



I've often heard corporate leaders say "there's nothing to report" to employees when their companies are undergoing transition such as restructuring, downsizing or merging. That's an unfortunate misread that can result in the loss of good employees and customers, which in turn can ultimately hurt the bottom line.

The change process can take several months and include multiple parties. Leadership is focused on complex decision-making with significant long-term impacts. While they're working behind closed doors for weeks on end, employees can't - and won't believe there's nothing to be shared. It's precisely at such a time that communicating with staff is more important than ever.

Employees aren't in peak productivity mode when they're working in an information vacuum in an uncertain climate. Staff are wondering if they'll still have a job, if their job will change, and who they'll be reporting to. They question whether there will be room for growth or if reasonable exit packages will be offered, and so on. They start feeling disrespected, insignificant and demoralized. Conditions become ripe for companies to lose their brightest and best at a time they're most needed. This has implications for customer service and shareholder satisfaction.

Here's what you can do:

- Establish a mechanism for regular updates, and indeed those updates shouldn't fall by the wayside.
- Ensure coordinated, timely information-sharing to prevent conflicting messages.
- If decisions aren't final, say so. Don't speculate on incomplete outcomes but explain the subject matter that's under consideration to the extent possible.
- If you can't share information, explain why.
- Engage employees by creating a venue for questions and input.
- Communications should come from the top
- Ensure strong communications supports are in place to facilitate all of the above.

When employees perform well in a change environment, customers and shareholders are reassured and will weather the storm. We've much more to share on this, so **call us!**

Finally, if those in charge don't understand the need to communicate with employees even at the best of times, there's likely a problem with company culture. But that's another blog post.

Talk soon!

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& your friends at FocusGRP**