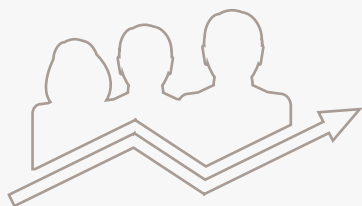


FOUR

Best Practices to Get the Most from Your Communications



1 Increase the value of messages with leadership's voice. In all of the discovery we've done with our clients, employees say they want to hear more from leadership. When leadership shares information, they are imparting more than just words. Leadership is also telling employees they are important and valued by taking the time to loop them in. Employees say they like to hear about vision and strategy from leadership, and then they like their management to break it down for their region / location and function / department.



2 Build trust with simple and straightforward communications. All of our clients – from the medical to the hospitality to the manufacturing industries – agree that short, direct communications are key to sharing information efficiently and effectively. Simple communications remove roadblocks to innovation and creativity because employees don't have to spend a lot of time figuring out what they are being told or asked. Plus, straightforward communications help to build cultures of trust and transparency.



3 Set expectations with clearly defined and consistently used vehicles. A lot of information is important – it's just that some of it needs action now, some of it needs long-term attention and some simply provides context. Different vehicles are good for helping employees know where they need to focus their attention first. Spark develops strategies to ensure there are vehicles for communicating news as it happens and longer-term visions and business plans.



4 Prevent information overload by targeting communications. One way to keep communications from getting overwhelming is to target them to the employees who need it. Intranets with targeted web parts and simple navigation, e-newsletters and e-alerts can be instrumental in sharing corporate, global, local and office news and resources.