



## ○ 12 top tips for internal communications

Good internal communications are vital for a healthy organisation. If done well, the way you communicate with your staff can be a key driver of improved business performance.

WK Consulting works closely with social housing providers to ensure that their internal communications meet their business objectives and help them cope with rapid change. Here are a few of the things we've learned.

- 1** **Give your communications a purpose in life**

Everything you do should be tied to your business objectives and business plan. Internal communications is no exception. Take time to ensure that your internal communications programme supports your business goals.
- 2** **A whisper can be better than a shout**

There are any number of communication methods you can use. Look at them all and assess what will work best for your organisation. Be careful not to stick to old methods because 'that's what we've done' or jump on new fads just because they're in fashion.
- 3** **You may like the sound of your own voice, but...**

The days of one-way, top-down communications have gone forever. The days of vertical two-way communications - announcement then feedback - are disappearing. Today, internal communications is an on-going conversation where listening is just as important.
- 4** **It's a game everyone can play...**

The communications department doesn't do communications. Everyone does communications. It's just that some people have more formal roles - and they might not be so comfortable communicating. Identify who they are and give them some support.
- 5** **...So don't forget the line manager**

In the past, most internal communications will have gone through the line manager. That's likely not the case today - and they're probably quite happy about it. But, the line manager sets the tone for their staff. They have to be just as engaged in the process.
- 6** **I know something you don't know**

The secret to good internal communications is to be as open, honest and transparent as possible. Of course, there will be times that you won't be able to talk about everything you have planned. But, keep people informed and tell them as soon as you can.
- 7** **Don't be two-faced, ever**

Ensure that your communications are always consistent. You've identified the different audiences you need to speak to, it's attractive to tailor your message. Be careful. Tell one person one thing and another something else and you'll have trouble ahead.
- 8** **Give me the worst, doctor**

When someone says 'it's all good' you naturally think 'oh no it isn't'. People know there are times when the news will be bad. They accept that. What they won't accept is being excluded or feeling that there are things they are not being told. Tell them. Involve them.
- 9** **If you've nothing to say, say nothing**

Internal communications is like any other form of communications. Too much simply becomes noise. Today, we are very adept at filtering out noise. Good communication is concise, clear and meaningful. That's what will have impact.
- 10** **The only thing 'run up the flagpole' should be a flag**

If you're in the middle of 'facilitating a synergy', please stop and try to explain - in plain English - what you're actually doing. Avoid buzzword bingo. Your staff are real people. They'll appreciate being spoken to in a language they can actually understand.
- 11** **You need to know you are that good**

Audit, measure and evaluate. Internal communications is a strategic business function and it should be handled as such. You need to know that what you're doing is correct and effective. There really is only one way to achieve that.
- 12** **So, you think you've finished?**

You know when you've had a really hard day at work. You come home, exchange brief pleasantries with your loved ones and then get to lose yourself for a while in a good book or film. Internal communications isn't like that!

If you'd like to discuss your internal communications requirements, please call Anita on 01732 749 422 or you can email us at [info@wkconsulting.co.uk](mailto:info@wkconsulting.co.uk).