



International  
**Wellbeing** Insights  
People, Culture & Wellbeing

## MODULE 6:

# MAINTAINING

# EFFECTIVE

# COMMUNICATION



# Maintaining Effective Communication

By the end of this module you will: →

- 👍 Understand why clear and open channels of communication are important.
- 👍 Understand why it is important to clearly communicate a wellbeing strategy.
- 👍 Learn how to improve communication across the organisation.

Having carefully constructed your wellbeing strategy with everything ready to be implemented, you now need to let the employees know what's available to them.

**Communication of your wellbeing strategy is key; a well-constructed wellbeing programme means nothing if employees are not aware of it.**

One of the first issues to address when it comes to informing employees on the benefits available is what media to use. There is a plethora of options available to the modern-day business, including email, meetings, social media, podcasts and much more. Benefex discovered that there is a positive correlation between the amount of communication methods used and the uptake of employee benefits. However, it is also important to think about the forms of communication that best suit your workforce.

- Are they always sat at desks on computers?
- Are they constantly on their feet doing manual labour?

Consider how your employees are most likely to get the information. Furthermore, ask the employees how best they think they can be communicated with. The people who are going to be on the receiving end of this are the employees, therefore they will know best how they function. Moreover, consulting employees on this matter can add to that culture of care with employees feeling as though they are being considered and listened to.

**Branding is another thing to consider when coming up with how to communicate your wellbeing strategy.**

The recognisability of a wellbeing strategy can dramatically improve how well the employees remember it. Think about creating a name, logo, and slogan that: impacts on the employees, conveys the philosophy of the strategy, and can be put on all documents and resources relating to the wellbeing strategy.

## Maintaining Effective Communication

Finally, what you are communicating and how frequently you need to convey it. There are key messages that should be put across when communicating the wellbeing strategy.

First is the organisational goals of the strategy, inform the employees as to what they want to see as a result of the strategy so that everybody can work towards it. Then, how reaching these goals benefit on an organisational and employee level; it's important for employees to know why they're trying to achieve these goals and what's in it for them. Very importantly, what the strategy consists of and what is available to them – a wellbeing strategy is no good if no one knows what they can do. Finally, how employees can go about signing up for different initiatives. These messages cannot simply be given on a one-off occasion, in order to keep awareness at high levels and to increase chances of uptake then communication needs to be consistent. Some forms of communication can be ever-present such as posters and leaflets but other forms such as meetings can happen on a regular basis.

**It is important to keep employees regularly informed of any changes to the initiatives as well as kept up to date on the progress the wellbeing strategy is having for the organisation and for individual employees.**

## Practical Solutions

	Communication	Benefits
Digital	<b>Emails/Texts</b>	They may seem over-played, but emails can be effective ways of quickly getting messages to a large number of people. Plus, with the rise of smartphones emails are much easier to receive. On top of this, text messages can be utilised to get small, quick messages out.
	<b>Digital Banners</b>	Digital banners can be used as constant reminders for people who use a computer a lot. When an employee turns on their laptop, as opposed to having to search for it, they can be informed almost immediately of whatever they need to know about their wellbeing strategy.
	<b>Intranet/Internal Social Media</b>	An organisation's intranet is a great tool to spread the message of wellbeing. Here all sorts of information can be uploaded: what initiatives are available, a personalised information page based on the initiatives an employee is signed up to, success story videos (video has been shown to a popular communication media amongst employees), and much more.
Peer-to-Peer	<b>'Wellbeing Champions'</b>	Having volunteers outside of HR from each area of the organisation as 'Wellbeing Champions' can help improve the spread of the human-factor of wellbeing. The Champions can help in keeping the employees in their area up-to-date, answer any questions they may have, and report back to the team leading up the programme.
	<b>Team Huddles</b>	Sometimes it can be hard to get all the employees in one place, plus there is no guarantee that all employees will see their emails or read the posters. Having regular face-to-face meetings means everyone can be informed equally as well giving them the opportunity to ask questions and voice their opinions.
	<b>Success Stories</b>	Research has shown that employees like to receive information from other employees. Whilst a 'Wellbeing Champions' initiative can help with this, hearing a success story relating to the wellbeing strategy from the person it affected can have a big impact in highlighting the usefulness of having one and increase the likelihood of uptake.

