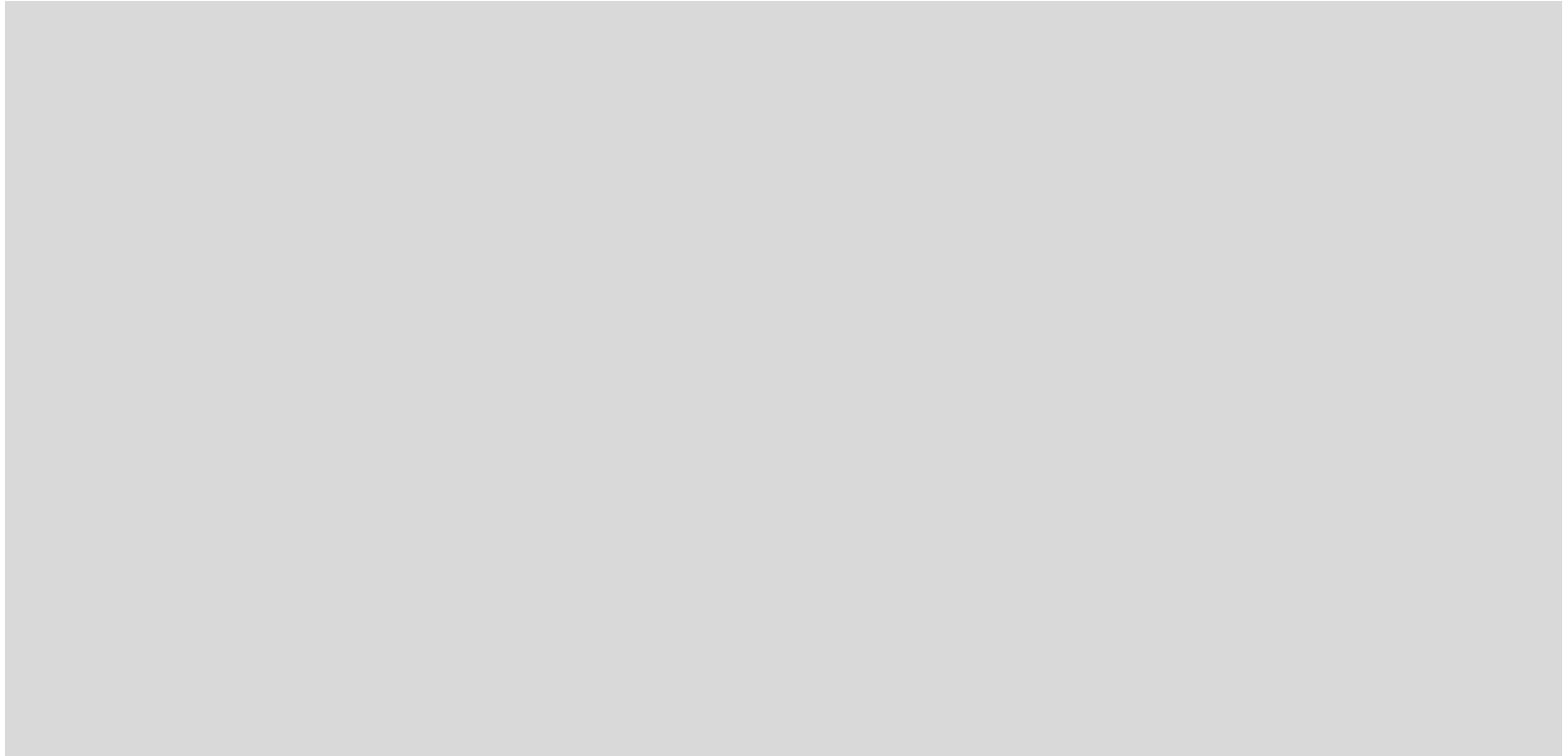




INTERNATIONAL
RESCUE
COMMITTEE

Introduction to Remote Management in the Syria Response Region

Group Exercise – Who are you?



What is Remote Management?

**Remote management of staff:
Remote Supervision**

**Remote management of programs:
Remote Programming**

IRC Definition

REMOTE MANAGEMENT:

a set of adapted procedures put in place because IRC's access to field offices and/or field sites is limited – for security, practical or logistical reasons.

What is Remote Management?

Management of programs by individual decision-makers who are not located at program implementation sites.

