



GOING SLOW TO GO FAST

MAKING
INTERNAL
COMMUNICATION
WORK FOR YOU

THE
GROSSMAN
GROUP

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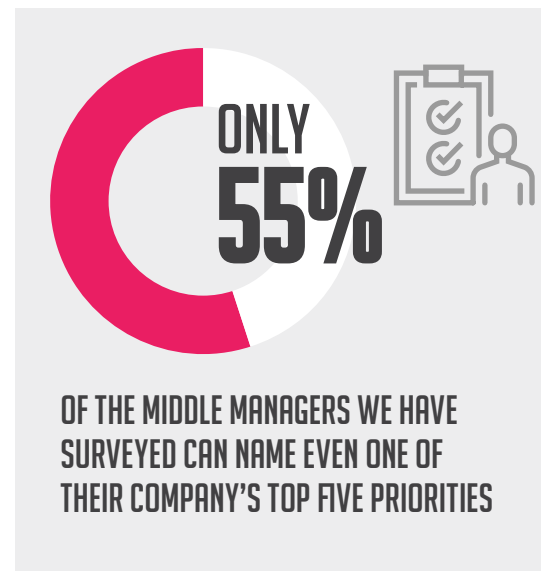
IT'S PROBABLY CLEAR TO YOU

that good employee communication can improve an organization and drive business success by turning strategy into action. But is it clear just how **BIG** of an impact quality employee communication can have on the bottom line results for your organization? Too often, executives measure communication through emails sent or town halls hosted rather than by the one metric that truly matters—how well key leaders and their employees understand what's communicated.

Clearly, there's a real opportunity to make good internal communication great, and organizations would be wise to seize it.

While good internal communication gets the message out, great internal communication helps employees connect the dots between overarching business strategy and their role. When the communication is good, it informs. When it's great, it engages employees and moves them to action. Quite simply, internal communication that's executed well helps people and organizations be even better. The reality is that despite all the new and timely

communication channels—flurries of emails, meetings, memos and more—research shows that the majority of companies aren't getting through to employees to help them connect the dots. In an article for the Harvard Business Review, researchers Donald Sull, Rebecca Homkes and Charles Sull highlighted poor communication as one of the key reasons that strategies fail. As one researcher put it:



“In other words, when leaders charged with explaining strategy to the troops are given five chances to list their company’s strategic objectives, nearly half fail to get even one right.”¹

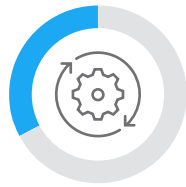
The researchers go on to say the issue isn't with a lack of communication. Instead, it's a problem with the communication not being great—it's not about what really matters. The HBR report highlighted one example of poor communication that is all too common in companies today. The executives at a tech company went to great lengths to communicate the company strategy at the annual executive off-site, but they ended up bombarding employees with so much information that they completely turned off the group.

“They introduced 11 corporate priorities (which were different from the strategic objectives), a list of core competencies (including one with nine templates), a set of corporate values, and a dictionary of 21 new strategic terms to be mastered. Not surprisingly, the assembled managers were baffled about what mattered most.”

OTHER RECENT STUDIES ALSO UNDERScore THE PROBLEM OF POOR QUALITY EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION



61% of employees don't know their company's mission, 60 percent don't know their company's vision, and 61 percent report that they don't know their organization's cultural values.¹



33% of executives are not confident that their employees could accurately communicate the company's strategy to others.²



57% of employees don't find their company's mission statement motivating or inspiring.³

While many senior executives should be able to help workers understand the organization's vision, fewer than one in five (16 percent) employees think that's what they do best.⁴



All of these statistics are alarming when you consider that a disconnect between employees and the business significantly detracts from organizational success, profit, and growth. Consider the findings from the following recent studies:

- Motivating employees to help achieve your strategic vision increases profitability 22 percent to 27 percent over a 6-12 month basis.⁵
- Companies with highly effective communication practices had 47 percent higher total returns to shareholders over five years compared to those with less effective communication.⁶
- The most successful companies actively build a culture to support and drive behaviors aligned with their business strategy.⁷

¹Achievers, "The Greatness Gap: The State of Employee Disengagement," 2015

²Zeno Group, "Barriers to Employee Engagement" study, 2014

³Achievers, "The greatness gap: The state of employee disengagement," 2015

⁴Kelton, "America's Workforce" Survey, 2012/2013

⁵Chief Executive Group, "4 Ways to Motivate Employees to Help Achieve Your Strategic Vision," August 2015

⁶Towers Watson, "Capitalizing on Effective Communication," 2009/2010 Communication ROI Study Report

⁷Towers Watson, "Change and Communications ROI Study Report," 2013-2014

COMMUNICATION IS MORE THAN A “FEEL GOOD” PART OF ANY ORGANIZATION.

