

Communication Framework and Training Plan

Brandon Lombard

IT 520: Technical Communications

Southern New Hampshire University

March 9th, 2025

Instructor: Dr. James Gallion

Communication Framework and Training Plan

BOLDFlash, a producer of flash memory components, is facing fragmented communication within its Mobile Division Units. These challenges have disrupted internal operations, delayed product delivery, and caused frustration among departments, ultimately leading to customer dissatisfaction. This document will outline identified problems within the company and how communication can be improved to correct these issues. This document examines the key problems affecting BOLDFlash's communication framework and presents a structured plan to improve collaboration and documentation practices

Background and Area of Focus

One critical issue within BOLDFlash involves their confusing product documentation that has unclear and incomplete instructions, overly technical terminology, a disorganized structure, and a lack of visuals or examples. For example, in Step 3 of the BOLDFlash Flash Drive Product #A23-B Installation Instructions, it states "to finish – it will go through a couple of more screens and you might need to click OK a few times." This provides no clear guidance for the user, as the instructions do not identify what the screens will say or look like. Additionally, BOLDFlash is using a revised Research and Development product release process, where they no longer respond to questions coming from Tech Support prior to the actual product release date, therefore increasing the lack of information exchange.

There are additional issues between Sales and Manufacturing, where Sales commits to delivery schedules without consulting Manufacturing. Additionally, if no response is received within two business days, Sales will assume approval which causes unmet deadlines and operational inefficiencies. Furthermore, there is a lack of defined roles between Marketing and Product Development. Marketing struggles to provide accurate market projections where Product

Development suggests new products without consulting with Marketing on market trends. This lack of communication creates unrealistic expectations and can strain the relationship between the two departments.

The most important area to fix initially is the product documentation, since it directly impacts internal operations and customer satisfaction. Concise documentation is the foundation for effective technical communication between both departments and the end users, as it makes it easier for customers to understand how to use the product, and for technical support to successfully assist customers when they are having trouble using the product. Additionally, improved documentation enables Technical Support to provide faster and more accurate assistance, minimizing delays and confusion while assisting customers. Addressing this issue not only strengthens interdepartmental communication but also builds trust among customers, making it an important starting point.

Planning and Communication with Stakeholders

Key Stakeholders

The key stakeholders involved in the product documentation issue include the end users, the Technical Support team, and the Research and Development team. Most important are the end users, as they require accurate and easy to understand instructions to use BOLDFlash's products. Confusing documentation will negatively impact their experience and perception of the brand, while increasing the workload of the Technical Support team, as the team will need to take more time assisting customers due to the poor documentation. The Technical Support team are also key stakeholders as they frequently use the product documentation to assist end users. Finally, the Research and Development team is a key stakeholder as they are responsible for creating the initial product documentation. It is essential that the Research and Development

team develops comprehensive and concise documentation, as there is a trickle-down effect, and it can negatively impact multiple other key stakeholders.

To properly address these groups, we will use the “Know Your Audience” communication framework, based on Deloitte’s Business Chemistry model, for both planning and communicating with stakeholders in the product documentation issue. This framework involves tailoring communication to fit the unique needs of different audience types (Noah L., 2023). For example, the Research and Development team is composed of “Guardians” and “Drivers”, who prefer methodical and detail-oriented communication, emphasizing measurable outcomes. In contrast, Technical Support, which includes “Integrators”, will benefit from a focus on collaboration and the practical application of solutions that consider user needs. Finally, end users likely spanning various types, will need simplified, high-level communication that prioritizes clarity and usability.

