

Overcoming Roadblocks to Effective Communication



"We know that communication is a problem, but the company is not going to discuss it with the employees."



Inform vs. Communicate

Information is simply sharing the facts, communication implies a two-way dialogue.

- Don't just hear, LISTEN!
- Transparency and Accountability
- Clarity of mission and message



“What if, and I know this sounds kooky, we communicated with the employees.”



Information Saturation

Too many messages - do you even know what you're trying to communicate?

- Don't get overwhelmed and pass that feeling on to employees
- Too many/mixed messages, too many initiatives with overlapping agendas yet no follow up and/or follow through
- Focus on limited number of things at a time
- Be brief, specific, consistent, and to the point



Ignoring Your Audience

Know who you're communicating with and how they want to receive that communication.

- Differences in age, culture, education, etc.
- Delivery method depends on the message.
- Email, text, video, intranet, blog, social media, old-school, etc.
- Take a look at yourself - how do you want to be communicated with? What do you respond to?



Technology

Allows for ease and variety of communication but can also cause complacency.

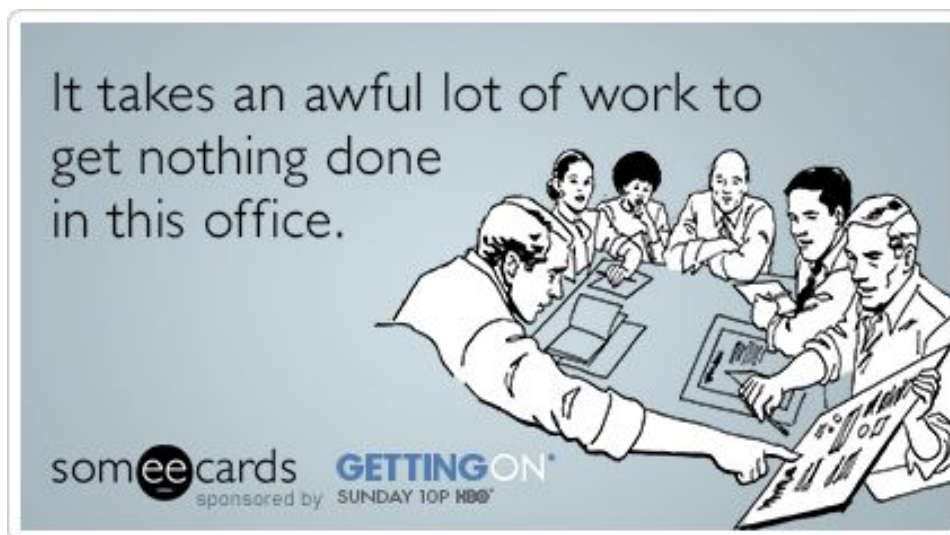
- Assess your options (email, texts, video, paper, intranet, blogs, social media)
- Email vs. face-to-face vs. phone call.
- Jabber, yammer, gmail hangouts.
- Stay ahead of the curve.
- Training – don't just throw a new thing at people and expect them to know it and/or learn it on their own.



Lack of Leadership

Wishy washy + no clear decisions
+ rules don't apply to "us" = failure

- Rumors become truths if the truth is never presented
- Do as I say not as I do
- Top leadership needs to openly support efforts and help spread the word – best ambassadors





No Plan/Strategy

If you don't even know what you're doing, how can you expect employees to buy into it?

- Feedback is essential. If you're afraid to ask, you probably already know you have issues.
- Benchmark/research – who does this well?
- People are resistant to change because they don't know how it will affect them. Communicate as early and honestly as possible to provide some peace of mind.



Inaction Reaction

You have survey results but choose to do nothing.

- People aren't dumb.
- Organize and build the plan, document it, and plan how you're going to roll it out and keep it going
- Help employees understand objectives, values, and culture



Eliminate Roadblocks:

- Don't inform - communicate
- Simplify your message
- Know your audience
- Technology is your friend
- Lead by example
- Get organized, get planning
- Just do it!

- Lots of work? Totally.
- Worth it for to improve employee retention and satisfaction?

Definitely.

