HR Toolkit

Employee Communication

Provided by: **LHD Benefit Advisors**

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Introduction

Think of employee communication as the sharing of information between organizational leadership and their employees—and vice versa. Effective employee communication can have a positive impact on all aspects of a company. Likewise, poor employee communication can lead to workplace inefficiencies and create challenges for successfully engaging and retaining employees.

The great thing about employee communication is that employers can always improve their internal communication, and initiatives can be scaled for any size organization since the goal is to tailor a communication style that is effective for that company's leadership, management and employees. That being said, while employee communication is often an emphasized effort for leaders and HR professionals, that doesn't mean that it is always effective. Here's an interesting figure from Gallup to consider:

> 74% of employees feel they are missing out on company information and news.

So, even if an organization already has employee communication initiatives in place, it's important to continually measure and evaluate those efforts to ensure employees are informed and engaged—and don't feel like they're missing out on news.

This HR Toolkit will provide an overview of employee communication, discuss the importance of employee communication and suggest a step-by-step process for developing or updating a communication strategy. Since employee communication can be both formal and informal, this toolkit will address formal communication strategies and informal communication tactics or initiatives. In addition, the Appendix offers supplementary resources, including an employee survey, infographic, planning checklist and more.

Overview

Employee communication refers to how organizations communicate with their employees—and conversely, how employees communicate with organizational leadership. It encompasses communication among all employees. It is how organizations keep their employees informed about company information or happenings.

It's essential to link employee communication to overall organizational strategy to ensure effective and consistent business operations. An employee communication plan or strategy can help organizations communicate consistent messages, establish a recognizable and positive employer brand and deliver information or messages from leadership that are consistent with the organization's mission, vision and culture.

The Purpose of Employee Communication

Plain and simple, the purpose of employee communication is to keep an organization's employees informed. Effective employee communication is a vital aspect of the employer-employee relationship. It shows employees that they are valued by the company. Conversely, a lack of communication can make them feel underappreciated, fostering discontentment and low morale. Poor communication may also suggest indifference to employees' performance and result in lower productivity.

The main principles of effective employee communication include the following:

- Clear organizational values

- Communication strategy goals

- Consistency

- A holistic approach including various channels or employee touchpoints

- Long-term focus

Since organizations should execute employee communication with a holistic approach, communications can impact or help facilitate the following topics:

- Day-to-day operations

- Employee benefits

- Organizational announcements

- Strategic business initiatives

Keep in mind that within employee communication, there are different types of communications happening. Internal upward communication comes from a subordinate to a manager or an individual up

the organizational hierarchy. On the other hand, internal downward communication flows from a superior to one or more subordinates. The most frequent workplace communication is internal lateral communication which happens among all employees. To be effective, it's important to be aware of all the different communication lines that exist in the workplace.

The Impact of Employee Communication

The way an organization communicates with its employees has a tremendous impact on employee productivity, collaboration, engagement and overall workplace experience. Effective communication is important because it:

- **Keeps employees informed**
- **Gives employees a holistic and transparent view of the company**
- **Keeps employees engaged in the workplace**
- **Boosts organizational morale**
- **Increases collaboration and workplace efficiencies**
- **Gives employees a voice for feedback, debate and discussion**

For example, employee communication can help drive new benefits offerings. It can also educate employees about why these benefits are important and beneficial and how to access or use their benefits.

Conversely, ineffective communication may increase the chances for misunderstandings, break employee trust and, ultimately, damage relationships between employees and organizational leadership. Ineffective communication may be a result of a poorly aligned strategy, a failure to execute the strategy, use of the wrong channel or bad timing. Even more subtle issues like word choice or tone can play a major role in how your communications are received. Ineffective communication may also encourage gossip in the workplace.

Poor communication can also be a costly mistake for both small and large organizations. Business experts reported that large companies (those with more than 100,000 employees) cited an average loss of $62.4 million each year in lost productivity as a result of inadequate or irrelevant employee communication. Wasted time due to clarification, poor direction and bad listening translates to reduced productivity. Furthermore, miscommunication costs smaller companies (those with 100 or fewer employees) an average of $420,000 each year.