Established Practices

To address the product documentation issue, BOLDFlash can implement several established communication practices to improve collaboration and ensure the needs of stakeholders are met. First, we will establish regular collaboration meetings between Research and Development and Technical Support leadership. This way, the two groups may discuss the product documentation and what must be improved before the final version is released. Then, we can implement feedback loops between the end users and Technical Support. Feedback loops, which are cyclical processes where information is continuously exchanged and refined, help identify shortcomings and ensure documentation evolves to meet user needs (Trilling, 2024). By using online forms and feedback sessions between end users and members of the Technical Support team, BOLDFlash can obtain suggestions and common challenges that the users are

facing. Finally, we will implement transparent communication channels by using project management tools (i.e. Slack and Basecamp) to keep key stakeholders informed about documentation updates, timelines, and versions. By implementing this framework, communication will foster collaboration and alignment between stakeholders and improve the end user's experience with BOLDFlash products.

Training Plan and Framework for Continued Communication

Communication Strategies

To effectively train the Mobile Division teams, various methods of communication will be used to ensure smooth dissemination of information. Since they are experiencing communication issues across all functional teams, even with Quarterly cross-functional meetings, more frequent training cross-departmental meetings with clearly defined expectations must be implemented. Before every meeting, a meeting agenda will be written that has key discussion points for each department and will be disseminated via email prior to the meeting. This is because regular meetings and well-structured presentations that are supported by clear and concise communication with actionable outcomes are essential for building strong relationships and fostering successful stakeholder engagement (Lenarčič & Faganel, 2024, p. 382). To maximize the effectiveness of these meetings, they will be recorded, and a written summary will highlight key points of the training for future reference, or if some employees miss the training. A project manager will then assign tasks to specific team members or departments to ensure timely resolution of identified issues.

Additionally, to address ongoing documentation issues between Research and Development and Technical Support, virtual training will be created to teach these teams how documentation should be created and read, which will be assigned to each team member by the

project manager. Then, regular training sessions will be conducted between the two teams so they can discuss any new documentation that is created and make sure each team member understands any new documentation standards. To avoid overloading communication channels, email will be reserved for quick questions and immediate needs, while project management tools will be used to streamline communication. This will reduce clutter and ensure that important messages are not overlooked.

Collaboration Strategies

Collaboration is crucial for improving communication and teamwork issues within the Mobile Division. Misalignment between departments such as Marketing, Manufacturing, R&D, and Sales has led to inefficiencies, unmet deadlines, and frustrated employees. To improve collaboration, a structured approach will be used so that the teams are aligned and working towards their goals together. First, a Project Management Office (PMO) will be implemented in the Mobile Division to act as a bridge between the departments and facilitate cross-departmental collaboration. A PMO plays a critical role in aligning different teams by promoting consistency, improving project outcomes, and fostering a culture of collaboration (Gale, 2016). The PMO will take charge of managing deadlines, tasks, and holding each department accountable.

Another challenge being faced involves the Sales team's lack of collaboration with Manufacturing. In one case, the Sales team committed to selling more chips than manufacturing was able to produce, and when confronted about it, they were told to do it anyway. This resulted in a system overload crash with the system's software which caused the plant to be closed for a day while waiting for engineering to fix it (Beer, & Shelton, 2012). To fix this, a sales and manufacturing approval system will be implemented using project management software to resolve existing miscommunication. This way, all teams can have real-time visibility into

production ability, customer needs, and project deadlines, which will align the two departments. Finally, Research and Development alongside technical Support will use a collaborative review process for developing their product documentation. When new documentation is produced, both teams will meet to review it for accuracy and conciseness. These collaboration strategies will help to address the unique needs of various departments and promote cross-departmental collaboration.

Training Methods

To deliver effective training for the Mobile Division teams, we will use multiple methods, tailored to specific audiences to ensure the training is engaging and relevant. Since BOLDFlash needs more frequent and organized training meetings, they will have departmental team check-in meetings every week, while holding the cross-functional meetings monthly, which can be held in the corporate headquarters. For more specialized or hands-on training, such as Manufacturing and Technical Support teams, there will be on-site training when new products are developed, so that these teams understand how to use and create the products, hosted by Research and Development. Information from all meetings will be disseminated to all internal stakeholders through memos, as memos offer a secure method of communication and are accessible to departments like Manufacturing, which may not have consistent access to email (Gerson & Gerson, 2016, p. 185). Email will be reserved for quick questions or instant communication between departments to reduce unnecessary clutter in communication channels.