## Practical Solutions

Environmental	Communication	Benefits
	<b>Posters</b>	Posters may seem rather “old-hat”, but with the upsurge of technology the old techniques can be rather refreshing. This can particularly be the case where a person’s job does not rely on technology. For example, someone who does manual labour for a living may be more likely to see a poster in the break room rather than an email.
	<b>Branded Pocket Folders</b>	Having pocket folders branded with the wellbeing strategy brand can help people easily find the important wellbeing-related documents they need. They can be regularly updated and placed across much of the organisation (even toilets) to ensure widespread coverage.
	<b>Small Reminders</b>	Small little postcards or placards can be placed all over the organisation (particularly places with a lot of desks) to remind employees of wellbeing strategy. They can include examples of the initiatives available, how to get more information and sign up, as well as little tips on things like staying active and relieving stress.
	<b>Calendars</b>	Calendars with the various events available to the employees can be placed around the workplace. This can help keep the employees informed of what’s on and when it is. They can also be colour coded to indicate what the event aims to address, such as physical health, mental health, work-based skills, and so on.

## Case Studies



Virgin Trains rolled out company smartphones for all employees to use. The purpose of this was to increase the level of communication between senior members and employees. They then created an internal app store where people could access a variety of apps, each designed to deliver specific information and guidance. This form of digital communication works well for a workforce that is almost constantly on the go. What's more is they are using this technology to measure employee happiness with real-time pulse checks.

<http://www.synergycreative.co.uk/latest-articles/the-10-best-internal-communications-case-studies-of-2017>



Royal London understands the importance human contact can play in engaging employees. In order to get the best out of them, they redesigned the way in which they talked to and received feedback from their employees. They created a cross-functional volunteer team with members from every area and level of the organisation. In doing this, they were able to communicate with their workforce as well giving them a voice. It also led to several employee recommendations being approved.



When creating their new corporate strategy, the British Red Cross knew that they needed the communication to be simple and for all staff to be involved from the very beginning. They did this by making what would be a 150 page document into much more palatable formats, including posters, videos, and small training sessions. By turning their strategy into more engaging medias, 96% of the staff were aware of the goals and 94% understood how they could contribute to them.

## Expert Opinions

“In any publication repetition of keywords allows for emphasis of less tangible assets.”

Jane Davison, School of Management, Royal Holloway, University of London

“Employees have come to expect that their employer will provide regular updates, have information when and how they need it. And, in many cases, people expect the technology in the workplace as sophisticated and easy to use as the technology used at home. No easy task for companies with employees working on-site, remote, around the world, and who speak many different languages and represent many different cultures.

Internal Communications teams have to raise the bar on how to communicate with employees given all these variables at play.”

David Grossman, Speaker and Adviser to Fortune 500 Leaders

“With the workplace populated with everyone from baby boomers to millennials, understanding the behaviors, norms, characteristics, and styles of each group is essential for effective communication. Everyone must be aware of generational stereotypes about their co-workers and examine their preconceived biases, judgements, and assumptions.”

<https://emplo.com/blog/biggest-internal-communication-challenges#.W2wusdJKjIU>

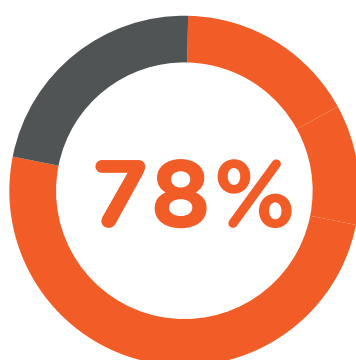
Arnold Sanow, Speaker and Consultant in Business, Communications, and People Skills

