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LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION TOOL

Planning Your Approach to Leader Buy-In



This tool will help you create a practical plan to gain a leader's support for communicating about an important business or people issue. A completed example is included below this template.

Think about a leader whose communication could help solve a current business or people issue. Keep that person and issue in mind as you work through the questions to finish with a practical and specific approach.

01 **What issue should the leader address that would benefit from better communication?**

Identify a current priority, problem, or decision where communication could make a difference.

02 **What is keeping this leader from communicating, or communicating more effectively, with employees?**

Consider factors such as their level of confidence, past experience, competing priorities, limited time, and doubts about the value of communication. Distinguish what you know definitively from what you're assuming.

03 **What might get this leader on board?**

Consider what matters most to them: a particular business problem, how their employees view them, how much of their time will be required, data that illustrates the specific need, or encouragement from a respected peer.

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04 **What evidence or insights do you have that show the need for communication, and what are you missing?**

Identify what you already have: for example, employee feedback, recurring questions, survey findings, or signs of confusion affecting execution. Then identify any gaps you need to fill.

05 **What are initial manageable actions you could ask the leader to take, and how will you help them succeed?**

Specify the action and the insights, preparation, or support you'll provide.

My next move and when I'll take it:

What would show that these actions made a difference?

EXAMPLE
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Think about a leader whose communication could help solve a current business or people issue. Keep that person and issue in mind as you work through the questions so you finish with a specific approach you can put into practice.

01 What issue should the leader address that would benefit from better communication?

The company has acquired another business, and successful integration depends on this leader's team integrating the new employees effectively. Confusion and lack of alignment are getting in the way, putting key goals at risk.

02 What is keeping this leader from communicating, or communicating more effectively, with employees?

The leader is focused on the operational side of the integration and assumes managers are handling employee communication. They may not realize how much confusion exists, how little information managers are getting, or how much employees need to hear directly from them. I need to understand whether the leader recognizes the gaps in what managers know and employees understand, then share information that might convince them of the value of direct communication.

03 What might get this leader on board?

This leader is highly data driven. Clear evidence showing gaps in employee understanding, alignment, and support for the integration will help illustrate that the lack of communication is putting the operational goals at risk.

04 What evidence or insights do you have that show the need for communication, and what are you missing?

You have results from a recent employee pulse survey showing that only a third of employees understand what they need to do and why. A short manager survey could further illustrate the gaps in understanding and the potential impact of those gaps. This could strengthen the case for this leader to communicate directly with both audiences.

05 What are initial manageable actions you could ask the leader to take, and how will you help them succeed?

Ask the leader to deliver a short manager briefing, followed by a 30-minute employee Q&A on integration priorities and immediate next steps.

Use the manager briefing to share integration priorities and goals, answer questions, and surface employee concerns. Use those insights, along with pulse survey feedback and frontline observations, to prepare your leader for the employee Q&A. Provide key messages, anticipated questions, and draft responses. After the Q&A, share a brief recap with employees through existing team channels.

My next move, and when I'll take it:

Meet with the leader this week to share the survey findings, recommend the communication approach, get buy-in, and discuss timing.

What would show that these actions made a difference?

Repeat the relevant questions from the original employee pulse survey to see whether more employees understand what they need to do and why. Ask managers what questions or confusion remains. Share the findings with the leader and recommend any follow-up.

ROI Communication is a 100% employee-owned strategic internal communication and employee engagement firm that helps large, complex organizations connect business priorities to the employees who bring them to life.

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