

# Core Plan 2: Communications

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## MANAGE CHANGE



As the executive sponsor, determining how to best communicate change is a critical first step in managing change in your organization. Use this tool as an audit for your current change management activities or as a guide as you plan for new initiatives and projects.

### 1. SELECT AND PREPARE THE RIGHT LEADERS TO DELIVER COMMUNICATIONS.

Research shows that employees prefer to hear messages from primarily two groups: top executives and immediate supervisors. It is important to thoughtfully form a coalition of the right leaders who will help you champion the change message and plan an effective communication delivery sequence. (It is strongly recommended to not have the project team simply send out change communication because they are typically more focused on the “great new idea” rather than the “why” and impact.)

### 2. ADDRESS THE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS FIRST IN FACE-TO-FACE COMMUNICATIONS.

Face-to-face communication is identified as the most effective form of communication and messaging about the change must resonate with those affected. To gain their support, provide a compelling case for why the change is occurring, how they will be better off, and what they get out of engaging in the change. Address these questions first:

- Why is this change happening?
- What is the risk of not changing?
- What’s in it for me?

### 3. IDENTIFY ALL AUDIENCES AND FIND EFFECTIVE WAYS TO REPEAT KEY MESSAGES.

Who needs to hear this message of change? Be certain to identify all audiences that need to be communicated with and remember that the first time a change is announced, people often wonder how it directly impacts them and they often miss details of the change itself. A holistic, creative communication plan uses numerous channels to repeat key messages and ensures that what you want to communicate is heard. Be creative in how you communicate and share messages more often than you think you need to. Some suggested channels are newsletters, presentations, brainstorming workshops, lunch & learns, screen saver messages, and one-on-one conversations.

#### 4. CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION AND ASSESS COMMUNICATION EFFECTIVENESS.

Craft a plan for two-way communication to give people the opportunity to share their concerns, provide feedback and ask questions. Two-way communication also helps to create buy-in, provide real-time answers, and ensure correct interpretation of the messaging. Change communications cannot be viewed as “one and done” but must be assessed and refined as needed.

### REFLECTION

1. Who are the leaders in your organization that have demonstrated the skill of effectively communicating challenging content?  
Click or tap here to enter text.
2. What is the core messaging of the change that needs to be communicated?  
Click or tap here to enter text.
3. Why is the change necessary and what is the risk of not changing?  
Click or tap here to enter text.
4. What audiences need to hear the change message?
  - Internal - Click or tap here to enter text.
  - External - Click or tap here to enter text.
5. What are the benefits of the change (at each level) of those impacted by it?  
Click or tap here to enter text.
6. What two-way communication vehicles will you implement to ensure opportunities for questions, feedback, and clarification?  
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7. What should the cadence of communications be and who should deliver?  
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