# Graded Case Study 2, Part III

## Team Conflict

The training issue was only one source of conflict on the client side. Bernie Hays and Ed Hallman, the communications specialists in SRT's Mechanical Department, were tasked with installing the terminals and associated components on the trains. This would require taking the locomotives out of service for two days each at staggered intervals. Eager to schedule the work, Hays had reached out to Lisa Lindstrom in Transportation Operations, who was responsible for coordinating train assignments, including taking vehicles out of service. She refused to give Hays concrete time windows, because there were too many issues compromising the availability of the locomotives. The conflict had become heated, and Lindstrom had become nonresponsive on the issue.

Because Hays, Hallman, and Lindstrom were all members of the project team, Varga was aware of the problem and realized it had the potential to impede the January installation deadline. Schaller had also informed Varga that the ongoing tension between Transportation Ops and Mechanical was nothing new; they had a history of blaming each other for problems and failing to work together. He has suggested that it might help if Varga, as an outsider, explains the importance of working out the ECO-Stream installation schedule so they can protect their investment and get the tool up and running.

Varga, however, is not keen on getting involved in clients' conflicts. While there are situations internally at ECO-Trans where it is necessary to have confrontations, she is apprehensive about making enemies on the project team, especially when they are SRT's resources. She hopes that Lindstrom and the Mechanical guys will find a way to work out the scheduling issues on their own.

## Stakeholder Communication

Up until the eighth or ninth month of the project, Varga felt that communicating with ECO-Trans and client stakeholders had been manageable. Early in the project, she set up an electronic Kanban board and showed project team members how to "drag and drop" activities into four status buckets: "Planned," "In Progress," "In Trouble," and "Completed." Even though the board was not regularly updated, project team members and stakeholders seemed to get ample information from weekly team meetings and occasional information requests via email or phone. She also prepared weekly


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status reports for all stakeholders.

When problems with the terminals began to plague the project, some of the stakeholders shifted more attention to the project. As a result, project team members were getting interrupted frequently with questions and requests for status updates on numerous aspects of the project. For example, Roland Letessier, ECO-Trans' software specialist, was getting urgent emails from SRT's Operations Planning Director to see where things stood with customizing the interface. Letessier wasn't the first to complain to Varga; at least three other team members were getting similar pressure to provide status reports on various activities, and it was impeding their ability to get work done.

Varga brought this issue to Schaller's attention and asked for his help in funneling communication directly to her. She asked him to remind stakeholders that all project updates would be covered thoroughly in her weekly status reports that they all received. Schaller agreed to do his best to mitigate the situation. He did, however, point out that the weekly status reports were very long and detailed. While this was useful for some stakeholders, he believed that others didn't bother to read through them.

*Before you move on to the next section of the case study, identify the problems and/or issues that you'll need to include in your analysis. Document this information, and consider how you will integrate it into your evaluation of the project.*


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