

COMMUNICATION TIPS FOR UNUSUAL TIMES

As we all attempt to adjust to the workplace ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, leaders of many organizations are struggling with employee communications. The questions of tone, content, frequency and delivery are top of mind. Here are a few suggestions and best practices that you can consider as many of you enter employee benefit renewal season.

CORE PRINCIPLES

For many employees, this situation feels like a crisis and we are well-served in leveraging core principles from crisis communications when we correspond. Working from a foundation of empathy, transparency and proactivity, leaders can provide valuable direction to their staff during uncertain times.

Your message will be much better received if you apply that lens to your communications. If your staff members know that you care, feel like you are being transparent, and understand your vision for moving forward, they are much more likely to be engaged in your efforts.

MESSAGE DELIVERY

Employers of all types are trying to find the balance between communicating too much and not enough. Under the current situation, when in doubt, err on the side of over communicating with your staff. But the question remains: When you have a message, how do you deliver it? Current best practices tell us that the top three methods are:



Email. Email remains the fastest, most effective way to get a quick message out to staff. Make sure your team has full access to your systems during these times. This can include links to internal websites or video content.



Virtual Meetings. This unusual time has been a catalyst for the rapid adoption of virtual meeting technology. Leveraging such technology allows you to conduct virtual meetings and provides a level of engagement that is important for managing the culture that you've worked hard to create.



Intranet. Organizations of all types have an intranet. Driving content from such a site is important to making sure that you are getting value from that investment. And this isn't just an opportunity to leverage your intranet site, it is an opportunity to change culture and make sure your staff members are using it as a central part of their workflow process.

These principles should be applied throughout your organization's communication needs during this pandemic and as you prepare to re-open your operations. Don't be afraid to leverage virtual meetings in place of the traditional in-person meeting, or experiment with video content and drive traffic to your intranet site. And, as always, use multiple methods to assure your employees that you are here to help them during these unusual times.

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