Virtual training sessions, such as those focused on developing or reading product documentation, will be conducted using platforms like Trainual. Trainual is a versatile training and knowledge management platform that allows the creation of Standard Operating Procedures and automates training processes, ensuring consistency and scalability in training. To keep track

of these training sessions and assign tasks, a project management platform, like Basecamp, will be used to ensure accountability across all teams. To improve the new training, BOLDFlash will obtain regular feedback from the trainees. Using feedback loops, BOLDFlash will gather ongoing input from participants through surveys, suggestion boxes, and post-training reviews. Feedback loops are vital in fostering ongoing improvement by enabling a cyclical exchange of information, which helps refine processes to better meet participants' needs (Trilling, 2024). Using these methods, BOLDFlash will have a comprehensive and adaptable training approach that addresses the needs of each department while strengthening inter-departmental communication.

Framework for Continued Communication

After the training, to ensure continued communication and collaboration, a structured communication framework will be implemented. BOLDFlash will first establish clear channels for different types of communication. Monthly cross-departmental meetings, as outlined in the training plan, will serve as a way for the departments to meet face-to-face and discuss issues. Project Management tools will also continue to be used, while the PMO will take responsibility for managing projects on this platform. Email will continue to be reserved for urgent or short-form communication, while most important communication will happen on the project management platform to ensure visibility for all important documents. All the meeting summaries and recordings will be saved and stored for future use as well.

A Standard operating Procedure (SOP) will be developed to standardize both the communication channels and product documentation issues. This SOP will include steps for collaborative review processes, especially for R&D and Technical Support teams, to ensure product documentation is accurate and user-friendly. The PMO will manage and regularly update

the SOP to reflect evolving business requirements and feedback. Additionally, feedback loops will continue to be used for continuously improving the training and business processes until we have the Mobile Division running like a well-oiled machine. Surveys, post-training reviews, and suggestion boxes will gather input from employees, which will be analyzed by the PMO. These feedback mechanisms will enable BOLDFlash to identify communication gaps and refine processes to maintain alignment and effectiveness.

Specified Guidelines

To ensure that the new communication framework is successful, a set of actionable and specific guidelines will be established. This will provide clear expectations, processes, and responsibilities to the team. Each department must use designated communication channels for specific purposes. For example, project updates, assignments, and discussions should happen exclusively within the project management platform. Email is to be reserved for urgent communication only, reducing clutter and preventing important information from being overlooked. Clear instructions on how to use these tools will be included in the virtual training and assigned to all employees. When there are meetings, an agenda must be developed beforehand and distributed to each team at least two business days prior so they can be prepared. After each meeting, a summary of key decisions and action items will be documented and uploaded to the project management platform, with clear deadlines and task owners. The PMO will oversee compliance for this process.

Feedback integration will be another crucial piece of this framework. Feedback loops will be formalized for continuous improvement in training and collaboration. Surveys will be distributed after training sessions and meetings to collect input on what worked well and what could be improved. The PMO will review this feedback monthly and use it to update training

materials and refine processes, ensuring that they align with employee needs and organizational goals. Additionally, all new documentation must go through the structured review cycle with team meeting to discuss the product and be walked through parts of the documentation to ensure clarity, technical accuracy, and usability. All finalized documents will be stored in a centralized location within the project management platform for easy access by relevant stakeholders. The PMO serves as the central hub for managing cross-departmental projects. They will assign dedicated contacts for each department to provide support and resolve issues. Each member of the PMO, however, will work together to ensure all departments are communicating effectively and on the same page. By adhering to these guidelines, BOLDFlash will establish a robust foundation for communication and collaboration through a structured and collaborative approach.

