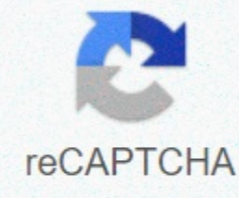




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# Internal communications plan purpose

Good internal communications makes good business sense. If your employees have issues communicating effectively, it will be difficult to have a highly-committed and well-performing workforce. Strong communication also builds a community and moves your company culture forward.The only way you do this is by creating an effective internal communication strategy.If you are looking to totally rock how your management team and employees use internal communications software, here are 20 internal communication ideas to get you started.1. Integrate video into your internal communication strategy.These days, it's almost expected that companies will deliver information through video. In fact, "93% of internal communication professionals believe that video has become essential," according to a report by Melcrum.However, many organizations still rely on lengthy emails to communicate with internal departments. Such organizations fail to realize the power that video has both inside and outside an organization.To keep your teams updated on new developments and changes within your company, you need to be engaging... and video is the perfect solution. Video is way more interactive and personable for your team than reading a long email. (And if you can't kick the email habit, check out this post: How to Get Your Employees to Read Your Emails.)If you are wondering how to integrate video into your internal communication strategy, consider some of the following:Online training and how-to videosWeekly or monthly company newslettersA presentation from your CEOEmployee contributions to boost moralCompany-wide meetingsImportant updates to company proceduresInterview your employees about a topicKeep videos short and punchy, make them conversational, record interviews, and use animations.You can easily create videos these days using the following tools:Snagit – (\$49.95) Capture video and screenshots from your computer screen.ScreenFlow – (\$99) Allows you to record the contents of your entire monitor while also capturing your video camera, iOS device, microphone and your computer audio.iMovie – (\$14.99) Easy to use video editing software for Apple Mac.2. Launch an internal social network.Prioritizing internal social networking into your internal communications strategy encourages people to connect with each other. It also helps your company search, source, identify, and consolidate employee skill sets.Take a step back and think about it: social media is so powerful that it revolutionized human behavior. So, there are tactics here that you can use to engage employees with their work. Deploying an internal social network is one way to incorporate social media features into your organization. Empower users to comment, like, and interact with colleagues and work-related content. Users also receive notifications and can view an activity stream of everything relevant in the intranet.Most employees are already active on social platforms, so implementing an internal social network will be easy. Ultimately though, the power and success of social media in your strategic communication plan will depend on the enthusiastic participation of everybody within the organization.3. Start an open door policy.Empowering your employees to have and share their opinions is one of the most effective ways to improve communication in the workplace. Encourage productive dialogue between managers and team members—make sure employees share their ideas and discuss issues when they arise. Don't forget to emphasize that no one will be targeted for sharing their personal opinions.You can implement this open door policy numerous ways. Use a forum in your intranet for employees to share suggestions and concerns. Make sure managers reach out to their teams. These communication ideas reduce office politics and gives employees a say in the organization. They're also a great way to show how you can motivate employees in your organization.4. Make internal collaboration tools fun.If you don't take pride in your company who else will? When you prioritize how your office or company intranet looks, employees will be more engaged. Consider an open workspace, where employees can easily collaborate and communicate with each other. Add your company logo, colors, and branding in your intranet to motivate your employees and make them feel connected to your organization. These are some easy internal communication ideas to increase productivity and overall happiness for every member in your organization.5. Set up a wiki for sharing and building a knowledge base.Wikis are excellent tools for documenting personal information, knowledge base articles, or anything pertaining to projects, tasks, and teams. These tools are great for information sharing, building a knowledge base, and for responding to queries from employees.Wikis are especially encouraged within an organization or departments that thrive on creativity and shared ownership. They establish platforms where everyone, including senior management, can search and locate contributions from the team.6. Deploy intranet software as part of your internal communication strategy.Intranets empower people with information and encourage two-way communication between employees and their company. They increase productivity and enhance internal communication with collaboration tools that help people work together; and social features that create dialogue.Executives and management can use intranet software to disseminate information, post company news, and connect the entire organization. Simultaneously, employees can communicate directly with management on the intranet and share their opinions, thoughts, and insights on published