How Can You Get Stakeholders to Respond More Promptly to Ad-Hoc Info Requests?

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Business is a collaborative art. The quality of the teamwork behind the project normally determines how successful the end result will be in the marketplace. Good ideas have the chance to become great when they are shared in a collaborative space with access to all the information that all parties need to understand their goals.

All around the world, businesses are growing thanks to a more effective collaborative work environment, including a boost to productivity, greater creativity in problem-solving and more motivated employees.

The Logistics of Communication
Before a business can create that kind of collaborative space, however, it needs to work out the logistics of communication in a world that is constantly on the move. To unlock the full potential of a collaborative business network, businesses need to focus on making it easier for your employees to collaborate on from wherever they are, even offline or on the road. This also demands that you search for original ways to eliminate common obstacles in their collaborative process.

Technology for the Mobile Workforce
According to a recent report by McKinsey and Company, getting collaboration right is the key to business survival in the new global environment. “Falling communications costs, globalization, and the increasing specialization of knowledge-based work have made collaboration within and among organizations more important than ever.”

The problem has been in choosing the right technology to meet the increasing demands of a more mobile workforce. As a result, contemporary collaboration brings many challenges that some companies have not been able to overcome.

The Four Most Common Signals of Collaboration Roadblocks
Here is a closer look at four of the most significant signals that your company may be facing serious roadblocks to collaboration between colleagues. If you recognize these, you will need devote resources to correcting them before your company can realize the full benefits of teamwork:
1. Coordinating Collaboration is Inefficient and Time Consuming

Sometimes it’s easier to do things yourself. Many companies end up missing big opportunities when project deadlines arrive faster than team members can respond. Virtual piles of unanswered emails and voicemails can quickly derail a group project. Today’s widely dispersed teams need solutions that allow every stakeholder to pick up exactly where they left off. Another feature that teams need is a way to integrate communications with CRM or other customer software so that team members can share the same view of customer information what they are discussing their next moves.

2. There’s no Guarantee That Teams will Come up with Direct Insights to Initiate Action

One of the biggest issues with collaborative teams is that, without clear accountability for the next step, momentum is lost. The solution to these types of problems involve technologies that are easy to use and integrated with enterprise applications, so that employees prefer to use the collaboration tool rather than their old standbys: phone, email and text. Within the collaboration tool, there should be functionality that facilitates the rapid resolution of issues by link directly to customer records. Employees don’t have time to excel at their jobs and constantly learn new software, so their collaboration environment should be simple and intuitive as a conversation.

3. Disrupted Communication Flows Causes Team Projects to Break Down

Pictures communicate so much more effectively than words because there is no interpretation necessary. Annotated screenshots shared across collaboration networks can clear up many potential confusions before they even start. A related problem is when not everyone on the team is working with the most current version or the most updated information. Make sure your collaboration tools pull in data in real time so that the entire team has synced up on the right versions of the project data, processes, goals and reporting models.
4. Collaboration Hampered by Limited Business Control and Insight Into Operations

It's impossible for employees to do their jobs productively and keep management informed at every step along the way. Fortunately, the latest collaboration tools allow any manager to log in and see at a glance who is logged on and who is still reachable by email. These systems can also let you know when a colleague has unread messages. At any time, you should be able to contact team members with critical project updates even when they are deep in a meeting with another customer.

Solutions for a Better Collaborative Environment

Once you have a better understanding of where communications are breaking down, you'll be able to find the optimal technology for patching up teamwork failures. There is no doubt that some companies are already ahead with solutions that enable colleagues to speak together from anywhere, make changes on the fly, keep everyone in the loop and update management with progress reports. Contact us to discover exactly what sort of collaboration technology you need to keep everyone on board and working together.

To find out how Unit4 Business World Milestone 5 can help you meet these challenges, visit erp.unit4.com.
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