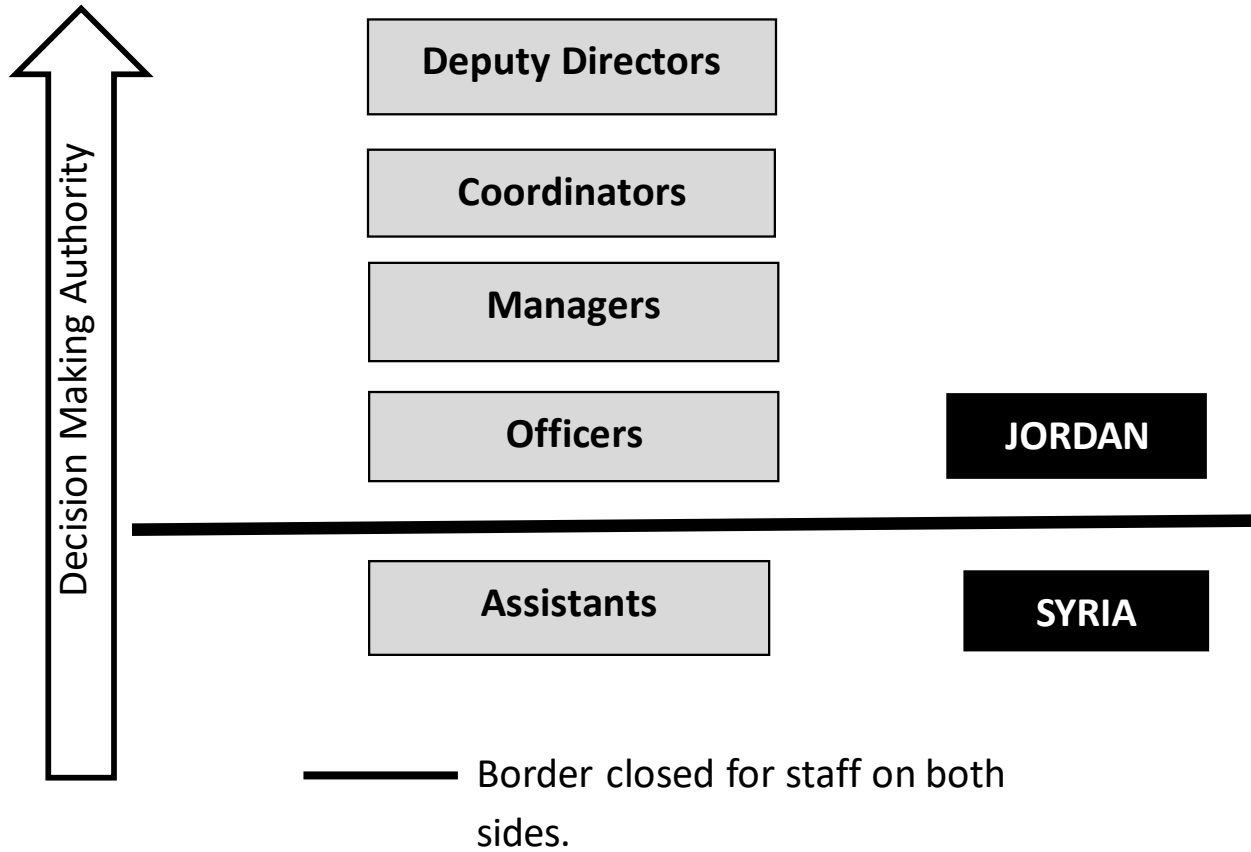
Categories of Remote Management

	Decision Making
Remote Control	Majority of decisions made by international managers located apart from programs. Limited delegation of authority.
Remote Delegation	Partial or temporary delegation of authority to national/local staff at project sites while other decision-makers are in a separate location.
Remote Support	A strategy to transfer decision making and authority gradually to national/local actors, while financial and strategic oversight is retained remotely.
Remote Partnership	Local actors maintain significant decision making authority

