

Change Management Imperatives

Here are some must-do's for communicating successfully about major organizational changes.

Tell the Truth

Be clear and forthright about exactly what's happening. Blurriness and hedging can undermine trust and dilute the support we need to embed change. Come clean with the facts and the rationale for the change.

Make the Case

There's a reason we're making these changes. Don't be shy about conveying it. Employees and other key audiences need to know our rationale ... even if they do not agree with it. A good case will maximize support and limit resistance.

Be Consistent

Get a foundational FAQ and key facts and messages in place early and make sure key managers understand them. Don't suffer any wildcat messages, even if they're accurate. Consistency in look is important, too.

Use Plain English

Gobbledygook, bureaucratese and other forms of poor language come off as fudging or hiding. We want to communicate benefits clearly and sharply, even if employees are not used to it, in order to nurture understanding and acceptance.

Measure and Monitor

Surveys that measure awareness and understanding are easy. Knowing where the needle rests is important to moving it. Allow for comments. Employees and others appreciate the chance to add input.

Make it Fun

Even if the subject matter is dry, the communication can add spark. One client even let us do a comic strip that advanced a major change initiative by, in part, lampooning the as-is environment.