As organizations adapt to short- or long-term work-from-home adjustments, communication is even more important to inform and engage the remote workforce. By the end of 2021, Global Workplace Analytics predicts that 25-30% of the U.S. workforce will work remotely at least multiple times a week, permanently. If organizations have been used to communicating with their workforce within an office or other traditional workplace setting, modifications need to be made to properly support all employees— regardless of location. The next section explores how to create and manage an employee communication strategy.

Creating a Communication Strategy

Although this section will focus on a suggested step-by-step process of creating and managing a formal employee communication strategy, components and the overall goal can also be implemented less formally at smaller organizations. A communication strategy is a plan to achieve identified communication objectives. To remain authentic, it's important to have clear goals tied to the organization's core values and mission. A communication strategy determines the flow of organizational information among employees, while establishing and maintaining workplace connections. With an effective communication strategy or plan, organizations are able to deliver clear expectations and objectives for employees.

Surveys have shown that 60% of companies don't have a long-term strategy for their internal communication. Regardless of how large the organization is, it's critical to have a long-term plan for employee communication. The key to success is to be mindful of all communications across all levels of the organization—and find what's authentic and effective for the organization and employees.

This section will outline planning, developing, implementing, measuring and evaluating an employee communication strategy. The purpose is to highlight successful components and tactics for communicating effectively in order to create more efficiencies.

The Planning Phase

It's critical to be thoughtful when communicating. That involves some upfront planning to evaluate current communications and reflect upon the organization. To start, an effective communication strategy needs organizational alignment. Conduct an audit to understand the organizational structure and needs for communicating with employees, including the following:

Mission statement

Company values

Strategic business goals

Company culture

Before diving into creating a communication strategy, first evaluate why there's a need for the strategy. Why is communication important? Organizations should determine what the overall goal of employee communication is. This objective will vary by organization. Common goals include keeping employees informed, improving employee engagement and mending employee morale. Consider what's at stake if an organization does not communicate effectively with employees.

The last piece of the planning process is to identify all internal stakeholders and assign ownership. Employee communication is most effective when it's an interdisciplinary effort and leaders from multiple departments are actively involved. Consider what makes the most sense for each organization based on resources. That may involve employees from human resources or communications, and a mix of management and team leaders. Once stakeholders are identified, it's important to assign ownership so it's clear who will own and be accountable for employee communication efforts. Dedicated communication leaders can help unify an organization's messaging and deliver a seamless communication

experience for employees—as well as serve as the go-to teammates for fellow employees when they have organizational questions or feedback.

The Development and Implementation Phase

Communication is important on several levels, ranging from groundbreaking company information to day-to-day interaction. Additionally, internal communication can be leveraged to have difficult organizational discussions or updates. It can especially help employees stay informed and calm during restructures, mergers and acquisitions. If not taken seriously, announcements may negatively impact employees' morale.

After the planning phase is complete and goals have been identified, it's time to develop and deploy those communications to employees. Keep in mind that communication is an ongoing process and there's nothing wrong with adjusting the plan along the way. If a communication is not achieving the objective or not resonating with employees, then it's important to update the communication plan. The next sections explore important aspects of effective employee communication.

Content Selection

First, what is the company news or update? There are many types of organizational information that should be communicated to employees, including, but not limited to, quarterly check-ins, end-of-year results, standard operations, employee benefits, workplace safety and company culture. Although organizational updates may not seem like an exciting topic, it's important that effective communications support the day-to-day operations as well. Those efforts help establish a strong, honest workplace culture through communicating. Employees will expect communications on a regular basis that address both small and big changes or information.

Here are some examples of common workplace communications:

- **Significant news**—This includes mergers and acquisitions, management changes, new product announcements, organizational crises and company reorganization. It is essential to inform employees of such news promptly, truthfully and transparently. Nothing hurts employee morale and loyalty more than hearing about something on the morning news rather than from their employer.