## Fun Facts:

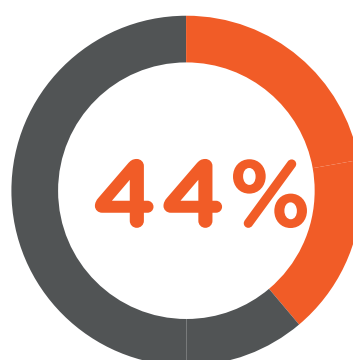


### Poor Communication

is resulting in lack of awareness of the benefits available leading to: lower levels of satisfaction and higher rates of absence. This **costs a typical business with 1,000 employees £470,000 more a year** than a business with similar benefits that has good communications in place. <sup>1</sup>



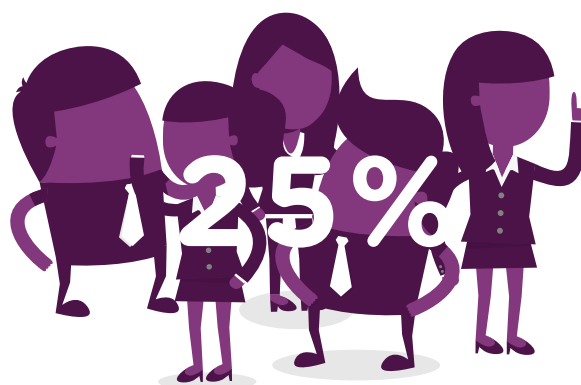
of people who text wish they could have a **text conversation** with a business. <sup>2</sup>



of employees want a **wider adoption of internal communication tools**. <sup>2</sup>

According to a study performed by Watson Wyatt, businesses with effective communication practices were **more than 50% more likely** to report employee turnover levels below the industry average. <sup>2</sup>

Productivity improves by up to



in organisations with connected employees. <sup>2</sup>

Sources:

<sup>1</sup>[https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/234061/file-2369180722-pdf/Module\\_3\\_communicating\\_your\\_wellbeing\\_strategy.pdf?t=1529951655506](https://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/234061/file-2369180722-pdf/Module_3_communicating_your_wellbeing_strategy.pdf?t=1529951655506)

<sup>2</sup><https://www.bluesource.co.uk/knowledge-hub/20-amazing-stats-business-communications/>



## Ask Yourself...



- Does your organisation currently maintain constant communication with its employees?
- How aware are your employees of their wellbeing programme and the benefits available?
- Is your communication strategy tailored to suit your workforce?
- What can be done to improve awareness of the wellbeing strategy?

## Exercise One:

Draw up a mock form of information-giving media that you feel is most appropriate and applicable to your company/organisation. For example, this could be an email, poster, leaflet, or newsletter. Remember to include all of the information you think is relevant to your audience.

## Exercise Two:

Think about the best ways to communicate with different types of workers:

Job	Communication	Why?
<b>Sedentary occupation</b> (Their work involves spending most of the time sitting e.g. in an office)		
<b>Standing occupation</b> (Their work involves spending most of the time standing or walking but no intense physical effort is required e.g. a shop assistant)		
<b>Physical work</b> (Their work involves some physical effort e.g. plumber, cleaner)		
<b>Heavy manual work</b> (Their work involves vigorous physical activity e.g. a bricklayer)		

## Useful Links/Resources

SimplyHealth provide a factsheet and highlight the type of services they offer when it comes to communicating employee wellbeing initiatives:

**[https://www.simplyhealth.co.uk/shcore/sh/content/pdfs/co\\_communications\\_plan.pdf](https://www.simplyhealth.co.uk/shcore/sh/content/pdfs/co_communications_plan.pdf)**

The NHS has created a document that informs on how to effectively communicate a health and wellbeing strategy:

**<http://www.nhsemployers.org/-/media/Employers/Publications/Health-and-wellbeing-communications-guide.pdf>**

Do not just use emails to communicate with staff; The Stress Management Society has written an article on the reliance of technology and how it can contribute to stress and is not always effective:

**<http://www.stress.org.uk/have-you-ever-felt-overwhelmed-by-technology/>**



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