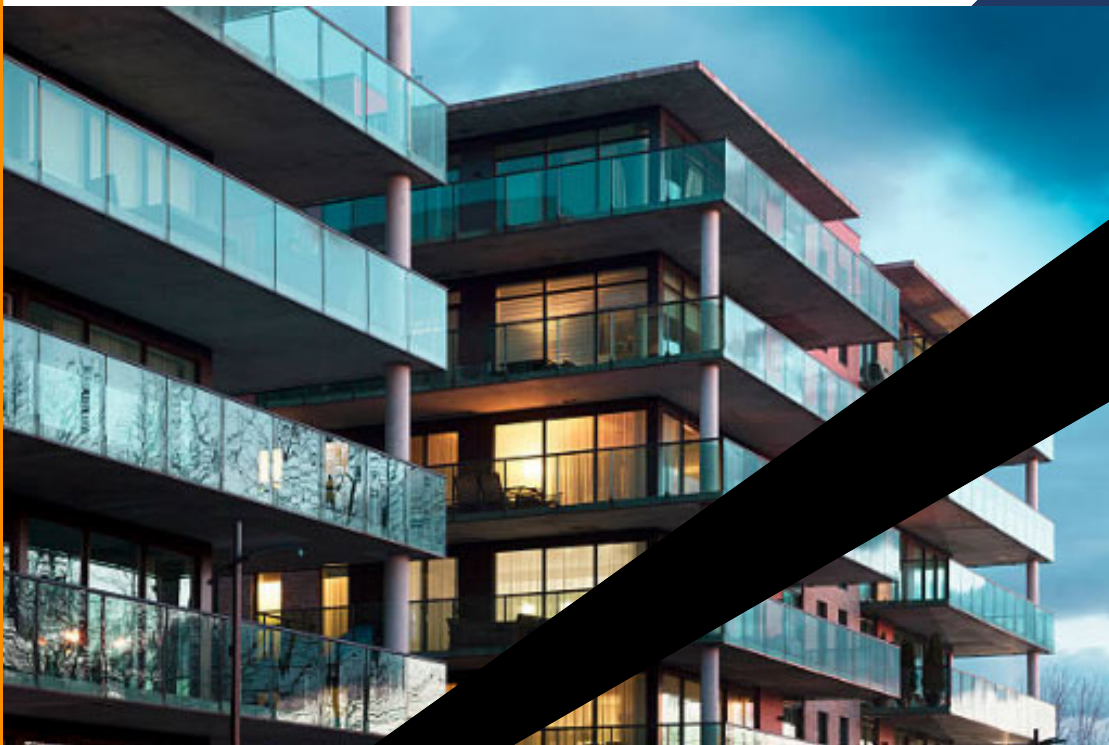




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How Clear Communication Prevent Delays, Disputes and Budget Blowouts in Strata Projects

Issue 5

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How Clear Communication Prevents Delays, Disputes and Budget Blowouts in Strata Projects



If you've been involved in a strata remedial project, this may sound familiar:

The project starts with clarity.

Reports are issued. Quotes are requested. Everyone is aligned.

Then slowly, things begin to shift.

Emails increase.

Questions go unanswered.

Contractors receive mixed instructions.

Owners become uncertain.



And before long, the project feels harder than it should.

Here's the reality:

Most project problems aren't technical.

They're communication failures.



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The Hidden Cost of Poor Communication

Communication issues rarely appear as “communication problems.”

They show up as:



1

Delays That Compound

- Decisions take longer than expected
- Contractors pause while waiting for direction
- Works are re-sequenced unnecessarily

Time is lost — and time always has a cost.

2

Budget Blowouts

- Variations arise from unclear scope
- Works are repeated or corrected
- Trades are mobilised multiple times

You don't just pay for the work.

You pay for inefficiency.



3

Disputes Between Stakeholders

- Owners question decisions
- Committees feel challenged
- Contractors push back on scope

Misalignment creates tension — and tension slows everything down.

