

Top tips for Communicating Change

1. **Communication is central!** Exactly what you and how you say it can make a major impact on how transition is handled. Poor communication can result in the failure to win the support of key shareholders and employees.
2. **What exactly is changing and why?** A common barrier to change is the lack of a clear case for the change. If employees understand how it will make good business sense, then they are less likely to resist.
3. **Remember there is more than one way to communicate change.** Technical people may appreciate analytical approaches, while retailers tend to appreciate more empathic presentations. Employ a style that best suits your organisation.
4. **Share information as soon as possible.** Don't let employees learn about change by reading it in the newspaper or on the radio! Once uncertainty is established, it can be an uphill struggle to regain trust.
5. **Bring resistance to the surface.** Create an atmosphere where people can feel secure in expressing doubt, anger or other feelings they may have.
6. **Use a variety of communication paths.** E-mail and newsletters may be quick and cheap, but more effective vehicles such as small group discussions should always follow them up.
7. **The best communication is simple and brief.** Quantity is fine, but quality and consistency of information are crucial.
8. **Keep things flexible.** By its very definition, change is subject to change. If the flow of events makes your communication plan irrelevant, you'd be foolish to use it.
9. **Don't underestimate the length of time required to change.** Rome wasn't built in a day - neither do organisations change in a week. Even if the change is perceived as positive, *resistance* is inevitable.
10. **Give people the opportunity to share their concerns.** And ensure that you follow up with answers and regular updates.

Remember – change is one thing that is here to stay!