It separates mediocre companies from great ones, unremarkable profits from excellent ones, discontented shareholders from happy ones... Well, you get the picture. So what are you waiting for? In the pages that follow, learn the value of, the strategy behind, and how to begin implementing a successful internal communication program that will enhance your own effectiveness, build strong teams, and ultimately make your entire organization more successful.



WHAT IS INTERNAL COMMUNICATION?

Internal communication is the exchange of information within an organization to create a shared understanding and then drive the behaviors and actions needed to move the business forward. Effective internal communication also creates an open environment that encourages employees to exchange ideas with co-workers. While communicating with fellow employees may seem like common sense, it's not always put into practice—especially in today's

fast-paced business environment. The world is changing rapidly, and change has become the watchword as organizations focus on what they can do to be even better. As a result, all the change can lead to confusion, skepticism, and mistrust for employees, which ultimately gets in the way of business getting done. That's why internal communication has become more critical today than ever before.

INFORMATION



UNDERSTANDING

COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENTS THEN

INTERNAL MEDIA

SEND

CONTROL

FORMAL

TIME

COMMAND

VS NOW

FACE-TO-FACE, SOCIAL MEDIA
ENGAGE, PARTICIPATE, INVOLVE
PART OF THE CONVERSATION

INFORMAL

EVERYTHING INSTANT

INFLUENCE AND PERSUADE

WHAT DO I MEAN WHEN I TALK
ABOUT “CHANGE”? CONSIDER
THE FOLLOWING FACTORS THAT
ARE CONSTANTLY CHANGING,
CREATING EVER-SHIFTING
CONTEXTS AND ENGENDERING
EMPLOYEE INSECURITY,
UNCERTAINTY, AND FEAR. ■■■

CHANGE #1:

BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT



Talk is cheap in corporate America—especially when it comes to leaders and their ability to build and maintain trust. These days, organizations are under attack and protecting every asset; the pressure is mounting for leaders to find the answers; and employees, who need to stay focused and productive now more than ever, are numb from fear of losing their jobs, of taking on more work, of the unknown, or of a combination of all three.

Trust between employees and their employers is at an all-time low, while skepticism and concern is high. Recent Edelman Trust Barometer surveys found only 37 percent of global respondents rated leadership to be sufficiently credible, continuing the pattern of low trust in recent years. Only 24 percent believe their leaders exhibit highly ethical behaviors, and less than one quarter (23 percent)

agree that leadership communicates frequently and honestly on the state of their company.¹

And get this: According to a 2016 study, trust in senior leaders directly impacts employee attitudes toward the company and work. In fact, workers with high levels of trust for their senior leaders are the most likely (82 percent) to love their jobs and be highly engaged (58 percent).²

Today, employees are putting leaders of all levels on notice that when it comes to earning trust, they need to work harder. Economic meltdowns and corporate scandals have led to greater expectations and regulations around transparency, and remain front-and-center in employees' minds. The playing field has changed.

¹Edelman, "Trust Barometer," 2017

²Globeforce, "The ROI of Recognition in Building a More Human Workplace," 2016

CHANGE #2:

EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER CONTRACT



The relationship between employers and employees is changing every day. Businesses are demanding more quality and productivity as they face intense pressures to reduce expenses and be profitable. At the same time, employees know there is no such thing as job security.

In the wake of significant economic and business challenges and foreign competition, many industries are making cuts across all areas of their operations—including employee training and development and benefits. Meanwhile, other organizations are dealing with increased pressure from outsourcing to overseas call centers and manufacturing.

Either way, it's becoming increasingly difficult for employees to commit discretionary effort and to stay committed when the very foundation of what they expect from their employer can change in an instant.