4

Erosion of Trust

- Owners lose confidence in the process
- Committees feel overwhelmed
- Strata managers are placed under pressure

Once trust is lost, even simple decisions become difficult.



Why Communication Is More Complex in Strata



Strata projects are not like standard construction projects.

They involve multiple stakeholders, each with different roles.

Different Priorities

- **Owners** focus on cost and impact
- **Committees** focus on decision-making and responsibility
- **Strata Managers** focus on coordination and compliance
- **Contractors** focus on delivery
- **Consultants** focus on technical accuracy and oversight

Without alignment, these priorities can pull in different directions.

Different Levels of Understanding

Not everyone speaks “construction.”

Technical reports can be misinterpreted.

Recommendations can feel unclear.

This leads to hesitation — or conflicting views.



Layered Decision-Making

- Committee decisions
- Owner approvals
- Formal meeting requirements

Even simple decisions can take time without clear structure.



Information Overload

Projects generate:

- Reports
- Drawings
- Emails
- Quotes
- Variations



Too much information — without clarity — leads to disengagement.

What Clear Communication Actually Looks Like

Clear communication doesn't mean more emails.
It means better structure.

1 One Clear Source of Truth

Everyone works from:

- A defined scope of works
- Consistent documentation
- Agreed project direction

This removes **confusion** before it starts.



2 Translating Technical Into Practical

Good communication answers three simple questions:

- What is the issue?
- What needs to be done?
- Why does it matter?

When people understand the **“why,”** decisions become easier.



3 Structured Meetings

Effective projects rely on:

- Regular, agenda-driven meetings
- Clear decisions and action items
- Documented outcomes

This replaces reactive conversations with **controlled progress.**



4 Defined Roles and Responsibilities

Clarity around:

- Who gives instructions
- Who approves decisions
- Who communicates with contractors

Without this, mixed messages are inevitable.



The Role of the Consultant as the Communication Bridge

In **well-run** projects, communication is not left to chance.

It is managed.

An experienced consultant plays a central role in this.

Translating Complexity Into Clarity

They take technical information and turn it into:

- Clear recommendations
- Practical options
- Defined risks

This allows committees to make informed decisions — **without confusion.**

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Aligning All Stakeholders

A consultant ensures:

- The committee, strata manager, and contractor are **aligned**
- Instructions are consistent
- Decisions are clearly communicated

This removes the “multiple voices” problem.

Managing Contractor Communication

Clear documentation ensures:

- Scope is understood
- Expectations are defined
- Variations are controlled

This protects both cost and program.

Supporting Compliance and Accountability

Communication is not just about clarity — it’s also about **responsibility**.

A structured process helps ensure:

- Works align with current regulatory requirements
- Documentation is complete and traceable
- Decisions are properly recorded

This reduces risk for the Owners Corporation and supports better governance.

Common Communication Breakdowns (And Why They Matter)

After working across many strata projects, common patterns emerge.

Too Many Voices

Multiple committee members giving direction leads to:

- Conflicting instructions
- Contractor confusion
- Increased errors



Over-Reliance on Email

Long email chains often result in:

- Missed details
- Misinterpretation
- Lack of clear decisions



Lack of Documentation

Verbal agreements create risk:

- Scope gaps
- Disputes during construction
- Unclear accountability



Delayed Decisions

When information is unclear:

- Decisions are postponed
- Projects slow down
- Costs increase

The Financial Case for Better Communication

Communication is often seen as “soft.”

In reality, it has a direct financial impact.



Fewer Variations

Clear scope reduces ambiguity — and variation claims.

Faster Decisions

Speed creates efficiency.
Efficiency reduces cost.

Reduced Contractor Downtime

Continuous workflow avoids:

- Re-mobilisation costs
- Program delays

Lower Dispute Risk

Clear documentation reduces:

- Contractual disagreements
- Legal exposure

A Simple 3-Step Communication Framework

If your project feels complex, start here.

