Managing Stakeholder Perception

Presented to

PMICIE Chapter

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Managing Stakeholder Perception

Objectives

• Learn how to positively modify the way stakeholders feel about us and our effectiveness

• Learn the incredible power of giving and getting the answers to the test and when to do so

• Propose actions to take now as individuals and as an organization to unlock stakeholder satisfaction

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Format and Assumptions

• Direct and may not be politically correct
• Intent is to stimulate thoughts and action versus agreement and inaction
• Everything suggested is ZERO RISK
• Fast paced- let me know if you need me to put the brakes on
True or False?

_ All Stakeholders define service excellence the same way

_ Stakeholder needs are the basically the same as stakeholder wants

_ There is sometimes a gap between the quality of the service delivered by the PMO (or you) and the stakeholder’s satisfaction level with the PMO (or you)

_ An ideal time to educate, inform, and building trust is during a critical event or crisis
Definition of Perception

The way you think about or understand someone or something. How you feel about something.

What’s Known (facts) + What’s Unknown (perception) = How You are Perceived
### Some Influencers of Perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influencers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information directly or indirectly received from others</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assumptions – no information so the perception is based on the person’s “default” thinking</td>
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<tr>
<td>Previous experience with you or the organization</td>
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<td>Peer pressure</td>
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<td>Current mood or situation</td>
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</table>
Q. Who has the greatest amount of control over the way we are perceived?

Q. Who has the greatest amount of control over the way we perceive our stakeholders?

Q. Are we empowered to manage the above?

Q. Is being positively perceived static or does it need refreshing?
Managing Stakeholder Perception

Rule #1

Perception: the way someone feels, interprets things, forms an opinion, trusts, has confidence, etc., is manageable.

Reduce the “unknown” and increase the “facts”

• Give the answers to the test to your stakeholders
• Get the answers to the test from your stakeholders

What’s Known (facts)
+ What’s Unknown (perception)
= How You are Perceived
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Answers to the Test Example

Statement

“ The project went sideways and ultimately was not viewed as being successful because management was not supportive.”

MC Question

“Specifically, what did management fail to support for which you had obtained a commitment from them to support?”
Rule #2

Build confidence and trust by educating, informing, listening and getting the answers to the test before a critical event or crisis not during

Statement

“I really did a great job managing the project and the project owner still is not happy and does not recognize the value we provide.”

MC Question

“Specifically, what makes the project owner happy, and what is it that they value?”
Rule #3

Keep it simple. As trust builds so will quality communication

Examples questions to get the answers to the test

• You have worked with many PM’s over the years. Would you share with me three characteristics of the best PM you have ever worked with?

• What do you see as the least effective behaviors of PM’s?

• Would you share with me examples of effective communication relative to a project lifecycle?
Rule #4

Carpe Diem. Make every interaction count and look for opportunities to create an interaction.

When you show a consistent interest in a stakeholder, they will begin to show an interest in you. This is foundational to building the relationship. Relationships enable you to provide them with the answers to the test and build:

- Trust
- Goodwill
- Problem solving
- Teamwork
- Stakeholder satisfaction
Simple Method for Assessing if Your Communication is Zero Risk

*Read back your question or statement to yourself - as if the stakeholder was telling HR or their Manager what you said.*

**Example of getting the answers to the test**

“Mark just asked me to share with him the top three characteristics of the most effective PMs I have worked with.”
Tips for generating positive perception

1. **CARPE DIEM** and ask relevant questions: it shows your interest, builds self-esteem, **gives you the answers to the test**

2. Share information at the appropriate times: **give your stakeholder the answers to the test**

3. Listen to everyone: it **builds their self-esteem** and provides you with more information

4. Know, understand, embrace, and communicate your organization’s value proposition – an elevator pitch is a must

5. Follow-up, follow-up, follow-up

6. Spread good news

7. Find a way to make someone look good - every day
### Words to Lose

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Words to Lose</th>
<th>How They Get Internalized</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’m really busy</td>
<td>What is it that you are not doing for me?</td>
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<tr>
<td>I’ll try to</td>
<td>It won’t get done. If you are going to do it, you would say, “I’ll do this”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need you to</td>
<td>I don’t need to. What’s in it for me?</td>
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<tr>
<td>You have to</td>
<td>No I don’t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>But</td>
<td>Everything you said before “but” is suspect</td>
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<td>You don’t understand</td>
<td>Shuts down communication. Self esteem killer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It’s not my idea, I’m just doing</td>
<td>Kills confidence, instills FUD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Things never seem to change</td>
<td>Think it may be you who needs to change?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I need to set your expectations</td>
<td>Not now and not likely</td>
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