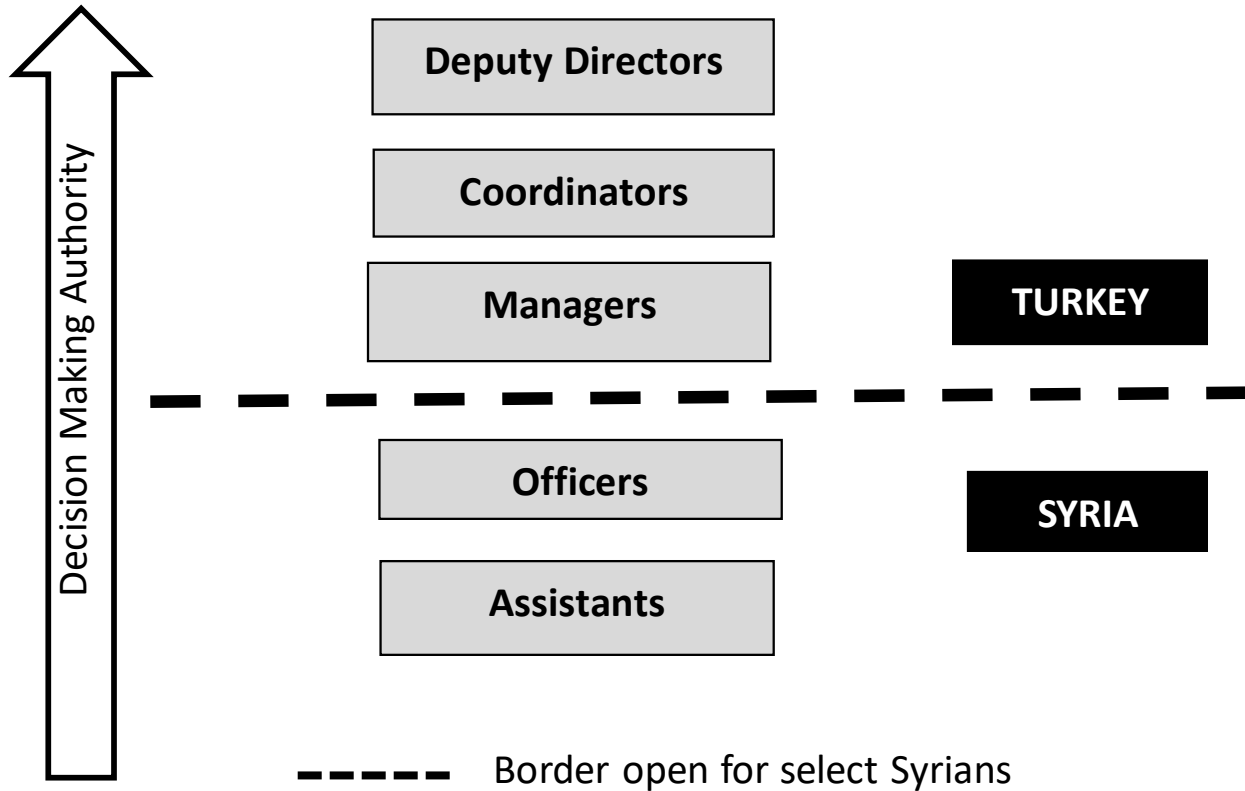
“Remotely-managed” vs. “locally-managed”.