The Training Critique

Target Audience

The target audience for this memo involves key stakeholders in the Mobile Division, such as Research and Development, Technical Support, the Sales team, and Manufacturing. Each of these teams plays an important role in ensuring the smooth operation of product development, distribution, and customer satisfaction. Research and Development plays one of the most important roles since they are producing the documentation for new products being developed. Their ability to create clear and concise documentation directly impacts the efficiency of other departments and the overall user experience. Technical Support and the Sales have more customer-facing roles. The Technical Support team requires detailed but accessible instructions to troubleshoot issues efficiently while the Sales team needs clear, concise documentation to assist customers when selling their products. Manufacturing, however, needs concise

documentation to ensure they can reproduce the installation document accurately to ensure that it is correctly packaged with each product before shipping.

Intended Message

The intended message of this memo is to effectively guide users through the installation and setup process for the BOLDFlash A23-B flash drive. It is designed to assist users in preparing their new device by creating necessary directories, extracting drivers, and ensuring all required files are properly organized. The instructions also aim to provide a step-by-step process to configure the flash drive correctly and begin using it without unnecessary issues. It is intended to serve as a reference guide to help users understand the essential prerequisites and installation procedures. Furthermore, it is intended to be accessible to users of differing technical backgrounds so that even those with minimal experience can follow along. However, despite its intended purpose, the current documentation lacks clarity and structure, making it difficult for users to navigate the installation process effectively.

Critique

There are currently numerous issues within the instructions for the BOLDFlash A23-B flash drive. First, there is a lack of clarity where the instructions are vague, missing steps, or have ambiguous phrasing. For example, in the third section of the documentation, it states that you will see a message that says something like “OK to install new device driver,” but it states “Macs are different” without further elaborating on how they are different and what the message would look like for those users. Additionally, the formatting of this document is not structured, with a lack of headings or clear bullet points for major steps. While there are bullet points in the document, they lack clarity for exactly what each section entails. This includes the second section titled “Then you should have something like this”, which is not descriptive and may

cause confusion for the user. Furthermore, there are no visual aids that could show how each step will appear in the user's system while installing the product. Visual aids play a crucial role in technical communication by enhancing conciseness, clarity, and visual appeal, making information more accessible and engaging for readers (Gerson & Gerson, 2016, p. 159).

Additionally, the instructions contain overly technical language without explaining what it means for the average person. In the first step titled "Prerequisites," the user is told to create a base directory, a subdirectory, and to download "Irrlicht 1.8." However, the instructions do not describe what these items are for the average user. Many users may not know what a base directory or subdirectory is. Additionally, these instructions do not describe the purpose of installing the drivers. There is also no troubleshooting section or information, which would assist users in resolving common issues, such as encountering a "device not recognized" error. A troubleshooting section, or additional information within each step, would assist both users and Technical Support in resolving these common issues more effectively. Finally, the steps are out of logical order, making it difficult to follow the installation process sequentially. For example, the document instructs users to verify installation only after completing the entire setup, instead of suggesting an intermediate check after the driver installation phase. This lack of verification can lead users to complete the process incorrectly before realizing there is an issue. Additionally, the instructions require users to create directories before explaining why they are necessary, which can be confusing for individuals unfamiliar with such tasks. The lack of a structured approach in the documentation affects multiple areas, including customer satisfaction, sales confidence in the product, and technical support team efficiency. This results in increased support inquiries and a lower overall level of user satisfaction.

Adaptation Example

Adapted Communication Artifact



*BOLDFlash Corporation
18 Commerce Boulevard
Manchester, New Hampshire*

BOLDFlash Flash Drive Product #A23-B

Installation Instructions

1. Prerequisites

Before installing the BOLDFlash Flash Drive, you need:

1. The BOLDFlash Flash Drive Product #A23-B.
2. A computer with a functional USB port.
3. An internet connection (For driver updates).

