

Internal Communication Tips and Tactics

• Visual

- Add visuals to all internal communication.
- Create an on-line space where you can place announcements/information.
- Provide visual clues for updates.



• Digital

- Blogs, e-newsletters, videos, social media.

• User-created Content

- Employee-created videos.
- Collaborative structures.
- Use their voice to tell about new initiatives.

• Ease of Use

- Use headlines and subject lines to convey information.
- Information must be relevant to the reader.
- Use consistent formats.
- Think about the 51 second reader.
- Use links for more details.

Proactive Communication is Early, Often and Ongoing

• Listening

- Face-to-face meetings; surveys; ask questions; advisory groups; faculty/staff meetings; polls on emerging issues.

• Personalized Communication

- Face-to-face meetings or small group meetings with staff most affected by upcoming or possible changes.

• Crisis Communication

- When unforeseen incidents occur, communication in the first 24 hours sets the tone for the entire event. Lead the message, don't follow it.

Special Communication Challenges

Handling Rumors

- Shape the message don't chase the message.
- Know the hot topics and proactively communicate.
- Be open to good and bad news.
- Gather feedback to understand perspectives.
- Thank people for complaints, questions, phone calls, e-mails, etc. These are opportunities to identify misunderstandings or to learn something new.
- Create Q&A documents about big issues.
- Keep Web site updated.
- Address individual people if misunderstandings arise.
- Personalize communication to those most affected.
- Create easy-to-access information.

Delivering the News of Unpopular Decisions

- State the facts.
- Trim your words.
- Avoid vague terms.
- Ask for questions.
- Be real and empathetic.
- Agree where you can.
- Stay calm and collected.
- Welcome questions for clarification.

Shaping the Message about Unpopular Decisions

- What alternative solutions have you tried or investigated?
- Who made the decision (don't pass the buck)?
- How does the decision affect employees (and others)?
- What does the organization expect from employees?
- What are the next steps?
- How will staff be kept informed of changes?

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