Because of this diminishing loyalty, one has to wonder if the employee-employer contract as we've known it still exists? The answer is no. The old "contract" has been replaced by a new "deal." The new deal is more of an understanding than a contract, yet it can still be stated explicitly: Organizations must make it crystal clear what they expect from their employees, and what employees can expect from the organization.

CHANGE #3:

TECHNOLOGY

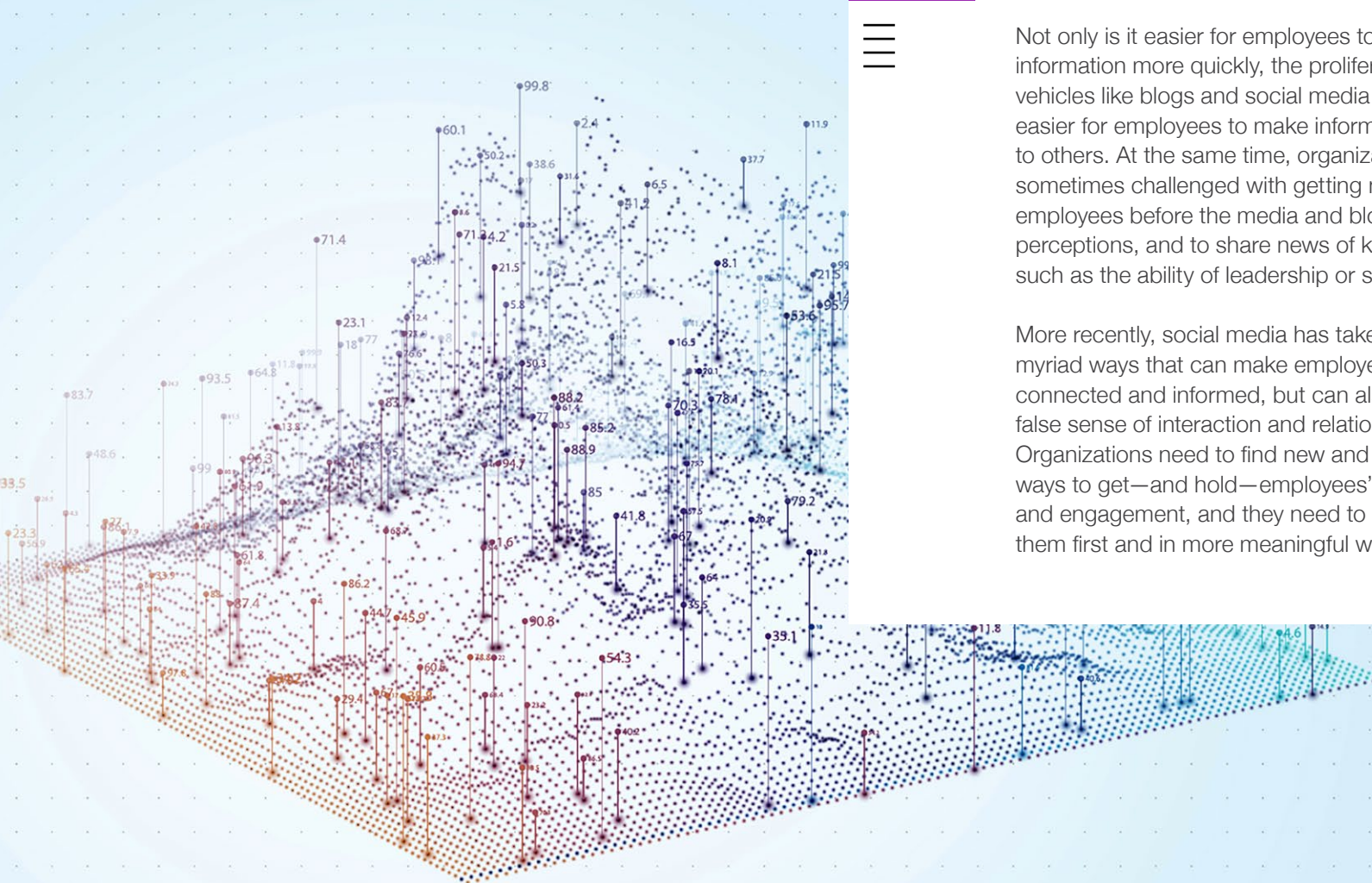


The Internet is the great leveler when it comes to accessing information.