2. Preparing Your System

1. Create a new folder on your computer named **FlashDrive**. This will store all the necessary files for the BOLDFlash Flash Drive to work on your computer.
2. Inside the **FlashDrive** folder:
 - Create another folder named **Driver**.
 - Download the files from our official repository (<http://boldflash.com/repositories/flash-drive-A23-B>) and place them into the **Driver** folder.
 - Download Irrlicht 1.8 (<http://irrlicht.techtoys.net/downloads.html>) and extract it inside the **FlashDrive** folder.
 - If you have a Mac, download the Irrklang 1.4.0 Mac driver (<http://www.techtoys.com/irrklang/downloads.html>) and extract it in the **FlashDrive** folder.

3. Folder Structure After Preparation

Your **FlashDrive** folder should have the following folders and files:

- Driver/ (contains necessary .cpp and .h files)
- Irrlicht/ (contains additional .cpp and .h files)

- irrKlang-1.3.0/ (If you have a Mac, which contains IrrKlang files)
- irrlicht-1.8/ (contains curl files)

4. Installing the BOLDFlash Flash Drive

1. Insert the BOLDFlash Flash Drive into an available USB port.
2. Wait for your system to recognize the flash drive. If it does not automatically recognize the device, continue to step 4.
3. Follow the on-screen prompts:
 - **Windows Users:** When prompted with the message “OK to install new device driver?”, click “OK” and follow the installation steps.
 - **Mac Users:** If prompted, select “Allow” to enable driver installation.
4. If no prompt appears, you can manually install the driver:
 - **Windows Users:** Open “Device Manager” and locate the BOLDFlash drive, right-click it and select “Update Driver”.
 - **Mac Users:** Open “System Information” and locate the device driver under USB, and follow manual installation instructions.
5. Once installation is complete, a confirmation message will appear. Your device is now ready for use.
6. Verify the installation by opening **File Explorer** (Windows) or **Finder** (Mac) to check if the flash drive appears under connected devices. Try transferring a file to confirm that it is working.

5. Troubleshooting Common Issues

1. Device not recognized
 - Try inserting the flash drive into a different USB port.
 - Remove your flash drive, restart your computer, and try again.
 - Check "Device Manager" (Windows) or "System Information" (Mac) for device status.
 - If the problem persists, reinstall the driver manually.
2. Slow performance
 - Ensure no large file transfers are running in the background.
 - Use a USB 3.0 port for faster speeds.
3. Installation Errors

- Verify that you have administrator privileges.
- Disable any antivirus software temporarily during installation.
- Restart the installation process following the guide above.

If you experience any issues with the installation process, please contact Technical Support.

Explanation of New Artifact

This revised installation guide for the BOLDFlash #A23-B flash drive was enhanced to improve clarity and conciseness, therefore improving the user experience based on key communication principles. The original product documentation was overly vague, technical, and lacked appropriate structure which made it difficult for users to follow. The new document addresses these issues by creating a more logical, step-by-step format with clearly defined sections so that users can easily locate the information they are looking for. One of the primary enhancements was adding additional information to each step, which explained why users had to complete certain actions rather than simply listing them. For example, instead of instructing users to create and extract files, the new instructions clarify the purpose of each action, which helps users understand the reasoning behind the process. Language was also updated to be more user-friendly with less technical jargon, which makes the documentation understandable to a broader audience.

Another big change was a troubleshooting section, since the original documentation did not provide any guidance for users who may encounter issues during the installation of the flash drive. This will help lessen the burden on technical Support, since we now include a section offering solutions to common problems such as unrecognized devices, slow performance, and installation errors. Finally, headings, bullet points, and numbered lists were used to break up the document into more readable instructions. This allows users to quickly find relevant information

without having to sift through the unorganized bullet points as before. By applying these adaptations, the new installation guide aligns with the best practices in technical communication, making the setup process more efficient and reducing the likelihood of user errors. These improvements ultimately enhance the customer experience while minimizing unnecessary technical support requests, benefiting both users and the Mobile Division at BOLDFlash.

