

Internal Communications Plan: 9-Step Checklist

Step 1: Define Objectives

Purpose: Identify what the plan is meant to achieve--inform, engage, motivate, or manage change.

Checklist:

- Meet with stakeholders to understand communication needs.
- Align objectives with broader organizational goals.

Example: Improve employee understanding of the company's new hybrid work policy by 90% within two months.

Step 2: Identify Key Audiences

Purpose: Tailor messages to the specific needs and roles of different groups within the organization.

Checklist:

- Segment audiences (e.g., executives, managers, frontline employees, remote workers).
- Determine their communication preferences and challenges.

Example: Use visual dashboards for warehouse staff and detailed FAQs for HR teams.

Step 3: Assess the Current Communication Environment

Purpose: Understand existing communication tools, practices, and pain points.

Checklist:

- Conduct surveys or focus groups.
- Audit existing communication materials and channels.

Example: Survey results show employees ignore monthly newsletters but prefer short weekly updates on Slack.

Step 4: Develop Core Messages

Purpose: Ensure consistency and clarity across all channels and departments.

Checklist:

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- Write clear, jargon-free messages.
- Include the 'why' behind decisions to build transparency.

Example: The new scheduling software is being introduced to simplify shift changes and reduce scheduling errors.

Step 5: Select Appropriate Channels

Purpose: Deliver messages in ways that are accessible and engaging for each audience.

Checklist:

- Match message types to channels (e.g., policy updates via email, culture stories via video).
- Avoid over-reliance on one medium.

Example: Use town halls for leadership updates, intranet for document access, and chat apps for team collaboration.

Step 6: Assign Roles and Responsibilities

Purpose: Clarify who creates, approves, distributes, and monitors each message.

Checklist:

- Establish a content calendar.
- Delegate tasks to communications staff, HR, and department leaders.

Example: Corporate comms drafts updates; HR reviews; team leads share during weekly huddles.

Step 7: Create a Feedback Mechanism

Purpose: Measure message effectiveness and foster two-way communication.

Checklist:

- Include surveys, anonymous Q&A tools, or open forums.
- Encourage employees to ask questions or offer input.

Example: Include a 'Was this update helpful?' poll at the end of internal emails.

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Step 8: Monitor and Measure Outcomes

Purpose: Track whether communication objectives are being met and adjust if necessary.

Checklist:

- Define metrics (e.g., email open rates, intranet clicks, sentiment analysis).
- Conduct follow-up interviews or surveys.

Example: After a rebrand rollout, measure how many employees can correctly articulate the new brand values.

Step 9: Review and Refine the Plan

Purpose: Continuously improve communication effectiveness based on feedback and results.

Checklist:

- Set quarterly or biannual plan reviews.
- Analyze data and revise strategies accordingly.

Example: Shift from long-form newsletters to micro-updates if engagement is dropping.
