

Communication Tools

Best Practices

email



Audience



- All employees that have a company email
- Office employees
- Hybrid workers



Best Practices



- Test the copy -- and don't forget to proof!
- Keep message short and concise
- Use QR codes and/or links link to resources, forms, etc.
- Use clear subject lines
- Create internal distribution lists for targeted communication
- Print out important emails for those not typically on email



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned



- Avoid adding too much content in one message
- Sending too many emails; however, some topics benefit from multiple emails. It's a balance!
- Avoid corporate jargon



Examples



- Handouts
- Invitations
- Employee recognition
- Monday morning message -- explain the how and why



Communication Tools

Best Practices

chat channel



Audience



- Office employees
- Hybrid employees
- ESOP committees and project teams
- Departments
- Mobile apps for those not regularly at a computer



Best Practices



- Asking open ended questions
- Use @ mentions
- Pin important messages
- React and support other posts
- Have a dedicated ESOP and employee ownership channel



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned



- Creating too many channels
- Not moderating or keeping conversations going



Examples



- Chat channel is an easy way to place employees on teams to participate in virtual games, such as trivia contest
- ESOP events reminders
- Polls for feedback
- Celebrations and ESOP milestones
- Example tools:
 - Slack
 - Teams
 - Google chat

Communication Tools

Best Practices

intranet



Audience

- All employee-owners
- Remote employees
- Specific groups and teams; such as committees, departments, locations, leadership



Best Practices

- Post new headlines often and keep it fresh
- Match headlines to what's happening in the ESOP, such as how to read your ESOP statement
- Start small and build up
- Organize the content so it's easy to find and in clear categories; especially helpful for new hire resources



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned

- Assuming everyone knows how to use it
- Outdated content
- Avoid only using peers and internal employees to communicate. Add in talks and resources from third parties



Examples

- ESOP 101 - list of key terms
- Recordings of ESOP meetings
- ESOP calendar with key dates
- Employee highlights and success stories
- Have your TPA present and create content to include
- Example tools:
 - Beekeeper App
 - Sharepoint

Communication Tools

Best Practices

text



Audience



- All who opt in
- Field employees
- Those without regular email access
- Specific groups for event reminders



Best Practices



- Keep it short and simple
- Include short urls
- Use gifs
- Alerts, reminders, and other important notifications



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned



- Don't use text like email
- Don't overcommunicate via text
- Don't write in a corporate way



Examples



- Event reminders
- Communicate awards
- Communicate company closures, holidays, etc.



Communication Tools

Best Practices

podcast



Audience



- All employee-owners
- Especially helpful for those who are frequently on the road or traveling



Best Practices



- Company leadership should conduct podcasts; preferably being interviewed by fellow employee-owners
- Keep episodes short, between 10-15 minutes
- Focus on one topic per podcast
- Invite guest speakers
- Make it engaging and fun



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned



- Avoid overly technical or boring content
- Inconsistently releasing episodes
- Ignoring feedback



Examples



- Leadership interviews
- Success stories of employee-owners
- Explaining complex ESOP concepts in simple terms
- Share price / company performance updates



Communication Tools

Best Practices

newsletter



Audience



- Company-wide



Best Practices



- Keep it simple
- Incorporate pictures and stories
- Use illustrations to convey messages
- Include upcoming activities
- Print out some copies to leave in the breakrooms
- Adapt content for screens if these are used around the company



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned



- Too long or complicated
- Avoid using only digital - make sure the format meets the needs of your employee-owners, including those not regularly at a computer



Examples



- Recap of ESOP events
- Profiles of standout employee-owners
- Company performance update



Communication Tools

Best Practices

screens



Audience



- Front line employee-owners
- Operations and manufacturing teams
- All who have access to gathering areas, such as breakrooms



Best Practices



- Keep content fresh
- Use large fonts and keep the page clean, easy to reach
- If rotating content, ensure the pages scroll at a speed that allows people to see and read the content



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned



- Complicated messages or too much copy
- Outdated content
- Poor screen placement



Examples



- Key ESOP dates and reminders
- Employee milestones
- Upcoming events, company happenings
- Company mission and vision; statements about employee-ownership
- Example tool: Enplug system with monitors in all breakrooms



Communication Tools

Best Practices

*in
person
events*



Audience



- Onsite employee-owners
- Remote employee-owners traveling in or participating virtually



Best Practices



- Be accessible to everyone
- Mail / send out what you'll need in advance and what to expect at the event
-



What to Avoid / Lessons Learned



- Avoid things that only benefit a subgroup
- Not including or inviting remote employees



Examples



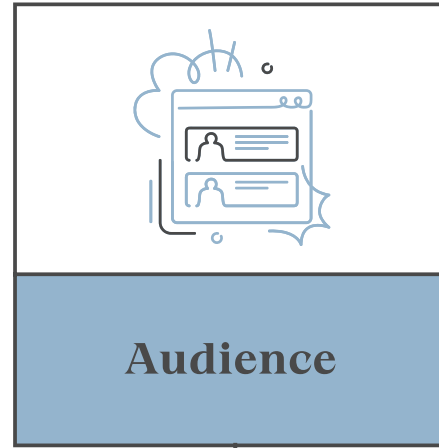
- Scavenger hunt
- Lunch and learns
- Town halls
- Leadership Q&As
- Charity / donation drives
- Celebrations
- Spirit week
- Holiday parties



Communication Tools

Best Practices

*other
tools /
general
tips*



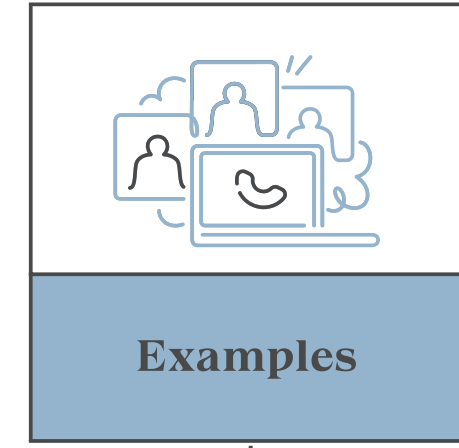
- Align communication method with the specific needs of each group to be more effective
- Consider urgency of the message when determining the best tool



- Add QR codes to get relevant content in front of employee-owners
- Make content interactive when possible
- Provide training to make sure everyone can use the tool
- Tailor content and language to the target audience



- Avoid jargon and assuming acronyms are common knowledge - include definitions
- Avoid using only one way of communicating - use different tools and formats to reach more people



- Social media
- LinkedIn
- Project management tools, examples:
 - Trello
 - Jira
 - Asana
- Collaboration tools
 - Google suite
 - Microsoft OneDrive
- Phone calls
- Video conferencing