Alternative Audience

The original technical communication was designed primarily for Technical Support and customers, with Research and Development providing detailed documentation. However, an alternative audience for this communication would be the Sales team, whose primary goal is to sell the product rather than troubleshoot or deeply understand its technical details. Because of this, they don't need an in-depth, highly technical document. Instead, they require a concise, sales-focused guide that highlights key product features, benefits, and selling points. The following memo serves as a product sales guide for the Sales team to confidently sell our flash drive product.

MEMORANDUM

TO: BOLDFlash Mobile Division Sales Team

FROM: Brandon Lombard, Technical Communications Lead

DATE: March 9th, 2025

SUBJECT: Product Sales Guide for BOLDFlash Flash Drive Product #A23-B

The Sales team plays an important role in ensuring the success of our BOLDFlash Flash Drive Product #A23-B, since they communicate and try to sell the product directly to customers. While

the original technical documentation was created for Technical Support and customers, this memo provides a sales-focused guide tailored specifically to help you sell the product confidently.

Key Selling Points

Customers want a fast, reliable, and secure storage device, therefore when selling out flash drive, focus on the following:

- High Speed Data Transfer with USB 3.2 for fast file transfers.
- Large storage capacity with 128GB, 256GB, and 512GB options.
- Secure data protection with built-in encryption.
- Durable design with shock-resistant and waterproof casing to protect data.

Common Questions and Answers

- Q: Is the flash drive compatible with older USB ports?
 - A: Yes, it is backward compatible with USB 2.0 and USB 3.0 ports.
- Q: Can I use this on a Mac?
 - A: Yes, it works with macOS and Windows.
- Q: What if I lose my files?
 - A: The drive includes built-in recovery software for accidental deletions.

This guide is designed to help you sell more effectively by focusing on what matters most to customers. If you have any questions or need additional support, feel free to reach out to the Technical Communication or Research & Development teams.

Best,

Brandon Lombard

Technical Communications Lead

Conclusion

Implementing an effective communication framework and structured training plan is highly important for resolving the collaboration and communication challenges within BOLDFlash's Mobile Division. By addressing gaps in product documentation, strengthening cross-departmental coordination, and adopting streamlined communication practices, the company can improve efficiency, reduce miscommunication, and enhance customer satisfaction. The proposed strategies, including regular stakeholder meetings, feedback loops, project management tools, and sales team adaptations, provide a clear path forward in aligning internal processes with business goals. Moving forward, continuous evaluation and refinement of these practices will be necessary to sustain improvements and ensure long-term success in both internal operations and customer interactions.

References

- Beer, M., & Shelton, R. (2012). *BoldFlash: Cross-functional challenges in the mobile division*. Harvard Business School Publishing. Retrieved from <https://services.hbsp.harvard.edu/lti/links/content-launch>
- Coulson, M. (2015, February). A strong PMO is more crucial than ever before. *Policy & Practice*, 73(1), 34+. https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A458803994/CSIC?u=nhc_main&sid=ebsco&xid=7553b7ee
- Gerson, S. J., & Gerson, S. M. (2016). *Technical Communication: Process and Product (9th ed.)*. Pearson Education (US). <https://mbsdirect.vitalsource.com/books/9780134118277>
- Lenarčič, B., & Faganel, A. (2024). *Using the Nominal Group Technique to Design an Appropriate Communication Strategy Among Strategic Procurement and Internal Stakeholders*. *Organizacija*, 57(4), 379–391. <https://doi.org/10.2478/orga-2024-0027>
- Noah L. (2023). Key communication frameworks for individual contributors. Medium. Retrieved January 10, 2025, from <https://noahlk.medium.com/key-communication-frameworks-for-individual-contributors-e18142a2c66f>
- Trilling, D. (2024). *Communicative feedback loops in the digital society*. *Weizenbaum Journal of the Digital Society*, 4(2), Article 4_2_4. https://ojs.weizenbaum-institut.de/index.php/wjds/article/view/4_2_4/132