

# CHANGE COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

*Kristina Ralston, Change Strategist and Leadership Coach*

*Let's get connected! Find me at: [www.kristinaralston.com](http://www.kristinaralston.com)*

Thoughtful, thorough, and meaningful communication is critical to the success of any change initiative. Taking the time to consider your audience, their needs, and their preferred mode of communication are all critical elements when planning your change communication strategy.

Answer the following questions to build out the key components of your change communication plan. Remember: it's not just *what* you say but **how** you say it that can be the difference between success or not.

## **AUDIENCE(S):**

- *Who is your intended audience? Think about the work they do on a daily basis, the teams they're on, the leaders they report to, and any notable interpersonal dynamics at play.*
- *What do they already know about the change, if anything? What do they need to know? What do they want to know about the change?*
- *What's worked well for the end-users, as far as communication goes? What are the opportunities to grow/refine existing messages and approaches?*

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES (sponsors/key stakeholders):**

- *Who is your sponsor? Have they been a sponsor before? What is their understanding of the sponsor role? What is their availability to provide support and guidance throughout the change initiative?*
- *What is the role of your sponsor and key stakeholders, specific to this change initiative? What are they responsible for?*

## **KEY MESSAGES OF YOUR CHANGE INITIATIVE (by audience):**

- *What are the required messages of your change initiative (think program or project level)? What do you have to communicate and provide updates on?*
- *What would be meaningful to your audience to create buy-in and understanding of why the change is important?*
- *Why are we doing this change right now? What are the proposed benefits?*
- *What are the risks of not changing?*
- *What are the benefits to the individual (WIIFM)? What are the benefits to the team (and the organization)?*

**COMMUNICATION VEHICLES (current):**

- *What is currently in place to cascade information/updates?*
- *How effective are these vehicles? Which ones do we want to incorporate into our communication plan?*

**COMMUNICATION VEHICLES (new/proposed):**

- *What opportunities are there for incorporating new ways of sharing information?*
- *Are there opportunities for building out internal skill/competency for communication planning (mentorship)?*

**PROPOSED CADENCE:**

- *How often is normal communication sent out or updated?*
- *How often do the impacted teams meet on a regular basis? Are there teams that don't have regularly scheduled meetings or 1/1s? How could that be a barrier to communication?*

**COACHING:**

- *Do your leaders need practice/assistance in developing their communication style (many leaders do, so don't be shy about offering to help them out with this)?*
- *Do mid-level managers have the knowledge, tools, and training needed to be effective change leaders? If not, how do we get them what they need?*
- *Do your change leaders know how to identify and leverage change readiness and resistance in themselves and their employees?*

**MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS:**

- *How will you measure communication effectiveness over time (surveys, interviews)?*
- *How often do you want to assess communication effectiveness and report progress to your sponsor/key stakeholders?*
- *What do your sponsors/key stakeholders want to see, know, and - most importantly - feel as a result of effective communication?*

*Note: this step is best done in partnership with sponsors/key stakeholders, as they may have ideas on what they want to know/see as communication starts rolling out.*