

Four Ways to Avoid the Fire Hose Communications Approach

Are you asking employees to drink from a fire hose? If you're communicating constantly with employees yet they never seem to hear what you're saying, you might be saying too much all at once.

Here are four tips to help your communications sink in:

1 Calendar-ize your communications

Define your communications objectives and build an editorial calendar for the next year, or at the very least the next quarter. What topics do you need to cover? How often do you want to communicate about them? Map out those topics across the channels you have available to you and establish the cadence of communications in each of those channels.

2 Feed info in bite-sized chunks

A lot of those topics will have several aspects or elements to them. Don't expect employees to take it in all at once. Break each topic down into smaller parts, and talk about them one at a time. If there are timing aspects to the information, such as an upcoming office move or some other change management issue, you'll probably want to give an overview first and then break down the information into sequential steps in subsequent communications.

3 Peel back the onion

Take it from Shrek; onions have layers. Start with the outer layers, and go deeper from there. For instance, if you're charged with communicating the company's vision, begin with the broad strokes. Announce the vision and values, but know that the work has just begun. Over the coming months, add more depth. Give them more concrete examples of how the vision and values impact actions and decisions by telling the stories of individuals and teams. The end goal is to have employees connect what they do every day with the success of the company's vision.

4 Make each communication a gift

Will people be excited to open that email you're sending? If they click on your video, will they find it interesting? Do those posters add to the clutter or do they communicate concise messages while being visually pleasing?

Realize that you're competing with all the communications that employees encounter outside the workplace – from glossy magazines to beautifully designed retail sites. Give your communications the benefit of engaging content, as well as high-caliber design.

Tribe's experience includes work with some of the world's top brands.



TRIBE

Best Practices

What does Tribe do?

We're an internal communications agency working with global and national brands to build employee engagement.

We share our expertise through these monthly Best Practices one-pagers and the GoodCompanyBlog.com, as well as our industry magazine, the Tribe Report. You can see digital versions of past publications on Tribe's website. To subscribe, email Nick@Tribeinc.com.

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