content. This type of digital workplace software enhances and encourages open communication, something that all organizations should strive to achieve.7. Establish and drive metrics.Which do you think is more likely to have a positive impact:a report that includes quarterly results, data, graphs, and growth numbers in order to encourage focus on a certain area, oran email that tells employees which direction they should be focusing in order to reach the company goalsThe answer is clear.By using metrics in reports, you are more likely to encourage growth. Adding visual representations that show internal growth trends enables teams to see where they can focus without even having to tell them to do it. Metrics speak louder than words and make your internal communications strategy more impactful.8. Create an employee-centric organization.These days, employee-centric environments are the way to go when running a business. The logic is pretty simple: if you take care of your employees, they take care of you. Instead of focusing on what your employees do for you, treat them as people. How can you connect on a personal level? How can you support their interests, even if it's outside the realms of their jobs? Interestingly, if you prioritize these elements that appear to be outside the scope of their jobs, employees will perform better.Employee-centrism has to be ingrained in your company culture and you must ditch the carrot and stick mentality. Dangling rewards or punishments narrows concentration and damages creativity and conceptual thinking required for many jobs of today. Instead, employees need autonomy and purpose to thrive ... and you can do this with a low budget. The core of your internal communication strategy should be valuing your employees and how you express that to everyone within the company. For more information, find Dan Pink's "The Puzzle of Motivation" session in our TED Talk post on communication.9. Communicate up and across.In most organizations, communication typically happens from the top down. Management teams often feel largely responsible for communicating necessary information and deliberating amongst themselves with little to no input from the employees.To implement effective change and make balanced decisions, consider a bottom-up business communication plan where employees can contribute their ideas and opinions ... and have these discussed openly by other employees and management. By involving the non-managerial team in decision making, it is likely to enhance collaboration and appreciation for what management is doing.How do you do this?Open up the lines of communication. When management communicates news, announcements, or updates, allow employees to respond. (Communication idea: enable comments and likes in your intranet software so employees can ask questions or leave comments on company posts.) Also, start forums or create surveys to involve your employees in corporate conversations.10. Be transparent with company goals and objectives.When goals are transparent, performance thrives. By telling everybody within the organization your goals, you are also helping them commit to pursuing those goals in their own way.Goals and objectives that are publicly available to your employees also help put meaning into metrics. Updating employees on your progress of achieving goals and objectives, with metrics, gives it a whole new meaning ... helping everybody see how their efforts are contributing to the goals. This is a powerful means of improving internal communications to help meet expectations.11. Check on staff regularly.Want to retain valued employees? Stay interviews are one of the most effective internal communication ideas to keep the people you want on your staff. Employees meet one-on-one with managers, HR personnel, or even your CEO to discuss what they like about their jobs and what needs improvement. Sometimes conducting a routine stay interview could be the solution to a problem you weren't fully aware of.If you want to prioritize your people, you need to talk to your people. And most importantly in a stay interview... you need to listen.12. Connect your organization through employee profiles.If your intranet supports employee profiles, use them! You'd be surprised how employee profiles can change your communication game. The beauty of this tool is that it boosts productivity and connectivity for every user.The average worker spends 20% of the workweek looking for internal information or tracking down colleagues who can help with a specific task, according to a McKinsey study. Imagine how this time could be spent elsewhere. Half of the solution is a strong document management system, but the other half is facilitating an easy way for staff to find each other. Employee profiles are an extensive staff directory that details each person—what they do, who they report to, professional projects, personal interests, etc. Members can find what they need and who they need with a couple clicks.13. Publish a monthly company newsletter.Publishing a monthly newsletter gives you an opportunity to reach your employees and increase awareness about your company, its products, and its services. This is especially important for new employees who need to get acquainted with your company's processes and procedures. A newsletter can also be an effective business communication tool for updating employees about recent developments and metrics.Since it's published once a month, it is likely that it will not be pushed aside as noise (spam) and will be an important communication tool. (But you still need to make decisions that ensure more people read it.)You could go through the trouble of having a paper newsletter designed, formatted, printed, and dispersed... or you could dedicate a blog on your company intranet to be