

1. Know your objective

What is the purpose of your internal communications programme? At its most effective, it can motivate your people, create a sense of belonging and improve productivity. It can have a negative effect if there is no clear objective. Know what you want to achieve and focus on this at all times.

2. Include everyone in your organisation

Include people at every level to encourage involvement throughout your organisation and prevent damaging divisions from arising.

3. Be open and honest

Use all your communications channels in an open and honest way to gain the trust and respect of your people. Without credibility, a communications programme will waste your time and money.

4. Give your people what they want

Make your communications useful and enjoyable. Many people want to find out what is happening in the organisation and hear about their colleagues. This also attracts them to participate more in the running of your business.

5. Use the widest mix of media

Printed newsletters, intranets, emails, noticeboards, employee briefings – all are effective employee communications vehicles. Ask your people which they prefer, and, depending on your budget, create the widest mix requested.

6. Give your commitment

Commit yourself to producing and distributing internal communications on schedule to show how important they are. Ensure all communications are consistent and update intranets and noticeboards with current information.

7. Bring good and bad news

Don't be afraid to tell bad news; suppressing it is not the best policy. When sensitive commercial or personal information cannot be distributed to everyone – be honest about this.