Not only is it easier for employees to get information more quickly, the proliferation of vehicles like blogs and social media make it a lot easier for employees to make information available to others. At the same time, organizations are sometimes challenged with getting news to employees before the media and bloggers shape perceptions, and to share news of key issues, such as the ability of leadership or stock prices.

More recently, social media has taken hold in myriad ways that can make employees feel more connected and informed, but can also create a false sense of interaction and relationship-building. Organizations need to find new and different ways to get—and hold—employees' attention and engagement, and they need to get to them first and in more meaningful ways.



CHANGE #4:

ECONOMY / GLOBAL EVENTS



As the world becomes smaller and global competition intensifies, organizations are focused on new and different ways to boost performance and productivity.

Blurred geographic boundaries, combined with the force of global events, economic crises in various parts of the world, and intense economic pressures require organizations to make tough decisions that impact employees at all levels. This directly influences communication as organizations try to find the best way to communicate with employees in different countries, with multiple languages, varying immediate concerns, and a variety of cultures and norms. Organizations still need to communicate their messages, but in a way that is faster and appeals to the various cultural nuances, all the while contending with increased scrutiny from the public and government oversight.

The business world, the real world, **employees' worlds**—all are continuing to change at an accelerated pace, leaving communicators and leaders with the daunting challenge of keeping employees focused, committed and engaged in what feels like the eye of a hurricane.



The good news is that effective internal communication can create a consistently calm harbor even in the stormiest environments.



EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND THE COMMUNICATOR'S ROLE

Achieving trust, credibility and especially engagement is the ultimate prize for employers, now more than ever. Communications and communicators play a key role in the engagement process. Great communication can engage employees if it cuts through the clutter to speak directly to them, and no one is better positioned than communicators to know how to connect effectively with employees.

First, employers and communicators must recognize that employee engagement is a two-way street, and furthermore that engagement is a gift an employee gives to an organization—that can be freely given or withheld at any time. It is up to these leaders to accept responsibility for making it that way.

Next, decision makers need to realize that engaged employees need more than just information. They need face-

to-face communication and dialogue. Communication professionals are at the heart of all of this interaction. It is up to them to facilitate communication between leaders and employees, and within individual teams. Yes, communication is everyone's responsibility, but it's up to the communicators to drive awareness and engagement.

Engagement is the degree to which workers feel an emotional connection with their employer and organization that allows them to identify with, be motivated by, and be willing to expend extra effort for their employers (e.g., extra time, brainpower, or energy). It also leads to an employee's willingness to advocate on behalf of the organization and brand. The sad fact is that overall employees aren't very engaged. This has a negative impact on productivity, results, shareholder value and many other aspects of the business.

ACCORDING TO THE 2017 GALLUP EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT INDEX¹

32%

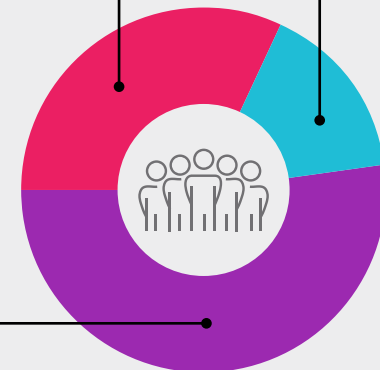
(just under one third) of all U.S. employees are engaged

16%

are actively disengaged

52%

(just more than half) are on the fence



ONLY 13 PERCENT OF WORLDWIDE EMPLOYEES ARE ENGAGED.

¹Gallup, "State of the American Workplace," 2017

TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO CONNECT

with employees, it is important to recognize that engagement involves both emotional and rational factors relating to work and the overall work experience.



EMOTIONAL FACTORS

are those that relate to an individual's personal satisfaction and the sense of inspiration and affirmation they get from their work and from being part of an organization.



RATIONAL FACTORS

relate to the relationship between the individual and the broader company. An example of this would be an employee's understanding of their role and their team's role, as they relate to the overall company objectives.



