

Internal Communications Strategy template

Welcome to IC's Internal Communications Strategy Template! The document provides a guideline for how to structure an internal communications strategy and what to include. While most strategy documents will include very similar things, each organization is different, so feel free to amend this template to suit your needs. You'll find notes like this throughout with advice and tips, remember to delete them before finalizing your strategy!

As a rule of thumb, each section of your strategy should be informed by those above it, taking the reader on a logical journey through your thought process starting with the context surrounding the strategy and ending with the specific actions you will take.

Please note, this is a template for an overarching internal communications strategy. Try our [internal communications plan template](#) for individual projects.

Background

The background section provides relevant contextual information that will help the reader understand the current situation in your organization. It may seem counterintuitive to provide basic information about your organization in a (mainly) internal document, but anyone should be able to read your strategy and understand the decisions you have made. Plus you can never be certain that other team members share your understanding of the business.

Things you may want to include here:

- Size of business/number of employees/departments etc.
- Your organization's Vision, mission, purpose, values etc. (Consider linking to this information if you're unable to easily summarize it)
- Your organization's current strategic objectives
- Recent significant organizational changes

Research

Use the research section to include learnings that impact your strategy. For example:

- Internal communication survey results (past and present)
- Best practice/internal communication theory (You can find some of this on the [IC's website](#))

Make sure to include the conclusions you have come to based on this research, rather than simply including the results.

Communications Opportunity

This section ties together the contextual information from your background and the conclusions from your research to define what opportunities your strategy will address. What problems have you identified that you can resolve or improve through communications?

Opportunity example:

- **Leverage new technology to expand communications reach:** Employees indicated that they prefer digital communication channels in our communications survey (research). The launch of our new intranet platform (background) provides an opportunity to shift communications to a way our employees prefer.

- **Utilize line managers as a key channel to engage employees:** Line managers are proven to be key sources of information for employees, as confirmed in our internal research. By better equipping line managers they can become more effective communicators and help to distribute central messaging.

Audiences

By segmenting the audiences within your organization you can take a more targeted approach to communications. Are there areas that have specific communication needs? Do some roles only have access to certain channels? Are there certain groups that you need to communicate with directly?

Your audiences could fall into categories as well, for example primary, secondary and tertiary, depending on how much time you will spend communicating with them.

If you haven't already, consider conducting an audience segmentation exercise for your organization – [here's a tool to help!](#)

Audience examples:

Audience ID	Traits	Need to know
Frontline Retail Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority young (under 25) • Mix of part time and full time • Shift workers • Based in retail units 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How their work contributes to organizational success • Retail-related policies and procedures
Executive team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key decision makers • Time poor • Supported by Executive Assistant team • Attend bi-weekly exec meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business performance information • Organizational strategic plan in detail • Familiar with internal communications strategy
New York Office Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily based in the New York office • Mainly Finance and HR team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pertinent operational information about the New York office

Goals and Objectives

This is where you'll state how you're planning to respond to the opportunities you've identified above and contribute to your organization's goals. Your Goals should be broad intentions and should be made up of a number of SMART Objectives. You can find some examples below.

Remember, these goals/objectives should contribute towards the overarching objectives of your organization. You should be able to say "Goal 1 contributes towards Organizational Goal A by"

An important consideration is that your goals and objectives are achievable. It's better to focus on fewer goals and do a great job, than spread yourself too thin.

Goal/objective examples:

Goal 1 – Improve levels of employee engagement at Organization X

Objective A – Increase the score of employees selecting "I would recommend Organization X as an employer to a friend" on the 2021 annual employee survey by 15%

Objective B – Achieve an employee retention rate of 75% in 2021

Key messages

To achieve your objectives you will need to define key messages that you will reinforce throughout the life cycle of your strategy. These messages should be simple, relevant to all employees and you should be able to weave at least some of them into each of your communication activities.

When developing your key messages, look at your objectives and think “How does this key message help me achieve Objective A, B and C”. If you don’t have an answer, you’ll need to keep working on it.

Key message example:

Organization X is a diverse, unified team.

- Whoever we are, whatever we do, or wherever we work, we are all part of the same team.
- Our diversity of perspectives is a strength.
- We work together to achieve our collective goals.

Communication risks

Despite your best intentions, there may be things that could prevent you from achieving your objectives, in this section you can list those risks and how you’ll mitigate against them.

Does your activity depend on other business areas delivering something? If a key resource was reallocated, would you still be able to deliver against your strategy?

Communication risk example:

Risk 1 – Local administrators circulate communications within their areas that undermine central communications

Risk 1 mitigation – Build stronger relationships with local administrators, enlisting their help in the circulation of central communication material. Offer assistance/guidance to ensure local communications are aligned to central messaging.

Tactics

Tactics are the communication activities that you will carry out, for example campaigns, events and initiatives. The level of granularity you include will depend on your activity and planning process. If you create a communications plan for each campaign for example, you may choose to only include an overview of that activity in your strategy.

Tactic examples:

Date	Item	Details	Audience	Channel(s)	Deadline	Owner
September '21	Information security campaign	Campaign to promote info security as outlined by Organizational goal X	All employees	Intranet, videos, posters, desk-drops, training events	End October 21'	Communications Specialist
Q1 '21	Line Manager Communication Seminars	Series of events to better equip line managers for internal communication	Line Managers	Events	End Q1	Communication Manager



Evaluation and review

You should revisit your strategy throughout its lifecycle – this is a living document and you'll likely need to make changes to it as the situation in your organization develops. Include review dates in here including a final evaluation session once completed to inform your next strategic planning cycle.

Review examples:

Review Date	Discussion points	Revisions
Q1 '21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Corporate objective reprioritization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivery of objective A pushed back to next year
Q2 '21	<ul style="list-style-type: none">New comms resource employed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ownership of objectives B and C transferred to new resource