- **Quarterly and yearly goals, initiatives and achievements**—Give employees access to company sales data, upcoming and ongoing goals or initiatives, and details on the future direction of the company. They want to know that they are working for a healthy, financially solvent company, and they likely will be interested to hear what direction decision-makers are taking the company.

- **Praise and recognition**—Employees want their hard work to be recognized, so make sure your management team finds ways to praise large accomplishments of teams or individuals. Whether it's a personal email, an in-person handshake or an announcement on the company intranet, don't let employee achievement go unnoticed.

- **New hires and promotions**—Keep employees in the loop by announcing new hires and promotions to the company or branch. This will help new employees feel welcome and will further the recognition for promoted individuals.

- **Ongoing company news or information**—This could be anything, whether it's about employee benefits, dates for the upcoming company picnic or company policy updates. Additionally, consider how companywide initiatives, such as learning and development and wellness programs, are communicated throughout the workplace. Through your chosen communication channels, make sure employees are always informed of any information relevant to them. The more involved they are with the company, the more loyalty they will likely have.

Once a content topic has been identified, ask the following questions:

• What is important?
• Why is it important to employees?
• What should employees do?

Content Format

The next factor to think about is the content format. Even if the current information lives as a spreadsheet or long-format report, it doesn't have to stay like that as it's communicated to employees. Consider how to tailor that content into new, digestible formats like infographics, videos, short blog posts or podcasts. Tailor content to a format that is easily digestible and desired by the specific employees to increase information consumption and retention. Examples of channels and tools will be further discussed in the next section.

Channels and Tools

Next, it's important to consider all content channels—mediums through which people in an organization communicate—and determine which are the most appropriate for the message. These can be current or existing channels or ones that need to be developed.

Channel strategy is not a one-size-fits-all approach. With all the possible channels for communication today, there are plenty of opportunities to supply employees with timely and accurate company news and information. Select a channel that best fits both the objective and employees. The goal is to reach the entire intended audience, so keep in mind information consumption differences between office employees, non-wired employees and remote employees. Here are some common workplace content channels to consider:

Company or departmentwide meetings can help bring all employees together. A town hall meeting can be an efficient way to share information or organizational updates so everyone is hearing the same thing at the same time. Town halls can make leaders more personable—and easily encourage discussion, feedback and healthy debate. If meetings are held virtually, keep those same goals in mind and provide channels to provide feedback or ask follow-up questions.

Keep in mind that casual and fun company events are equally as important to incorporate messaging and facilitate feedback as employees are together and engaging with one another.

Digital signage can help attract attention to organizational information. Make the most of screens that already exist in the workplace, such as TVs, display walls or screensavers, to reinforce messaging. Digital signage works well to keep non-wired employees in the know. Like with any digital consumption, it's important to regularly update with fresh content to have an impact on the workforce.

Email remains a primary employee communication channel in most workplaces. Be careful not to overuse this channel as employees send and receive many emails each day, and the important company update could get lost in the shuffle or simply ignored. Email can instantly reach a wide audience and is easily accessible across many devices.

Employee education and communication can go hand-in-hand. For example, consider sharing educational resources or holding informational sessions about employee benefits to increase open enrollment. Employee education can work for any organizational mission or goal to help increase employee understanding and involvement. Check out Broker Briefcase for customizable employee education resources.

Intranets are very common workplace communication channels. If well-designed, an intranet or blog can keep employees up-to-date on news and updates. The downside of an intranet is that employees have to actively seek out that information. Consider ways to encourage discussions or two-way communication on the intranet and address any limitations for employees accessing the intranet outside of the office.

Newsletters can help inform employees on a regular basis. Keep in mind that when sent via email, newsletters can also be hard for employees to prioritize in their inbox. It's important to get creative with newsletters to engage employees, keep employees up-to-date and make them feel personalized based on location or role.

One-on-one meetings provide employees with the opportunity to meet with their immediate supervisor periodically to discuss expectations, current projects, and concerns or questions on either end. These one-on-one meetings should be separate from any performance evaluations in order to foster maximum openness.

