

Four change communication ideas you haven't tried yet

Successful change management is rooted in behavior modification. But employees and consumers can't do what they don't understand. That's where clear communication—both content and visual explanations—comes in. Here are four tips that you might not have tried to create new behaviors and get everyone on board from the start.

Four tips for making clear, visual communications

1

Make it tangible

Part of what makes change hard is that it often involves things that we can't see, like technology platforms and business process. Even physical things, like people or money, often feel theoretical because we don't physically interact with them. But our brains are wired to imagine physical things. To help your employees understand the intangibles of your change effort, create illustrations that turn the abstract into concepts that the brain can grasp.

2

Make it relatable

Understanding is built by adding new ideas and information that are tangential, but not too far from our current knowledge base. When it comes to organizational change, a great way to do this is to help employees see themselves in the new processes and systems. Make sure that the visual representations of your employees resemble those people who will be impacted by the change.

3

Make it repeatable

Being able to explain something you've just learned to someone else is a key part of understanding. In fact, the retrieval process moves information from short-term to long-term memory. Create tools that help employees to retell the story to themselves and—most importantly—to others, creating new neural pathways that improve retention in the process.

4

Make it direct

Implementing change is no time for euphemisms, metaphors, or jargon. To be successful you need to be specific and transparent. Use clear, plain language to cover the basics of your behavior change story: who, what, where, when, why, and how. Add specificity and instant meaning by using icons and illustrations.

A A great caption focuses on explaining a single big idea. The best ones are 20 to 30 words long and use plain language.

B OK, I see where I fit in.

C Let me tell you about our new supply chain.

If you want to learn more about how clear communication can improve your change management, get in touch at www.thoughtform.com or 412.488.8600.

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