You may not realize it, but you're actually engaging employees every time you:

- Help them understand the realities of your business
- Connect the dots between the big picture of your business and what it means to them and their job
- Reinforce that they can trust you
- Ask their thoughts / feedback
- Ask how they are doing

If engagement merely facilitated a more efficient working environment or a friendlier atmosphere, the business imperative to make it a priority wouldn't be as compelling. But the extra effort, the willingness to act as a champion and to advocate for your organization, the desire to provide value every minute of the day, makes engaging employees a critical success factor for any business.



DID YOU KNOW?

Disengaged employees have a staggering effect on business. Research estimates that actively disengaged U.S. employees cost the U.S. \$483 billion to \$605 billion each year in lost productivity, while increased workplace injury, illness, turnover, absence and fraud have an economic impact estimated at \$1 trillion per year.¹ This is felt around the world at a global level, but it also has very personal and immediate effects on organizations, departments, teams, and individual employees.



COMMUNICATION ISSUES THAT DISENGAGE EMPLOYEES

1. Information overload
2. No clear understanding of business goals and priorities
3. Leaders who don't "walk the talk"
4. Communication is a "check-the-box" activity and doesn't get to employees in a relevant way
5. Leaders who don't see value in communication and don't plan their communication
6. Communication that is reactive, scattered and not relevant to questions or needs
7. Withholding information or limiting information sharing
8. Limited access to managers, information and leadership
9. Being told to do something without the appropriate context
10. Hearing news in the media or community before hearing it from their employer

THE FACE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS TODAY

The constant change in today's business environment has created a new challenge for communicators, especially because it's been accompanied by an evolution in the needs and expectations of employees. They feel a greater need to be personally connected to their employer company and its leaders. In part, this is because they are more aggressive owners of their jobs and the companies they work for than they were in the past. Employees care about the organization they work for, what it stands for and how it affects them as individuals. And unlike generations past, today's employees are willing to move from job to job in search of the employer that is the best fit for them.

This means employers have to work that much harder to keep their best employees and keep them engaged. One way organizations are addressing this engagement culture is through significantly higher benefits offerings. These aren't, however, always communicated in a way that helps employees fully understand what is available to them. Furthermore, the benefits value proposition alone can't do the job because benefits alone don't translate into loyalty for an organization.

A leader**communicator**[™] realizes most problems in business today lie in the absence of real communication, and understands the need to facilitate dialogue and “manage” conversation with employees and teams. Studies show that the number one reason employees leave their jobs is not because of their paychecks, but because of their manager. Although employees will always want to hear from the top, no one is more influential than an employee's supervisor. Supervisors today need to be leaders **and** communicators.

Virtually all surveys show that a supervisor is an employee's preferred source of information—employees look to their supervisors to translate information and make it meaningful and relevant for them. In fact, 48% of respondents to Melcrum's employee engagement survey felt the actions of senior and frontline leadership are the single most influential factor in driving engagement.

A leader**communicator** is someone who understands that communication enables strategy, but that it also is a strategy in itself. These individuals realize that most problems in business today lie in the absence of real communication, and they understand the need to facilitate dialogue and “manage” conversation with their teams. As a result, they're able to create shared meaning and move people to action.

THE C-FACTOR:

Communication Factors for Top Leaders



- Be visible
- Communicate frequently
- Be honest, open, trustworthy and candid
- Understand that everything they say and do communicates something (including what they don't say or do)
- Answer questions employees have (ideally before they ask them)
- Be engaged in developing/ planning communications
- Engage the Communications function as a business partner
- Ask employees for their input and use it

THE REALITY IS THAT
ORGANIZATIONS DON'T
INSPIRE EMPLOYEES,
PEOPLE DO.

DO YOU REALLY UNDERSTAND YOUR EMPLOYEES?



Employees may join an organization because of its charismatic leaders, benefits, or top-notch training, but how long they stay and how productive they are also is directly related to their boss. Too often, managers view communication as a “to do” they cross off a list, a tactic for which the communication department is solely responsible, or a skill to be developed (similar to becoming a better presenter or listener). But communication is a learned skill—one that traditionally hasn’t been emphasized in organizations—and one that takes practice and planning.

Think of it this way: a company doesn’t just decide one day that it’s going to put a new product into market and then “wing it.” It’s planned, tested and carefully orchestrated to ensure a positive response. The same should go for how leaders communicate, and that’s not often the case.