Podcasts are popular in daily life, so consider using that channel to communicate with employees. According to LinkedIn, 42% of people between the ages of 18-34 listen to podcasts at least once a week. Podcasts are great for storytelling, so give employees something compelling. Just make sure that podcast efforts and integrated with other channels to capture all employees and reinforce messaging.

Print still can play an effective role in employee communication. Materials including memos, posters and table tents can offer reading material for employees when delivered or placed in the right locations. Print doesn't necessarily invite feedback, so ensure there are other channels to help capture engagement and questions.

Social media, when handled correctly, can be a great way to encourage genuine discussions and information exchanges among employees. Monitor conversations and encourage a healthy exchange of information. A social media policy can help outline and enforce guidelines.

Team leaders and managers can deliver information with a personal approach. Employees may feel more comfortable sharing feedback or asking questions among others they know well. With an effective leader, this channel can promote discussion, feedback and engagement.

Virtual communication platforms offer a range of tools and channels to help keep multiple departments connected, but also facilitate collaboration among smaller teams. Common communication apps include Microsoft Teams, Slack and Zoom.

Part of the evaluation process is to think about how employees consume information and use those channels. If employees' inboxes are bogged down or there's low participation on the company intranet, consider a new streamlined way to break through to employees. For example, virtual communication platforms can sometimes help break through the clutter of the typical workday. Additionally, consider the devices (e.g., mobile, laptop or desktop) most commonly used by employees to tailor content and channels, and ultimately increase consumption and understanding.

Tone

An exciting announcement or operational update can be poorly received by the workforce if delivery and tone are not addressed. In fact, although small, those types of nuances can be very damaging to the organization. Communications should be transparent, honest and jargon-free. Especially if dealing with a sensitive subject, speaking in plain terms is often your best option. Simple messages are easier to understand and will make any calls to action clear.

Transparency

If you do one thing, be transparent. Just as organizations share exciting news and successes, it's equally as important to share the failures instead of hiding them. It's all about being open to share ideas, stories and collaborate across the organization. Transparency can also come through when sharing details about significant news, such as a merger or layoff. Leaders likely will share what is known at the moment, but being open about what isn't known at the time will be appreciated by the workforce. It shows that nothing is being hidden and that leaders are in touch with what employees may have concerns about. This requires leaders and managers to embrace the fact that it is OK not to know everything.

Delivery

With regard to delivery, it's important that communication is meant to be reciprocal. Employees should have a way to provide feedback or ask follow-up questions. Even if there is no formal way for employees to communicate with executive leadership, ensure that employees know they can speak with their managers or team leaders to have their voice heard and respected.

Getting information out to employees is essential, but hearing their thoughts, concerns and ideas is important too. Not only will they feel like the company values their opinion, but they could provide some excellent feedback for future changes or improvements.

Here are just a few ideas for encouraging open communication:

During company or departmentwide meetings, allow time at the end for a question and answer portion. Leaders need to be sure to answer employees honestly and directly, even if the answer is, "I'm not sure" or "I can't discuss that now and here's why…"

When possible, deliver news in smaller group settings to allow for discussion and conversation among employees and management.

Periodic employee opinion surveys can be conducted to keep a pulse on the workforce. To encourage candid responses, make it anonymous. Analyze the results and work to improve items of concern among employees.

It won't be an option for every work environment, but consider implementing an open-door policy to facilitate transparent and two-way communication. It is also worthwhile to consider how management might become more available and easily accessible to employees. The goal should be to make employees feel comfortable expressing their ideas, concerns and suggestions with supervisors and upper management.

Employers should pay special attention to the timing of the communication. Lean on channel analytics to evaluate performance and gauge best response times. It's fine to experiment with the findings to find the perfect time to share different types of information. Once you've found what resonates with employees, develop a publication schedule for consistency. This can be especially useful when multiple employees are responsible for communication efforts.