the newsletter. If you go digital, your employees will always be able to access it... plus, as we discussed in point #9, you can collect comments and feedback as well.14. Avoid email when you can.There's another part to the McKinsey statistic that I shared in #10: The average worker spends 28% of the workweek managing emails.Woah. Everyone's experienced the wrath of unnecessary emails. Company announcements, customer emails, colleague emails, automated messages, Google Alerts, and many others clog our inboxes on a daily, even hourly, basis. Sometimes we're included in long threads that we don't need to be a part of. Your internal communication strategy should tackle this issue by avoiding emails when possible. Encourage managers to use collaboration tools to track and discuss projects. Colleagues can use direct messenger to send files. Department heads can use their space to send updates to their entire team. Leave inboxes as clean as possible so messages from customers or partners are never missed.15. Always communicate... even when times are hard.I'm sure you've heard the saying, "Treat others how you'd like to be treated." This is a valuable principle for a strong internal communication strategy. When determining how leadership shares company-wide news, or how teams work together, this golden rule considers every person in the situation. Particularly when your organization goes through inevitable changes—good or bad—you need to ask yourself, "If I was the receiver of this news, how would I like to be told? Who would I want to hear it from? What questions would I have?"The same questions apply to every aspect of your business communication plan. When you put time, thought, and care into how you deliver information to your staff, you create a supportive and trusting environment. Turnover decreases, engagement increases, and morale is at its highest.16. Use mobile tools.Companies with a highly effective internal communication strategy are 7X more likely to use leading-edge communication tools, according to one Weekdone.It's no secret that mobile devices have transformed how companies operate. Today, employees "out in the field", across different geographic locations and time zones, can communicate with work efficiently.Therefore, smartphones and tablets can also greatly improve your internal communication strategy. There are many apps available, like a mobile intranet, with push notifications, that allows employees to respond directly from their own device. This is not only convenient for them, but also keeps communication channels are open at all times for both the management and employees.17. Keep your teams organized.If your company lacks internal organization, you're going to run into issues inside and outside the office. Your departments, divisions, and/or teams need their own place to organize documents, people, and information—whether it's shared within that group or the entire company. A great internal communication idea is to have digital workspaces.With a Spaces feature in your intranet, you can designate a known spot for everyone to access. Need to find an HR document about benefits? No problem! Looking for a contract from your legal department to handoff to a customer? Go to the Legal space. Internal communication only works if everyone is communicating with each other.18. Create company traditions as part of your internal communication strategy.A positive side effect of a strong internal communication strategy is a connected staff. Not just with each other, but with your company values. One of the best ways to build a culture is by investing in it. Start company traditions—annual holiday parties, pizza lunches for birthdays, or celebrate your company's birthday. The motto "work hard, play hard" works if you put energy into celebrating your successes and people.Be sure to schedule these exclusive events on the company calendar for everyone to see.19. Provide everyone at your company with what they need.It may go without saying but it's important to provide your staff with what they need to do their jobs well. Old computers, outdated software, and difficult programs makes their lives harder, which hurts your business. If you're taking the time to improve your internal communication strategy, you want devices that drives these conversations. Take inventory on the tools your company uses, the platform(s) used to communicate and the software employees use to do their jobs. Do they work well? Are they slow or difficult to use? Can anyone in your organization use them with little problem? Every device and software in your organization should be quick and easy to manage for anyone.20. Always show deserved gratitude.Appreciating your members requires very little effort and can generate the most morale. Therefore, your internal communication strategy should promote employee recognition when they do great work. When a team member excels on a project, send a thoughtful message, create a newsletter about employee successes, or send a badge via your intranet. You want your employees to know that you see their hard work while reinforcing the purpose their contributions have for the company and the people they serve.In conclusion.The people inside your organization are the engines that move your company forward... and unless they are communicating effectively, your teams will have difficulties reaching their fullest potential. Try some of the preceding 20 internal communication ideas in your business and see what works best. When you prioritize your internal communication strategy, you will reap the benefits of a booming, well-performing workforce. what is the purpose of internal communications. what is an internal communication plan. how to write an internal communications plan

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