

***CONSTRUCTION RISK CHECKLIST > During-construction > Clear
Communication Channel With Workers & Subbies***

Most Construction Problems Start as Communication Problems

Many construction disputes, delays and defects are not caused by poor workmanship. They are caused by poor communication.

A subcontractor didn't receive the latest plans. A staff member wasn't told about a variation. A delivery issue wasn't reported. A problem was identified but never escalated. Individually, these issues may seem minor. Collectively, they can have a significant impact on project cost, quality and programme.

The solution is to establish clear communication channels from the start of the project and ensure everyone knows how information will be shared, recorded and actioned.

Communication should not rely on memory, chance conversations or verbal instructions alone. The most successful builders create simple systems that allow important information to be captured and shared with the people who need it.

Project Communication Checklist

The following items should be covered through daily briefings, site logs, toolbox meetings or project updates:

1. **Work completed since the previous update.**
2. **Work planned for the next day or period.**
3. **Health and safety issues or hazards identified.**
4. **Quality concerns or defects requiring attention.**
5. **Variations requested or approved.**
6. **Material deliveries received or delayed.**
7. **Subcontractor attendance and performance issues.**
8. **Programme delays or risks.**
9. **Weather impacts.**
10. **Photographs of progress and key milestones.**

11. Client instructions or decisions received.

12. Outstanding actions and responsibilities.

One of the simplest communication systems is a dedicated project WhatsApp group or similar messaging platform. For smaller projects, this can provide an effective way to share site photos, communicate delivery updates, confirm instructions and quickly raise issues requiring attention.

However, even simple systems need structure. Important decisions should be clearly acknowledged, and critical information should not become buried within hundreds of messages.

Many builders also use shared cloud folders to store plans, photographs, inspection records and project documents. This ensures everyone is working from the latest information and creates a record of what was communicated.

For larger or more complex projects, dedicated project management platforms such as Buildertrend, Buildxact, Wunderbuild or similar systems can provide greater control. These platforms allow tasks, variations, RFIs, site photos, schedules, quality inspections and communications to be tracked in a central location.

Regardless of the system used, site photos and videos deserve particular attention. Photographs can provide valuable evidence of progress, completed work, hidden building elements, site conditions and issues requiring rectification. A simple habit of taking and storing photos and videos daily can prove invaluable if questions arise later.

Builders should also encourage early reporting of problems. Team members and subcontractors need to feel comfortable raising concerns before they become significant issues. A problem identified early is usually cheaper and easier to resolve than one discovered weeks later.

The key is consistency. A simple communication process that is followed every day is often more effective than a sophisticated system that nobody uses.

The most successful projects are not necessarily those with the best software. They are the projects where everyone knows what is happening, what is expected of them and how issues will be communicated and resolved.