Lastly, be creative. It's OK to experiment with different communication methods and directly ask for employee input. For example, a new spin on a standard channel could be using digital signage to feature employees' workplace Facebook or Instagram photos to reinforce company culture. Employees may then pay attention more to digital signage or the company intranet if they are watching to see if their content is being featured to their co-workers.

Messaging

Before clicking send, pause and reflect. A strong employee communication strategy hinges on effective messaging.

To ensure communications resonate with all employees, ensure messaging is:

✓ **Compelling**—As with any communication, the words or messaging need to grab employees' attention and compel them to act to achieve the desired outcomes.

✓ **Concise**—Great organizational messages are brief, memorable and easily understood. It's especially important to make the key takeaways obvious and clear.

✓ **Credible**—Especially when sharing company goals or structural changes, ensure messaging is accurate and attainable. If a stance is too aggressive, an organization may lose the trust and belief of employees.

✓ **Consistent**—Once messaging is developed, it's just as critical to consistently deliver that messaging throughout various communication channels. If not consistent, employees may start to question the accuracy and transparency of the messaging.

Employee communication messaging should trigger meaningful connections among employees, while still connecting to the larger organizational level.

The Measurement and Evaluation Phase

To truly understand whether an organization's employee communication is impactful, performance should be tracked, evaluated and modified. It's all about reaching those previously identified organizational goals. The top reasons for tracking employee communication efforts are to prove value, maximize budget and maximize the team's time.

There are many different things an employer could measure, so an organization should identify its own key performance indicators (KPIs) to gauge the effectiveness of its employee communication. Consider the following types of common KPIs to track employee communication performance:

- **Reach**—How many employees are able to access communications. This can help leaders identify how many employees are adopting platforms or channels. Reach can be especially helpful during the planning process for understanding which channels are the strongest and most efficient for employee communication.

- **Engagement**—How employees are interacting with communications. This helps identify how many employees are seeing content, when they prefer to receive communications and which employees are most engaged. Consider breaking out metrics by departments instead of focusing on individual employees.

- **Feedback**—How employees are understanding or perceiving communications. Feedback can be obtained in numerous ways, including through a survey or a manager talking during a weekly one-on-one meeting. It's important to establish such a culture in which employees are willing to voice feedback (whether it's good, bad or neutral) and are open to receiving organizational feedback or updates. Furthermore, organization leaders should be thoughtful with surveys. It's important not to overwhelm employees with lengthy surveys just for the sake of it. Ensure there is a purpose and a willingness to take action with each channel of feedback.

- **Turnover**—How often employees are leaving the organization. A high employee turnover rate can be an expensive problem for organizations. It's important to identify a healthy turnover rate for the organization and strive to stay in that range.

- **Other behavioral outcomes**—Focus on outcomes that are tied directly back to each communication's purpose. For example, the goal could be benefits enrollment. Organizations could track participation across various channels or touchpoints, including email open and click-through rates, intranet logins, town hall meeting attendance and enrollment completion.

- **Organization goals**—It might also be helpful to review operational and customer goals, and measure that progress through formal and informal methods. Keep in mind that business productivity or customer satisfaction could be an extension of employee satisfaction.

It's important to select clear and trackable goals. That sets a baseline for communication efforts, so there is a reference point to measure all work moving forward. Push to get analytics and feedback on the topics that truly matter to the organization and its employees. You don't have to measure everything; just measure what's considered most important. This undertaking can also help an organization highlight key issues, pinpoint critical areas for action and improve.

When changes or improvements are being made, be sure to openly communicate that back to employees so they know that their voices are being heard and respected.

Summary

Employee communication refers to how organizations communicate with their employees—and conversely, how employees communicate with organizational leadership. There are many ways for an organization to connect with employees to increase engagement and profitability. Employee communication should not be pushed to the wayside since poor or ineffective communication can lead to an array of challenges and inefficiencies. Enabling better connections between all employees, regardless of organizational role, is good for the bottom line of an organization.

