

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS EXCELLENCE:
The Anchor of Any
Thriving Organization

AN AVALON PERSPECTIVE



Why is Internal Communication the Lifblood of any Organization?

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, the corporate landscape has undergone a seismic shift. The initial scrambling around remote work and virtual meetings soon morphed into a new way of corporate life where a hybrid workforce soon became the norm. As businesses navigated these challenges brought on by the pandemic, one truth soon became abundantly clear: successful organizations were those that managed their internal communications effectively, making it not just a tool but a critical anchor that kept the workforce aligned with organizational goals, principles and philosophy. In this new era, the significance of a robust internal communications plan cannot be overstated. It is a thread that weaves together disparate teams and a beacon that guides employees through choppy waters towards a set of shared objectives.

Here we present a practical approach to developing and deploying an Internal Communications roadmap within any organization.

What Defines Good Internal Communication?



*Internal Communication can generally be measured along two broad vectors - **width and depth***

Width: indicates the extent of dissemination of information across the organisation cutting across departments, teams, functions and geographies. It can comprise of parameters like:

Depth: indicates the extent of richness and granularity of the information being so disseminated allowing the audience to make meaningful decisions. It can comprise of parameters like:



Reach & accessibility:

These are technical tasks essential for maintaining a building's physical infrastructure, such as HVAC systems and other permanent structures.



Quality of Information:

clear and comprehensive content that endeavors to explain and clarify rather than withhold and obfuscate



Communication channels:

These are non-technical tasks that enhance occupants' well-being and comfort, including cleaning, security, landscaping, and interior decorating.



Quality of Engagement:

meaningful and engaging interactions with employees



Collaboration:

These are supplementary services that go beyond core hard and soft services, such as catering for events, waste management, and pest control.



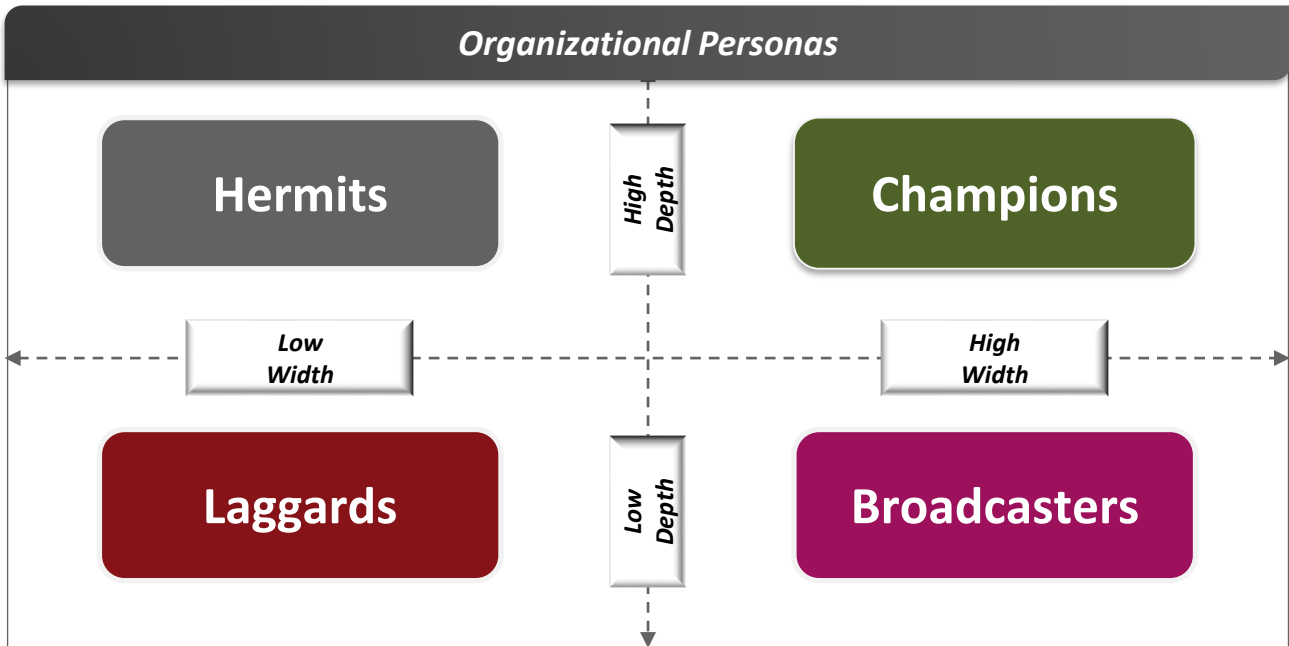
Frequency of Interaction:

appropriately timed touchpoints that ensure connect without degenerating into intrusion



Where do Organizations lie on the Spectrum of Communication Performance?

