

Table I:2 – Types of Clients

Type	Description	Examples	Your priority
Official clients	This is the person or group who hired you (if you are external) or assigned work to you (if you are internal). They probably interviewed you during your first meeting with them. They probably sign your paycheck. Usually, they have positions of authority to make decisions and provide resources during the entire project. They often define “success” for the project and ultimately decide if the project was successful or not. Usually, the official client remains the same throughout the project.	In projects for change in small- to medium-sized businesses, the official client is often the Chief Executive Officer. In larger organizations, the official client might also be a mid-level manager.	You need to be sure that the official client is always aware of, and approves, the status of your projects.
Direct clients	This is the person or group whom you directly and regularly interact with during a particular time in the project. They could be different people at different times, depending on the current priorities and focus of your project.	Could be the Board Chair, Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer, middle manager, Project Team, financial manager, etc.	Direct clients are usually your current priority for strong collaboration with you. You should always be concerned about using effective communications and interpersonal skills with your direct clients.
Indirect clients	This is the person or group who is indirectly and ultimately affected by your work in the organization.	Could include everyone in the organization, such as Board of Directors, CEO or other employees. Could also include people outside the organization directly affected by changes in the organization, for example, customers, investors, community leaders, etc.	Indirect clients need to agree with, or not directly disapprove of, the changes in the organization. Indirect clients inside the organization often have a major influence on the culture of the organization and often implement the plans for change.