A strong employee communication strategy hinges on effective messaging. To ensure communications resonate with all employees, ensure messaging is compelling, concise, credible and consistent. It's not just about having a message to share—it's about how that message is shared or discussed with employees. Employee communication can be effective or fall flat depending on the channel, tone and delivery. As with any type of communication, transparency is key.

Remember that initiatives for employee communication can be scaled for any industry or organization size. The goal is to tailor communications to be effective for that company's leadership, management and employees. The purpose of employee communication is to keep an organization's employees informed about company happenings, so start small and work with available resources and communication channels. If needed, identify communication gaps or what will make the biggest impact on the workforce, and focus on strengthening those channels or efforts.

Contact LHD Benefit Advisors today for additional information and resources about employee communication.

Appendix

This appendix features valuable information, including a survey, infographic, scorecard and communication planning checklist. Please review these resources when designing your own employee communication strategy or assessing overall communication efforts. The information included in this section may require some customization, and it should only be used as a framework.

Please consult with LHD Benefit Advisors if you have any questions about these materials or any other content in this toolkit.

Printing Help

There are many printable resources in this appendix. Please follow the instructions below if you need help printing individual pages.

1. Choose the "Print" option from the "File" menu.

2. Under the "Settings" option, click on the arrow next to "Print All Pages" to access the drop-down menu. Select "Custom Print" and enter the page number range you would like to print, or enter the page number range you would like to print in the "Pages" box.

3. Click "Print." For more information, please visit the Microsoft Word printing support page.

Employee Communication Survey

Surveys can be the best way of understanding how employees engage with internal communication. People are likely more willing to provide honest answers if they feel that there is anonymity to their responses. If necessary, break down the responses by department or role to understand preferences and perceptions. Survey data should be collected in a well-defined manner that helps an organization assess and pinpoint any problem areas.

To ensure employee communication is effective, ask reflective, open-ended questions, and ask them often. Consider customizing questions and available answers when adapting the following survey to discover employee communication benchmarks.

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 does its best to provide a transparent, comfortable and productive work environment. To ensure we are doing our part, we would like feedback from you. Please complete the brief anonymous survey below to help us enhance internal communication and updates.

Thank you in advance for your valued participation. Please speak with HR if you have any questions or concerns about completing the survey.

- Does provide adequate information about policies and goals?

- Does provide adequate information about important changes?

- How transparent does that information feel?

- How do you prefer to receive company updates and information?
    - Email
    - Intranet
    - Department meetings
    - Company meetings
    - Other

- How often do you prefer to receive company updates and information?
    - Daily
    - Weekly
    - Twice a week
    - Other

- Which days are best for you to receive internal communication?

- What communication channel or method do you utilize the least or find most ineffective at ?

- How seriously and effectively does take your feedback and suggestions?

- How effectively does act on the feedback you provide?

- How can improve employee communication?

The Importance of
Employee Communication

Employee communication refers to how organizations communicate with their employees—and conversely, how employees communicate with organizational leadership. Effective employee communication can improve employee engagement and productivity. Enabling better connections between all employees, regardless of organizational role, is good for the bottom line of an organization.

With employee communication, perception is the reality for evaluating effectiveness. Research shows that there's work to be done to improve communication.

74%
of employees feel they are missing out on company information and news.

44%
of employees say that their internal communication hasn't changed in the past 5 years.

25%
of employees think their company takes effective action on their feedback.

60%
of companies don't have a long-term strategy for their internal communication.

Inadequate employee communication—resulting in lost productivity—can be a costly mistake for both small and large organizations.

o **Large companies** cited an average loss of **$62.4 million each year.**

o **Smaller companies** cited an average loss of **$420,000 each year.**

Get started today and consider these steps for building an employee communication strategy:

1. Conduct an audit.

2. Set clear and measurable objectives.

3. Define messaging.

4. Choose the channel(s).

5. Choose content format(s).

6. Measure engagement and success.

Sources: Gallup, Revive Social, Tiny Pulse, Arthur J. Gallagher & Co.