THE RESULT IS THAT INTERNAL COMMUNICATION TODAY NEEDS TO INVOLVE EMPLOYEES IN TWO-WAY DIALOGUE—IT’S NO LONGER ENOUGH JUST TO “DISTRIBUTE” INFORMATION.

THE EIGHT KEY QUESTIONS™

The key to effectively communicating with employees through two-way dialogue starts with answering the key questions that all employees have. Whether employees ask them or not, the reality is there are several key questions that are on their minds—what we call *The Eight Key Questions*. These questions are a lot like Maslow's

hierarchy of needs—which purports that only after a person has fulfilled certain levels of needs can he or she begin to move to more complex levels of thought, self-awareness and understanding of others. It states that employees' basic needs have to be addressed first before they can begin to think beyond themselves.

Employees' core questions are “me”-focused questions that help them understand what's happening around them and what it means to them specifically. When the me-focused questions are answered, then employees can look beyond themselves and become interested in the “we”-focused questions.

It's important to remember that these are questions that employees think about, and perhaps ask, every day—whether they are new to the organization or veterans. When change happens—as it often does in today's fast-paced business world—employees immediately go back to the me-focused questions.



“I AM YOUR EMPLOYEE”

What you need to know about employees today.



- I'm bombarded by messages and communications clutter
- If you want me to change my behavior, I must trust the person telling me to do it
- I'm more likely to pay attention if you make the impact on me clear
- I'm most influenced (and want to hear from) my manager and senior leaders
- I appreciate repetition over time
- I appreciate having a choice of media when being addressed
- I'll pay more attention if I've had a chance to provide input up front
- If I see the leaders in my organization behaving how they want me to behave, I'm more likely to pay attention

KNOWING WHEN COMMUNICATION IS ESSENTIAL

Let's look at some events or situations that often trigger the need for communication:

BUSINESS CHANGES

If there's a change in the way business will be done and it's going to affect employees, it's important to tell them what's going to be different, and what they need to do differently as a result. This applies to a broad number of situations, such as:

- When leaders need to take specific action to accelerate business results (e.g., top-line growth, profits, etc)
- A change in business priorities, metrics, leadership, etc
- A change in organizational structure (e.g., merger, acquisition, downsizing, plant closing)
- Survey results are not where they need to be
- Need to create and dominate new markets
- Operational changes to improve productivity, cut costs, etc

DRIVING BEHAVIORS AND ACTIONS

Internal communication is essential if you need to drive new or different behaviors—or culture change. Employees need to know what's expected of them and what they need to do differently. This can apply to a specific business initiative or project, or to broader behaviors for the organization at large.

CELEBRATION

Let employees know if the organization or individuals achieve specific milestones or wins that should be recognized. This keeps them interested, motivated and engaged.



THE BIG “OOPS”

Communication mistakes that can shut employees down (literally and figuratively)

- Inconsistent messages
- Talking at employees instead of with them
- Communication delays—not responding quickly
- “Spinning” messages instead of speaking truthfully
- Breakdown in technology
- Not telling the truth or silence
- Using language employees don't understand

HOW TO BREAK THROUGH (OR AVOID) COMMUNICATION CLUTTER

Communication at its best is about moving people to action. Each time you prepare to communicate internally, first think about the business outcomes you want to achieve. Then, think about what you want employees to think, feel and do as a result of your communication. This will shape the messages you develop and help you choose the vehicle you use to share those messages.

Employees need a chance to grasp an issue or topic—it needs to be on their radar—before they'll have an emotional response to it (that's the feel). And when employees feel strongly about a topic, they are much more likely to take action on it (that's the do). Without a call to action, it's just information.

It's also important to remember that repetition is critical to ensuring your audience received the message and understands what's expected of them. When employees hear the same message from their supervisor (their preferred source), the CEO, through the company Intranet or through the grapevine, they're more likely to take notice, believe it and, most importantly, act on it.

BREAKING THROUGH...



Plan all communication using a strategic approach that focuses on:



REMEMBER
EVERYTHING YOU
DO COMMUNICATES.
YOU CAN'T NOT COMMUNICATE.