Group Exercise

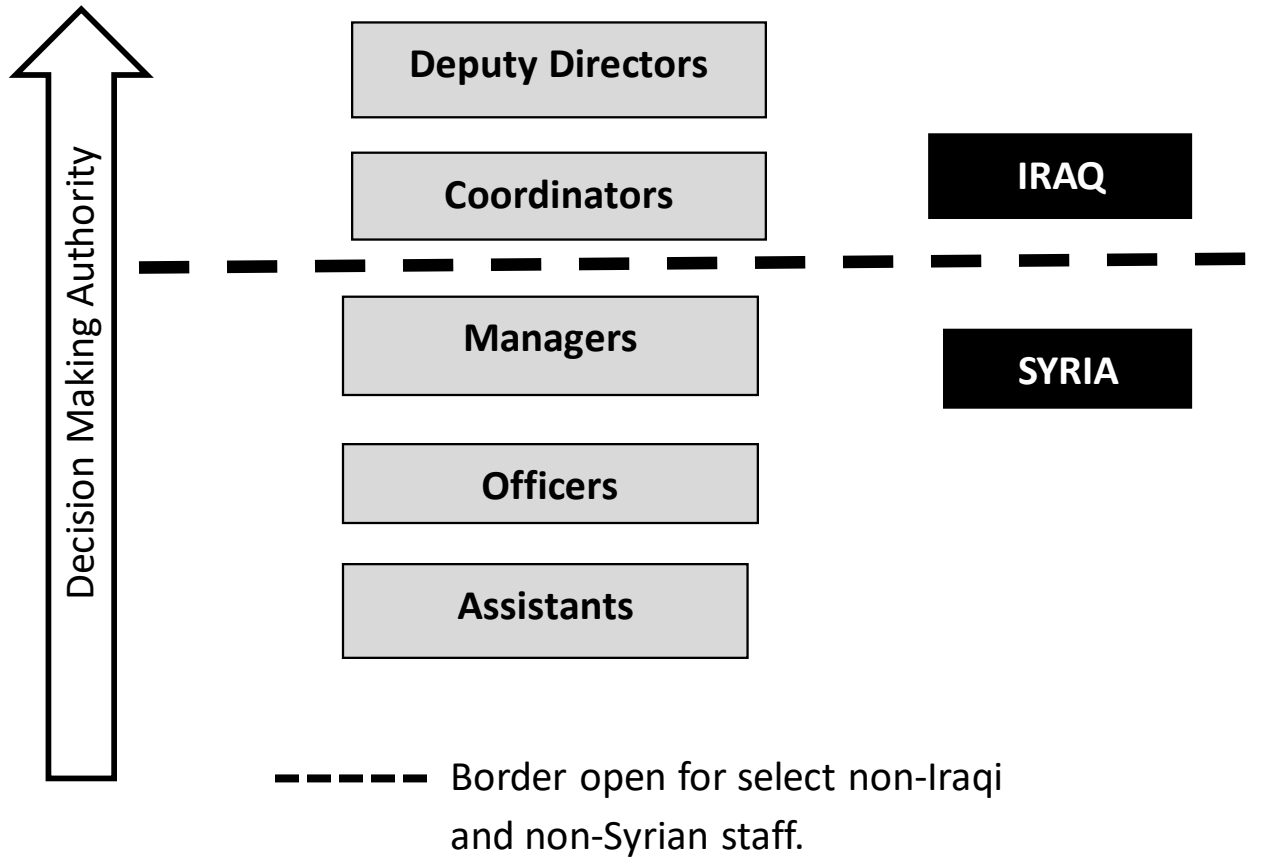
Examples of Remote Management



Examples of Remote Management



Examples of Remote Management



Individual Exercise

BREAK (15 mins)

Group Exercise

What are the factors that influence the proximity of decision makers to the project sites?

Factors that influence proximity of decision-makers

Security

Acceptance

Border controls

Nationality of staff

Local context

Local capacity

Type of programming

Type of organization

Age of programs

Trust

Ability to communicate

Technology

Size of budget

Donor requirements

Ability to recruit

Personal choice/Right to

Withdraw

Group Exercise

What are disadvantages of remote programming?

or

What are the disadvantages of having decision makers further from the project sites?

Disadvantages of Remote Programming

- Decision makers don't get local input
- Program development staff are less aware of the context leading to poorly-designed projects
- Slow feedback/communication (up and down)
- Monitoring is more difficult; more data, extra work
- Issues of non-compliance with policies result in higher reputational and financial risks
- Staff/partners don't feel engaged or supported
- Staff/partners are less safe due to reputational risks
- Risk may be transferred to local staff/partners
- Programs are less sustainable.

Disadvantages of Remote Programming

Less principled, lower-quality programming; less impact; fewer lives saved

Key Point

**Remote management
should be a last resort.**

or

**Programs should be as locally-managed
as possible.**

Discussion

Given all of these disadvantages, why do we implement programs in sites that must be managed remotely?

The humanitarian imperative – lives saved

Key Point

Decisions to manage a program remotely must weigh the risks against the humanitarian imperative.

Waiting until the context is ideal to provide aid may result in greater loss of life and suffering.

LUNCH (90 mins)

Best Practices

How do we counter these disadvantages?

or

How do we improve our remote management?

Individual Exercise

Some Best Practices

Acceptance:

- Humanitarian teams working in parallel with programs to ensure acceptance
- Hiring locally; local partners
- Principled, needs-based programming
- Clear lines for withdrawal

Some Best Practices

Types of programming:

- Prioritizing critical, life-saving programs
- Needs-based programs
- Avoiding highly technical programming; or implementing them indirectly
- Transitioning to more culturally-sensitive programming

Some Best Practices

Reducing financial risks

- Use of hawala for transfers
- Reducing cash/assets in country
- Strong financial systems

Some Best Practices

Monitoring and Evaluation

- M&E system independent of programs
- Triangulation of data with access teams, program staff and partners
- Electronic data collection with GPS
- Third-party monitoring
- Beneficiary feedback mechanisms

Some Best Practices

Human Resources:

- Clear roles/responsibilities
- Recruitment of managers in Syria
- Simplified, regular performance reviews
- Remote capacity building, online learning
- Regularly updated risk management plans

Some Best Practices

Coordination:

- Joint operating principles established and agreed upon with clear red lines for withdrawal
- Regular meetings: grant review meetings, team meetings
- Regular reporting

