

Job Aid

Communicating Change

Purpose: Use this job aid to guide you in making decisions to communicate change.

Part of effective change communication is knowing what to share with whom. There are certain details of a change initiative that are shared with everyone:

- a change statement
- a list or description of the success factors
- background information on the change, summarizing its main points
- a list of key people or roles involved in the change, including the sponsor, the process owners and, if assembled, the members of the guiding coalition and the change project team members
- the stakeholders involved, with their RACI relationships to the change defined
- scheduled events or milestones for deliverables

There are certain other communications that you share only with stakeholders who are involved in the change. For example, those

- who have a high influence on success or failure
- whose personal cooperation in the change process is important to success
- who have a RACI status of R, A, or C
- who could potentially impede success if not kept well informed

With these groups, you need to share additional information:

- a charter for the change
- a detailed work breakdown structure
- specific information to address how it affects them, including projected benefits and changes to work processes and relationships
- answers to other questions they may have about the change

Methods for communicating change

Your choice of method for communicating change is directly related to four key considerations:

- the degree of complexity associated with the change
- the degree to which the change affects the stakeholder on a personal basis and how likely it is that they may resist the change
- the degree of sensitivity about the change to the organization and necessary levels of confidentiality
- the degree of feedback desired

Choose a communication method that is appropriate to the level of complexity, sensitivity, or amount of feedback needed.

For a highly complex, personal, or sensitive message or one that requires feedback, communicate

- verbally, in person
- in small, private groups
- in written form, providing an outline with the minimum amount of information – just the talking points

For a message of medium complexity, communicate

- verbally, in person
- in small or larger groups
- via a web meeting or phone call
- using a questionnaire-style chat or text message

For a message that has a low level of complexity, use

- e-mail
- published bulletins

- newsletters
- posts on social media

E-mail should never be used to communicate when it's important to know if a message was received and understood as intended.

Course: Making Change Stick

Topic: Knowing What to Communicate

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