- Focus on messages. People only remember three to five headlines, so make them count
- Streamline messages and the channels used to communicate them
- Create a platform with core messages to focus on and reinforce what's most important
- Role model the action and behaviors you want to see from others

FIVE STEPS TO MEANINGFUL INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

> STEP 1:

Articulate goals, vision and mission

At this initial stage, you are understanding your desired outcome in the context of the organization's goals, vision and mission. This means articulating an initiative or the organization's goals, vision and mission. This ensures that from the beginning you are thinking big picture: What are the outcomes that you want to achieve, how do they tie to business priorities, and how do you need to shape your messaging to achieve those goals?

> STEP 2:

Message development

Develop key messages that communicate with and speak to the right audiences. Messages need to be clear, credible and resonate with your audience. A critical part of the message development process is understanding where your audience is coming from so you can make your messages powerfully meaningful to them. That's where research comes in. What data do you need to best understand your audience?

> STEP 3:

Communications planning

Building on the core messaging you have identified and developed, your next step is to create a plan that articulates the approach for achieving the goals identified in Step 1 through communication.

As part of this plan, you must:

- Identify key audiences you need to reach
- Decide on best vehicles for communicating message (e.g., in-person meeting, newsletter article, letter from the president, etc)
- Select appropriate timing

> STEP 4:

Implement

By now, you've reached the implementation phase of your communication plan. It's now up to you to put the ball into play and to begin communicating with employees. Using your established plan as a guide, you should use the various communications tools available to reach your employees with your powerful message where it will have the most meaning to them. This will ultimately drive the outcomes you seek.

> STEP 5:

Evaluate against goals created in the context of the current environment

You should start working on Step 5 as you are also undertaking Step 4. This is the evaluation phase. This last step is critical in ensuring that you drive the desired behaviors or actions in employees. If you learn that this is not the case, step back and re-evaluate your plan. It's important to be able to correct your course along the way if you learn that something isn't working as you had anticipated or intended. At its core, Step 5 is about assessing whether or not your communication have helped you achieve the desired outcomes you identified in Step 1.

MEASURING THE IMPACT OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

It's often said that what gets measured gets done. Although it may feel overwhelming or even impossible to measure the value of something as intangible as communication, the fact is that there are definitive metrics by which you can measure success. And the reward of understanding the impact of any strategic internal messaging plan is well worth the effort! Measurement helps create credibility for communication among an organization's employees and its leaders, and it ensures that communication has a place at the table in any strategic business discussion.

The key to successfully measuring communication is to focus metrics on the outcome (the action you seek), not the output (how you communicate). Since the goal of internal communication is to drive action and behaviors, it's not enough to know that a message was distributed to employees. Rather, measurement needs to focus on whether the message was received, heard and acted upon.

It is important to remember that when measuring the impact and effectiveness of communication, both qualitative and quantitative results are ideal.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MEASUREMENT

- Keep measurement strategies simple (or they won't get done!)
- Use strategies that already work for the company
- Use strategies that can live on after the initial metrics are complete
- Ensure senior management will champion measurement activities
- Ensure staff who participate in the evaluation process feel comfortable being candid, see the results, and have the tools to apply the feedback and/or results



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION MEASUREMENT TECHNIQUES



EXISTING VEHICLES

If your organization conducts an annual employee commitment survey, consider integrating a section about internal communication. Better yet, conduct a Communications Climate Index™ *(an assessment that measures the specific cause-and-effect relationships affecting performance and engagement)* to gauge your organization's health in relation to critical internal communication drivers.



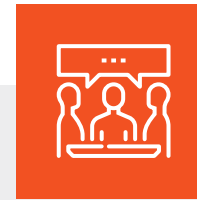
BUSINESS METRICS

Pinpoint the level of employee understanding and action around key business priorities. How? Connect existing metrics to the outcomes you seek to accomplish through communication, and establish a correlation to overall business results.



PULSE SURVEY

Identify a representative sample of your target audience and reach out to them for feedback on communications directed at them. Ask the survey participants a few questions to get a “pulse” for the impact of a communication. This can be done via conference call, email or an Intranet posting.



FOCUS GROUPS

Gather employees to participate in an interactive discussion in which you ask specific questions about communications tactics. This can be done informally or in a more formal setting, depending on your organization's culture.



EMPLOYEE ADVISORY BOARD

Want to know how employees really feel about existing and new communication plans and strategies? Ask them. Gather a group of employees who can offer regular feedback and who can help measure success.



