# Template: Communications Checklist

Communicate clearly, calmly, and consistently when it matters most.

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## Change Log

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# Template: Communications Checklist

*This checklist helps teams prepare and deliver clear communication before, during, and after a digital disruption, outage, or incident. It supports trust, accountability, and resilience by ensuring people know what’s happening - and what’s being done.*

***Tips for Use:*** *Use this checklist when planning responses or updates around an outage, breach, or major change. It helps ensure the right people hear the right message at the right time.*

* *Keep tone calm, professional, and human.*
* *Avoid over-promising - commit only to what you can verify.*
* *Plain English beats technical jargon every time.*
* *Update one master message, then distribute consistently.*

# Before an Incident - Be Ready

## ✅ Build your contact list

* Who needs to know? (staff, customers, suppliers, partners, regulators)
* Keep updated email, SMS, and social media contacts.
* Identify media spokesperson(s).

## ✅ Prepare message templates

* Draft short, adaptable messages for:
  + *Awareness* (“We’re aware of an issue…”)
  + *Updates* (“We’re still investigating…”)
  + *Resolution* (“The issue has been fixed…”)
* Use plain language, not jargon.

## ✅ Decide communication channels

* Website banner or status page
* Email or SMS notifications
* Social media updates
* Phone or in-person briefings (where relevant)

## ✅ Set expectations

* Who approves messages?
* What is your ideal response time for first notice and updates?
* Who owns communication if your systems go down?

# During an Incident - Be Clear

## ✅ Acknowledge quickly

* Confirm awareness within 30–60 minutes where possible.
* Say what you *do* know and what’s being done.

## ✅ Stay factual

* Avoid speculation.
* Keep updates short and consistent across all channels.

## ✅ Show accountability

* Use clear ownership: “Our team is investigating.”
* Acknowledge impact: “We know this affects your business.”

## ✅ Maintain rhythm

* Provide regular updates, even if there’s no new detail.
* Keep timestamps visible (“Updated 3:15 PM AEDT”).

# After an Incident - Be Transparent

## ✅ Close the loop

* Announce resolution and recovery steps.
* Thank people for their patience or help.

## ✅ Share what you learned

* Post a brief “What Happened / What We’re Doing” summary.
* Include steps being taken to prevent recurrence.

## ✅ Collect feedback

* Invite comments from affected staff or customers.
* Capture lessons for the *Post-Incident Reflections* template.

## ✅ Review internally

* Did the right people communicate at the right time?
* What could be improved next time?