Depending on the maturity organizations exhibit along the two vectors of width and depth, they develop certain personas which drive their messaging and intent:



Champions: maintain their competitive edge by using various channels to extend the reach of critical messages and spend enough time, energy and resources to thoughtfully craft the messages so that they are fully absorbed by employees



Hermits: spend significant effort and time in meticulously crafting relevant messages but are unable to ensure appropriate dissemination due to lack of appropriate communication channels



Broadcasters: focus on information spraying by adopting multiple channels to bombard the audience with information, but give little thought to ensuring that the content of the messages are aligned with the objectives



Laggards: generally fail to plan their Internal Communication strategy effectively and follow a passive approach to communication with their employees resulting in a general disconnect since messages are neither understood well nor do they percolate down through the organization

Attributes of Champions

Becoming a Champion organization in communication requires focused effort:



What makes a champion

Reach and Accessibility:

Utilize technology as a tool to enhance connectivity among employees, creating numerous avenues for engagement via dissemination of information as well as receipt of feedback

Quality of Information Shared:

Ensure comprehensive communication by intricately tying it to actionable objectives, facilitating better internalization and understanding amongst the employees and aiding in informed decision-making

Communication Channels:

Acknowledge diverse channel preferences of the workforce and employ a multi-faceted approach to IC to strengthen messages, thereby improving absorption by the workforce

Quality of Engagement:

Embrace diverse communication styles to enhance engagement and inclusivity and integrate feedback mechanisms to make necessary adjustments; use leadership messaging to underscore key points

Communication Channels:

Encourage a dynamic exchange of information in both directions, cultivating a healthy exchange of ideas through regular interactions and active involvement of the core IC team

Frequency of Interaction:

Determine the optimal frequency for delivering impactful information, ensuring perfect timing – too information can overwhelm, while too little can easily be forgotten

How to Design Effective Communications?

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To ensure that Internal Communication initiatives have a meaningful impact, it is crucial to address several critical factors. However, managing these components, aligning them with the organization's purpose and effectively disseminating key ideas can often feel overwhelming and daunting. To streamline this process and to ensure effectiveness, organizations can make use of Avalon's '6M framework' comprising 6 key elements:

6M FRAMEWORK

- 1 Message:** needs to be well curated eliminating any chance of ambiguity. A suitable way to check the efficacy of the message is to conduct a litmus test by answering certain questions. Any message not passing the litmus test should be reviewed and brought in line or dropped altogether:

 - ✓ Is the message relevant for the audience to whom it is being addressed?
 - ✓ Is the information in the message fully accurate without any doubts of its validity?
 - ✓ Will the receivers feel suitably empowered to make critical decisions after receiving this message?
 - ✓ Is the message being shared at the most opportune moment for the intended recipients?
 - ✓ Does this message address the relevant stakeholder cohort?
- 2 Motive:** defines the underlying purpose, whether it is to inform, engage, motivate or elicit feedback. A clearly established motive helps in crafting the message suitably and achieving the desired outcome
- 3 Moment:** can significantly impact the effectiveness of a communication initiative. The message or initiative should be delivered at the optimal moment when it is most relevant for the recipients and most likely to be received positively. Timely communication helps in capturing the audience's attention and enhances the likelihood of the message being acted upon
- 4 Medium:** should be appropriately selected based on the message content and the intended audience. Whether it is through emails, intranet portals, face-to-face meetings, or social media, choosing the right medium ensures that the message reaches the audience effectively and efficiently
- 5 Maker:** choice of messenger can influence how the message is delivered and received. The maker should be trusted and respected by the audience and hence needs to be carefully chosen. This could be a leader, a team manager, or a peer, depending on the context of the message or initiative
- 6 Measure:** finally, measuring the effectiveness of a communication and understanding how it was received can provide valuable feedback to refine future communication

*By employing the elements of the **6M framework**, organisations can ensure engagement, transparency and overall success in their communications strategy.*

How can the impact of internal communication be maximized?

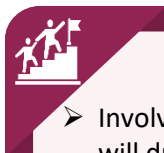
The frameworks and strategies outlined earlier in this paper are merely guidelines. A good internal communication strategy needs to be crafted through meticulous planning, strategic decision making and continuous monitoring. Additionally, there are some elements that can help supercharge the efforts of the internal communications team -



- Technology can be a gamechanger for communications given the wide array of tools that are available and the general comfort that people have developed with the use of technology in their day-to-day lives



- Injecting a dose of creativity into the communication activity can ensure relatability and adoption among an audience that is tired of the usual tropes that most organisations deploy



- Involving the leadership will drive a sense of purpose and belief among the audience and convey the message that the organization really means business



- Developing a heightened sense of engagement among the people and bringing them together as a community can work wonders in ensuring that communication percolates all the way through and creates ambassadors across the rank and file

In conclusion, while there is a general belief that an enhanced internal communication strategy will always work well for an organization, on most occasions it takes concerted effort and a systematic approach to implement on-ground internal communication initiatives. By embracing a structured approach and using suitable frameworks as suggested in this paper, companies can use their internal communication strategy to create a more cohesive and motivated organization

Our Values

The Avalon EDGE

E

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Enterprising ownership to transform ideas into pragmatic and profitable solutions

D

DEDICATION TO EXCELLENCE

Commitment to premier quality and highest standards in everything we do

G

GREAT VALUE CREATION

Focus on delivering maximum client impact through innovation and collaboration

E

ETHICAL APPROACH

Respect, fairness, and transparency in all our interactions

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