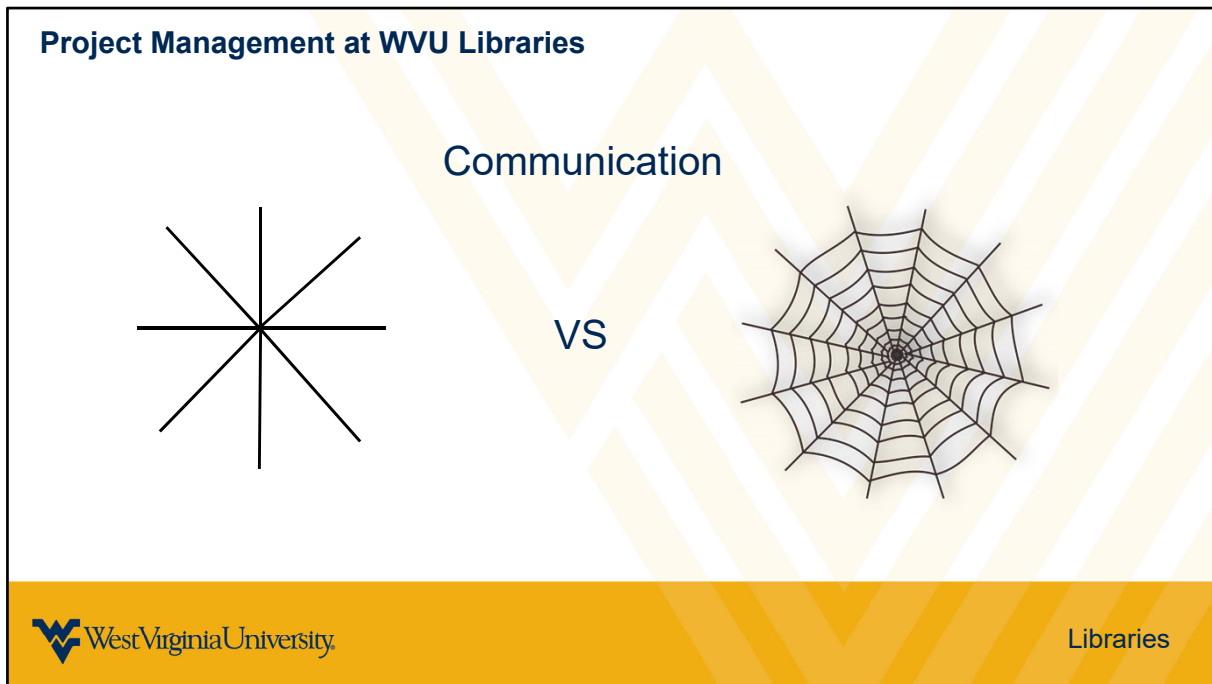
On our project to select a new discovery system, we had to consider some of our direct stakeholders, librarians who would be evaluating the system, as well front end staff. Since we were only “evaluating” these systems we could have kept this narrow, but considering the impact of a new discovery tool, we took a wide view on stakeholders. So getting students and faculty involved as well as all library staff was important.

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Without a sufficient project communication plan, it's impossible to keep all responsible parties up-to-date on the changing status of the project.

There's a lack of transparency which eventually leads to inefficient, counterproductive decisions that will hinder the aims of the project in question.
(kissflow.com)

The last element I want to talk about is our communications plan. This long quote speaks to our drive to change things.



In a quick visual this is the change we wanted to make. In the first image it represents the project lead as the center and how communication flowed. With our projects, we strived to create a web of communication plan.

As we began working through our project plan, I began to realize that the work that had already been done involved direct communications between the project team and individuals and departments related to the specific area within the project. Visually I think of this as the first pic. Where the project leader or team is in the middle and communicates directly with those on specific tasks. This is not unusual but when you think about collaboration and stakeholders. But a good communications plan is one where information is shared and flows between those involved in the project, stakeholders, and others in the organization. This web of communication is stronger and supports transparency. The sharing of meeting minutes, updates, and good communication about the project status leads to a strong web thus moves the organization to stronger transparency.

Project Management at WVU Libraries

Examples from the Communication Plan

- Regular Project Meetings
- Leadership Team Updates
- Staff Newsletter
- Updates to All Staff
- Project Documents available on Intranet



Libraries

Here are examples from our project plan that really lead to more transparency. This included Regular Project Meetings, regular updates to the Leadership Team Updates, articles in our Staff Newsletter, update emails to All Staff and making our Project Documents available on Intranet.

We wanted to keep everyone informed along the process, not just the beginning and end.

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Projects – Discovery tool review, discovery tool implementation, Combining 4 ILS systems into one ILS.

Project Management at WVU Libraries

Transparency is defined as *“the quality of being done in an open way without secrets.”* In the realm of projects and processes, it means creating a project management system in which all team members* can access all relevant information about a project easily and efficiently. (Kissflow.com)

*Library Staff *Stakeholders

One final quote to leave you with.

Thank You

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References

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