Communication Strategy
Agenda

• Communication Process
• Change Communication
• Influencing Stakeholders
• Designing a Communication Strategy
From personal experience, we all know that change creates **anxiety** and **fear**. The current state has tremendous holding power, and the possibility of losing what we have grown accustomed to (and comfortable with) creates worry and anxiety. For many employees, the future state of workplace changes is often unknown or ill-defined, and this uncertainty creates fear about what lies ahead.
Fears

We all have four fears. They are:

- Fear of failure
- Fear of humiliation or embarrassment
- Fear of losing power or position
- Fear of rejection
These physical and emotional reactions are powerful enough by themselves to create resistance to change. It is likely that each of us have experienced these reactions in our own lives, whether at work or at home. But there is more to resistance than our emotional response. From a change management perspective, we must examine the other drivers that influence an employee’s resistance to change.
A good place to start is the nature of the change itself and how this change is impacting the employee:

“Were they involved with designing the change?”
“Do they know why the change is being made?”
“Do they believe that the reasons for making the change are valid?”
“How will the change impact them and their personal situation?”
Communication Process
### Communication Process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>• Why and What</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Message</td>
<td>• Information to be communicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encoding</td>
<td>• Ability to convey information clearly and simply and eliminate sources of confusion. A key part of this is knowing your audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel</td>
<td>• Verbal, Written, Meetings</td>
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</table>
Communication Process

Decoding
- Listen actively

Receiver
- Individual members of audience and their understanding of message.

Feedback
- Close attention

Context
- The situation in which message is delivered
Change Communication

Clear communication depends on:

▪ Clear purposes
▪ Thorough awareness of the stakeholder
▪ Careful attention to the message
▪ Well-defined consequences
Change Communication Basic #1

Establish your **objectives**.

Communication without an objective is like driving without a destination.

People will want to ride in your car if you’ve proven you know where you’re going and how to get there.
Positive Objectives

- To be effective, objectives should be positive.
- Think about what you want to do, rather than what you don’t want to do.
Use of Verbs

▪ When defining objectives, it’s most useful to state them in terms of verbs which helps to make communication dynamic and positive.
Abstract  Physical

To Explain  To invite participation
To announce  To reveal
Abstract

To Tell

Physical

To Rally

To Soothe
Change Communication Basic #2

Understanding your stakeholder

This determines

• How you will communicate
• The words you will choose
• The tone you will take
Examples:

• Child as compared to an adult.

• Boss as opposed to your employees.

• Large group than you do to a small group,

• Friends as compared to strangers.
Influencing Stakeholders

- What do I want the stakeholder to understand?
- What do I want them to feel?
- What do I want them to believe?
- Finally, what do I want them to do?
What is the stakeholder’s knowledge of the technology?

What may be the points of resistance or negative perception that I need to overcome?

Who is the primary stakeholder – the person most critical to my goals?
For each question, follow the answer with a statement that begins with “Therefore, I will…”

Tip: Have a strategy based on your stakeholder and situation.
Change Communication Basic # 3

Develop and use good technique. Technique is what allows you to successfully execute your plan.
Now comes the question, can you do it?

Do you have the skills?

Can you control the ball and get it where you want it?

That’s technique. It takes a little practice.
Change Communication Basic # 4

Call to action.

Helps your stakeholder process your information.

Reminds them of key points.

Suggests how they should feel about your message.

Tells them what to do next.
Call to Action – Who, What, When

- Brings your ideas to life.
- Translates into stakeholder involvement.
- Gives people something concrete to take away.
- Sets a challenge.
- Ends with a combination of optimism and urgency.
Designing a communication strategy

Communication Strategy

- Communication Diagnosis
- Prepare Communication Plan & Strategy Framework
- Implement & Manage
- Measure Impact & Gather Feedback
- Review & Adjust

Review & Adjust

Measure Impact & Gather Feedback

Implement & Manage

Prepare Communication Plan & Strategy Framework

Communication Diagnosis
Developing a Communication Strategy

Designing a communication strategy as a part of the diagnosis:

- What worked well in the organisation before?
- What worked well in other organisations in similar situations?
- What role did communications play in change history, failed initiatives etc.? Based on lessons learnt, what would work going forward?
- Assess the typical channels for communication and what is and is not possible when it comes to using hi-tech methods of communication.

Information can be gathered via a communications audit survey, interviews and focus groups.
Prepare Communication Plan

Activities:

• Define the aim, objectives and core elements of communication
• Develop key messages to be communicated
• Determine activities and channels of communication
• Define the measures of success
• Outline potential issues and risks
Developing a Communication Strategy

Designing a communication strategy

The chart below provides examples of the various ‘channels’ of communication that can be deployed to engage and inform stakeholders.
All the inputs gathered in the Communication Diagnosis and Planning phase is used as input to develop a comprehensive Communication Strategy Framework. The Framework includes things like:

- Communication objectives;
- Key messages;
- Roles and responsibilities;
- Guiding principles;
- Timings;
- Channels and media,
- Risks and Success measures
Developing a Communication Strategy

Following provides an overview of communication plan/strategy for e-Governance implementation (Illustrative)

### Implement & Manage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Purpose of this document</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The purpose of this document is to provide a set of guiding principles for communication…</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Key objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The main objectives of the strategy are to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create an understanding of…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Continue to develop…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improve…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Enhance value from…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Help to establish…</td>
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<tr>
<th>3. Success measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The impact of the communication strategy may be measured by awareness created. While this may not be enough to measure exactly the success, it will provide the way ahead.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Communication principles</th>
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<tr>
<td>Honest, open, face-to-face when more appropriate, timely and relevant etc.</td>
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</table>
Developing a Communication Strategy

Designing a communication strategy

5. Communication style
Jargon-free, simple, lively and engaging etc.

6. Stakeholders and audiences
- Groups
- Key individuals
- “External” stakeholders – Citizens

7. Key themes and messages
We’re reorganizing our business to play to our strengths around innovation and responding to our clients’ needs.
- This will mean some changes to the way we are structured, our processes and the way we liaise with our clients and suppliers.
- We want to make sure this is a positive change for all of our staff – and we will be making sure you have all of the support and training you need along the way. …etc. etc.

8. Deliverables
Weekly newsletter, new website for the change programme, training manuals, road shows across all key sites, etc.

9. Channels, vehicles and media
Webzine, face-to-face, road shows, town halls (particularly where there is a personal impact or role change) etc.
## Developing a Communication Strategy

### Designing a communication strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. Enablers and barriers to effective communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email is over-used in the organisation, only management have access to the intranet, 20% of staff are on field.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>11. Resources and budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify project team, and the cost for each team member to deliver each phase/activity in the project. Also identify other resources needed, e.g. external design/print agency, translators.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Roles and responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outline project sponsors, key roles impacting the Communication work stream</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Implement & Manage

- Installing or building and testing any communications technology components
- Preparing and agreeing project communications
- Delivering project communications
- Updating the Communication Plan and the Communication Strategy Matrix
- Collecting project communications feedback and tracking performance measures
Measure Impact and Gather Feedback

- Feedback is gathered from various stakeholders using multiple mechanisms.
- Feedback is gathered to ensure stakeholders are complying to the change plan.
- It also helps in measuring change in the stakeholder’s acceptance level of the initiative.
Incorporating feedback mechanisms from pilot phase/communications to make the process effective and inline with requirements on ground.

• Define the feedback mechanisms needed, including communication evaluation survey;

• Run periodic focus groups;

• Work with the local change agents within the Change Network etc, for updating/refining the communications plan;

• Develop supporting tools/guidance material for obtaining feedback from stakeholder groups

• Use management information to improve Communication