Some Best Practices

Supply chain:

- Preferred vendor lists
- Commodity Tracking System
- Specific SOPs for cross border programs

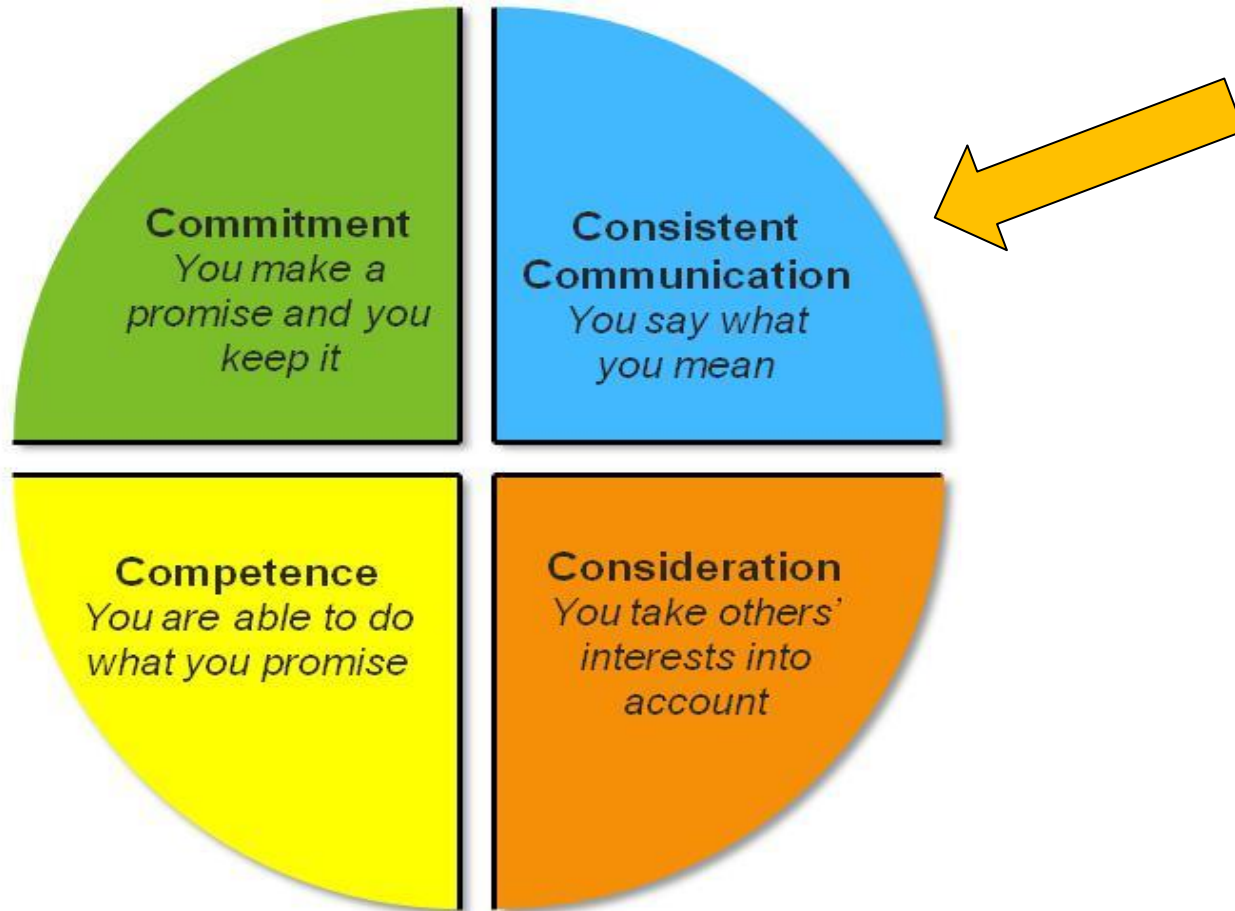
Some Best Practices

Others?

