

**The following document represented the Communications Strategy for a company-wide Human Resources systems implementation. There were a total of 88 changes affecting employees (HR policies, benefits and pay administration) and numerous changes to internal processes.**

## **5 COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The objective of the Communication Strategy is to effect information sharing. The formal communications Plan will allow <company> to maintain the effectiveness of its workforce through transition and influence stakeholders to participate through the avenues and forums provided.

The Communication Plan contains the following elements:

- Communications Purpose & Objectives
- Communication Principles
- Audience Identification and Analysis
- Communication Activities (by audience, message, media, timing)
- Evaluation Plan

## **6 COMMUNICATION PURPOSE & OBJECTIVES**

### **6.1 Purpose**

The purpose of the Communication Plan is to contribute to the successful implementation of <project> with the right communication delivered to the right audiences at the right time.

### **6.2 Objectives**

Enable Leadership Advocacy: Provide information to enable leaders to be advocates of the project.

Build Synergy of <project> Team: Provide communication that helps build the team's effectiveness.

Prepare Management and Staff: Create awareness and understanding of <project> impacts and implications - on staff jobs, employee benefits, work processes, HR policies, etc.

Enroll Staff: Generate interest and buy-in to <project>. Tell them about project developments so that they feel involved, have an opportunity to give feedback, and are acknowledged for their contributions.

Manage Expectations: Reinforce the scope of the project realistically (under promise / over deliver) to manage perceptions/expectations and to ensure staff understand that there will be (temporary) takeaways prior to long term gains being realized.

Improve Human Resources' image: Demonstrate how <project> supports HR's mission of delivering people capability to <company> business units enabling them to meet their business objectives.

## 7 COMMUNICATION PRINCIPLES

The following guidelines outline the preferred way that communication is developed and delivered. They are assumptions that govern how communication activities take place.

- Tailor communications to discreet audiences according to needs analysis.
- Design communication using fact-based information and deliver openly, regularly and in a straight forward manner.
- Ensure communications contain consistent core messages.
- Deliver face-to-face / one-on-one where messages contain job sensitive information (i.e.: an individual job will change).
- Continually reinforce the business reasons for change.
- Consistently ask for feedback and involvement, and acknowledge same.
- Evaluate at pre-determined points to ensure message is understood.
- Pursue communication opportunities at involvement activities (focus groups, BPT workshops, training sessions, etc).
- Consult with Corporate Communications through various phases of the project to ensure communications related decisions meet with corporate approval and fit within company protocol and standards.

## 8 KEY DELIVERABLES OF THE COMMUNICATION PLAN

The Plan contains these key deliverables:

- Regularly scheduled meetings with the following groups:
  - Steering Committee
  - MAT (Project Management Team)
  - Project Team (whole group, and separate functional, technical and quality assurance team)
- Bi-monthly project newsletter circulated to the HR Community including the above teams
- Team events and celebrations at project milestones
- Covering communications for training and other implementation activities
- Communications (various media) integrated with existing <company> vehicles (regular publication, ongoing “Plan”)

## 9 MECHANISMS

Communication mechanisms will be selected from the following available sources according to the objectives and audience of each communication piece.

- Workshops
- Focus Group Sessions
- Project Newsletter
- Corporate Newsletter
- E-mail memos
- Presentations at pre-scheduled meetings (HR Conference, Senior Manager's Meetings, HR staff meetings, etc.)
- Information Sessions with PeopleSoft Prototype Demonstrations

Other mechanisms linked more to implementation but which can be considered communications pieces:

- E-mail conference board
- HR Help Centre
- Designated Support Leaders throughout company

## 10 AUDIENCE IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

Audience identification is the process of determining groups of people who have similar roles/responsibilities regarding <project> and therefore similar needs for information and communication.

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Communication Needs</b>	<b>Preferred Media</b>
EMG (Executive Management Group); HRPC; SMG (Senior Management Group)	Responsible for divisional business and overall corporate financial results	Input to vision, high-level awareness of <project> impacts on work units, understanding of <project> potential for increasing business effectiveness	Presentation at scheduled meetings / Print
Steering Committee	Responsible for overall project direction	Input to global vision, input to <project> business decisions, ongoing project status reports	Regular Monthly Meeting
HRC (HR Council – HR Executive and Consultants)	Responsible for effectiveness of HR function / sensitive to differing needs of individual divisions	Need regular progress status reports, and input to significant decisions.	Regular Monthly Meeting
HR Product Managers	Responsible for HR policy	Need regular progress status reports, input to significant decisions	Information Session, print
HR Line Managers (retail and non-retail)	Undergoing paradigm shift from HR managers/administrators to HR strategists/advisors	Need to understand HR strategy overall, <project> impacts, how changes affect them and their client areas	Information session, print
Project Team	Integration of technical and functional team challenging	Need project status updates including sharing plans, milestones, issues, problems; need understanding of other teams, and feedback on team progress	<project> all-team meetings, e-mail, group meetings
HR Community	Act as resources for <company> line managers – face of HR	Need rounded <project> information to carry out functions and support line staff, need awareness of project progress	Workshop, print

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Communication Needs</b>	<b>Preferred Media</b>
Line Managers (People Managers)	People management a new major accountability – new focus on this area of management – facing recruiting challenges, time and expense challenges	Need to know how <project> will help them manage people, need information to inform delegates who assist with people management and administration	Self-study, print, workshop  Retail only: Retail People Plan
Employee Population	Time crunched, prevalent feeling of information overload (communication survey), incomplete understanding of HR practices, policies, etc./		Toll-free help line, face-to-face from manager, print