OVER-SURVEYED EMPLOYEES!

Measuring the impact of communication isn't always enough. Employees can come to feel "over-surveyed," and because they aren't always conscious or cognizant of results or action, the response rate and nature can be inaccurate. Use high-level assessment to measure where you and your employees are in relation to business goals and strategies, and use the information to take action and drive results.



UNACCOUNTABLE LEADERS!

At the end of the day, most people only do what they are accountable for because their reputations and/or jobs are on the line. Leaders need to know the importance of their roles as leader communicators and be held accountable. Ideally, communication should be a part of a leader's individual performance metrics so that communication is incorporated as a natural part of the business and progress can be tracked.



DOING NOTHING WITH RESULTS!

Why did you bother to ask for feedback, gather employees, conduct surveys, and more if you aren't going to do anything with the results?! Not only are leaders squandering valuable information that could help advance business goals when they fail to act on it, but they hurt their credibility and break down hard-won employee trust.

REMEMBER THE BOTTOM LINE WE TALKED ABOUT AT THE VERY BEGINNING? WE'VE COME FULL CIRCLE.



Whether you are just beginning to think about the importance of internal communication, you are in the midst of an existing plan, or you're measuring the success of your overall strategy, remember that this is all about the bottom line. At its core, communication is an instrument of strategy as well as a strategy in itself. It's an

instrument of strategy because it helps you share your mission, vision and values with employees. It's a strategy because it will help you achieve specific goals. It creates a sense of community and trust with employees, creating a line of sight for them and engaging them to make the business successful.

SO WHAT'S THE PAYOFF?

EMPLOYEES UNDERSTAND THE BIG PICTURE AND HOW THEY FIT IN

They feel valued, listened to, and like an important part of the team and the organization.

EMPLOYEES ARE MORE PRODUCTIVE AND THERE IS MEANING TO THEIR WORK

As a result, they contribute more and feel better about their contribution and the organization so they stay on the job and help move the business forward.

BETTER LEADERS

Communication isn't just tactical anymore; it's about strategy. In this context, leaders are better able to understand employee needs and how to meet those needs to motivate, inspire and engage them.

VIGILANT MANAGERS WHO HAVE AN EAR TO THE GROUND

For managers and organizations to attract, create and retain an engaged workforce, they must be committed for the long haul. Building the trust and credibility to keep employees engaged requires effort, but it's worth it. It takes only seconds to lose employee connection and interest.

A CULTURE OF COMMUNICATION

The employee engagement journey is a continuous one. Communication is not an "event." It is a continuing process. You must work every day to ask the right questions, answer others appropriately, and communicate openly and honestly with employees. When they see you making that extra effort, they'll do the same. By moving away from lip service and toward positive action, you drive positive business results.



Organizations that understand, prioritize and constantly strive to achieve better internal communication are a breed apart. They achieve trust and credibility. They enable employees to do their jobs better. They create a constructive workplace that encourages growth and a common sense of purpose. From all this, there can only be one result: Higher levels of performance and better business results.

REACH OUT (BOLDLY GO)



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David helps leaders drive productivity and get the results they want through authentic and courageous leadership and communication. He's a sought-after speaker and advisor to Fortune 500 leaders, and three-time author. His latest book, "No Cape Needed: The Simplest, Smartest, Fastest Steps to Improve How You Communicate By Leaps and Bounds," recently won the Pinnacle Book Award for the "Best in Business" category and the Beverly Hills International Book

Award's President's award. His other books include, "You Can't NOT Communicate: Proven Communication Solutions That Power the Fortune 100," now in its second edition, and its follow up, "You Can't NOT Communicate 2". His leader**communicator** blog is also ranked the #1 blog on communication by Feedspot. David counsels leaders at top organizations to unleash the power of strategic internal communication and drive performance. Clients include CVS

Health, Eastman Chemical, Health Quest, Hill-Rom, Johnson & Johnson, Kimberly-Clark, Lockheed Martin, McDonald's, NYU Langone Medical Center, Tenneco, and Wyndham, among others. He's Founder and CEO of The Grossman Group, an award-winning Chicago-based strategic leadership development and internal communications consultancy, and teaches at Columbia University in NYC.



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