Step 1: Establish a Single Point of Coordination

Avoid fragmented communication.

Ensure one central point manages:

- Instructions
- Updates
- Contractor interface

Step 2: Define and Document Everything Clearly

Clarity should exist in:

- Scope of works
- Decisions
- Variations
- Responsibilities

If it's not documented, it's open to interpretation.

Step 3: Communicate Consistently and Transparently

Maintain:

- Regular updates
- Clear reporting
- Open communication with owners

No surprises. No confusion.



What Well-Communicated Projects Look Like



When communication is structured, projects feel different.

You'll see:

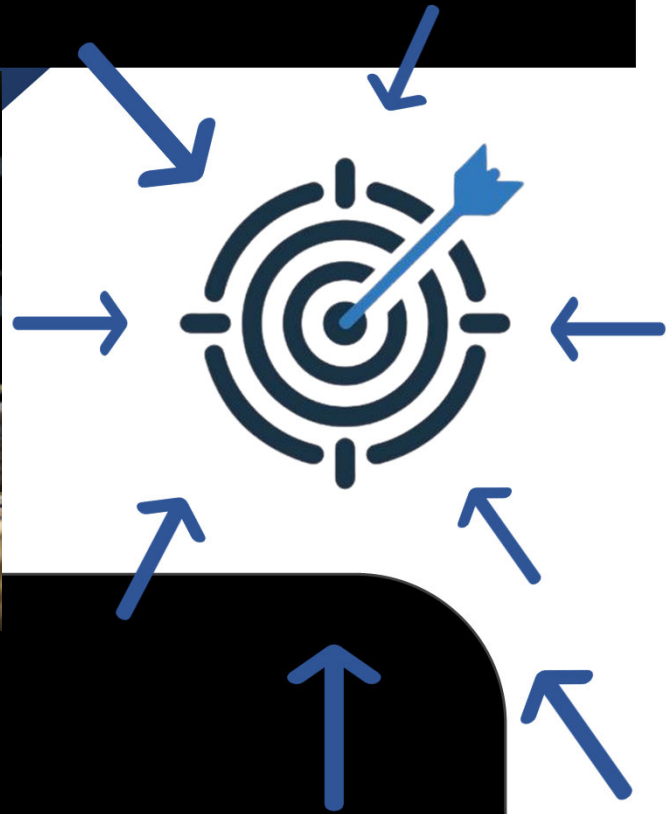
- Shorter, more productive meetings
- Faster approvals
- Clear contractor direction
- Minimal disputes
- Confident, aligned owners

The project doesn't feel easier because it's simple.

It feels easier because it's controlled.



Final Thought: Communication Is Project Control



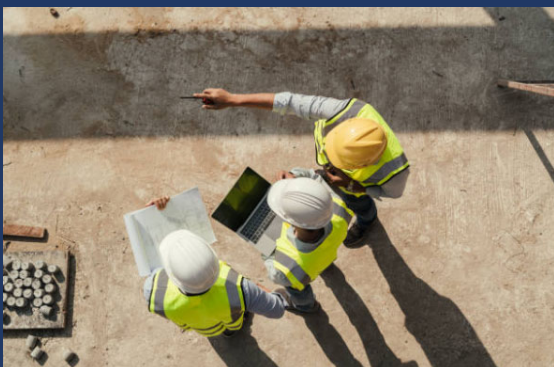
It's easy to think of communication as administration.

It's not.

It's how projects are led.

Projects rarely fail because they are too complex.

They fail because complexity isn't communicated clearly.



One Action You Can Take This Month

Before your next project meeting, ask:

“Do we have a clear communication structure — or are we relying on email threads and informal conversations to manage a complex project?”

If the answer is unclear, that’s your starting point.

Because when communication improves:

- Decisions accelerate
- Risks reduce
- Costs stabilise

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