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION
SCORECARD

Communicating effectively with employees is consistently a top priority for businesses. Falling short in this area can make employees feel underappreciated, which contributes to low morale and decreased productivity. Now more than ever, technology makes it simple to communicate with your workforce. However, doing so effectively can still be challenging. Complete the scorecard below to see if you are doing everything to communicate effectively.

Instructions: Begin by answering the questions below. Each response will be given a numerical value depending on the answer. After completing the questions, total your score using the scale at the bottom of the page.

Yes: 0 points | **No:** 2 points | **Unsure:** 2 points

QUESTIONS	YES	NO	UNSURE	SCORE
1. Do you offer monthly newsletters on topics employees find interesting?	☐	☐	☐	
2. Do employees receive easy-to-understand descriptions of their benefits prior to open enrollment?	☐	☐	☐	
3. Are you reaching out to employees through methods besides email, like social media or mail-home flyers?	☐	☐	☐	
4. Does your organization hold in-person, all-staff meetings at least once a year?	☐	☐	☐	
5. Are your internal communications written so that everyone can easily understand them?	☐	☐	☐	
6. Are employees kept up to date on important news regarding the company, like mergers, executive-level structure changes or open positions?	☐	☐	☐	
7. When relaying important news, do you set aside time for employee questions and feedback?	☐	☐	☐	
8. Have you surveyed employees in the past two years about their preferred methods of communication?	☐	☐	☐	
9. Do employees receive praise in a semi-public forum, like a team meeting or an all-company email?	☐	☐	☐	
10. Are employee promotions announced to individuals outside of the immediate department?	☐	☐	☐	
TOTAL SCORE				

Low risk. Contact LHD Benefit Advisors to confirm: 0-6

Medium risk. Contact LHD Benefit Advisors today: 7-14

High risk. Contact LHD Benefit Advisors today: 15-20

CHECKLIST | EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Presented by LHD Benefit Advisors

Sixty percent of companies don't have a long-term strategy for their internal communication. Regardless of how large your organization is, it's critical to have a long-term plan for employee communication. The key to success is to be mindful of all communications across all levels of the organization—and find what's authentic and effective for both the organization and employees.

Use this checklist as a suggested step-by-step process of creating and managing a formal employee communication strategy. Components and the overall goal can also be implemented less formally at smaller organizations.

Planning	
Conduct an audit to understand the organizational structure and specific needs for communicating with employees, including: • Mission statement • Company values • Company culture • Strategic business goals	☐
Evaluate the need for a communication strategy (e.g., inform employees, improve employee engagement or restore employee morale).	☐
Identify communication stakeholders across multiple departments.	☐
Assign dedicated communication leaders to help unify messaging, deliver a seamless experience and provide a go-to contact for employees.	☐

Developing and Implementing	
Identify organizational updates or news to communicate.	☐
Ask the following questions about the content topic: • What is important? • Why is it important to employees? • What should employees do?	☐
Assess current content format and tailor to new format, if necessary.	☐

Consider available channels and identify the appropriate channel(s) for the topic.	☐
Identify and tweak tone, if necessary, to be transparent, honest and jargon-free.	☐
Ensure two-way communication so employees can provide feedback or ask follow-up questions.	☐
Pay attention to the delivery and timing of the communication.	☐
Ensure communication messaging is: • Compelling • Concise • Credible • Consistent	☐

Measuring and Evaluating

Identify key performance indicators (KPIs). Common KPIs include: • Reach • Engagement • Feedback • Turnover • Other behavioral outcomes • Organizational goals	☐
Set clear and trackable goals as a baseline for communication efforts.	☐
Create and deploy employee surveys to discover employee communication benchmarks.	☐
Evaluate communication performance and effectiveness based on KPIs.	☐
Identify errors, gaps, improvements or successes.	☐
Ensure employee feedback is addressed and those actions are shared with employees.	☐
Update or enhance communication efforts and tactics as necessary.	☐

Use this checklist as a guide when sharing company news or updates with employees. For assistance with employee communication, contact LHD Benefit Advisors.