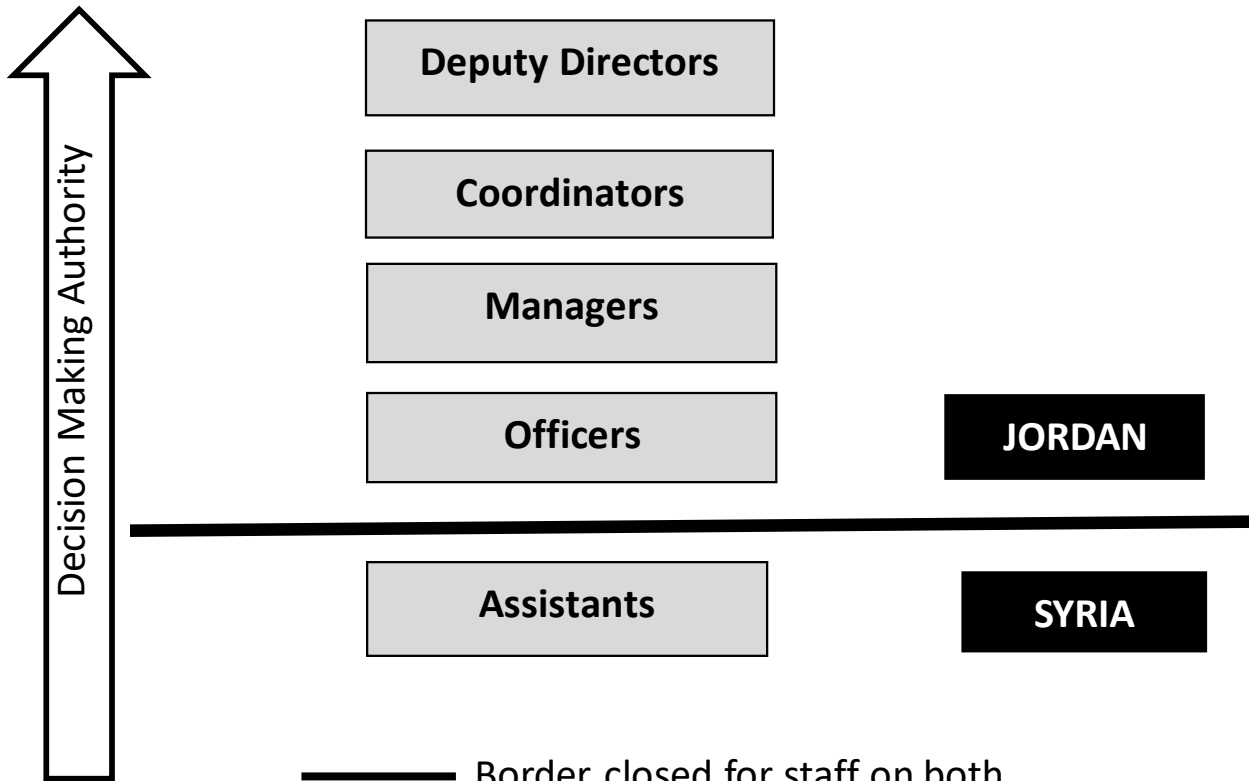
Some Best Practices

Remote management essential: effective communication

Good Communication Builds Trust



Adapted from Mayer, Davis, Schoorman



—— Border closed for staff on both sides.

Group Exercise

The importance of clarity.

Frequency: More is Better!

TIP!

When building trust, check-ins should be as regular as possible. Consider:

- Daily, brief phone calls (15 min)
- Limited, standardized agenda
- Particularly useful for new team members, for key staff, during pivotal moments for the project
- Always send an email with key points or action items

Email Communication Tips

Email is not meant to be used for all communication!

Methods of Effective Communication

High Context

Low Context



- I have a complicated problem.
- I have something important to tell you.
- I have something sensitive to tell you.
- I have multiple important things to say.

- Here's the date for our call.
- Here's the report that we discussed.
- How many trainees did you have in that session?

High Context Communication

Face-to-Face = Video/Skype conference

TIP!

Consider starting all Skype calls with just a few minutes of video. It allows you a chance to say hello, make eye contact, show engagement, build rapport.

High Context Communication

Face-to-Face = Video/Skype

TIP!

Video messages are a really great tool! If someone is away, and you want to Skype or WhatsApp them, leave a quick video message.

Email Communication Tips

Do:

- Keep them short (2-3 sentences ideally)
- Always put any required action in the beginning of the email
- Always put the most important information in the beginning of the email
- Use email to confirm or document information after phone or video conversation
- Use good subject lines

Email Communication Tips

Don'ts:

- Don't use email for high context information
- Avoid email as a first choice when sharing info for the first time
- Never give a staff member critical feedback in an email
- Never send an email when you're angry or frustrated
- Don't use unnecessary "high urgency" emails

Other Tips for Effective Communication

TIP!

When recruiting for remotely-managed staff, emphasize strong communication skills, particularly written, and test those skills through email communication.

Questions?

THANK YOU!