

Communication Brief

Quick Ways to Make Your Message More Persuasive

Use the techniques below to increase the credibility and influence of your message.

- **Align your ideas with theirs.** People will judge your opinion based on the attitudes and beliefs they already hold, so help them make the connection. If your ideas seem to reinforce their worldview, they will be more likely to accept your position.
- **Address counterarguments in your message.** Doing so shows you are aware of opposing views and provides the opportunity for you to refute them before they are raised by others.
- **Keep it fresh.** Don't just reiterate the same tired arguments people have already heard. Instead, offer fresh evidence – e.g., news, analysis, opinions – to get others to listen.
- **Include testimonials from credible sources.** Whenever possible, inject supporting opinions from credible or seemingly unbiased people. This suggests your views are objective and that you have done your homework.
- **Give parallel examples.** Show how what you are advocating has worked at a competitor or a respected company in another industry.
- **Emphasize benefits (not features).** Feature: what something can do. Benefit: how it helps you.
- **Get to the heart of the matter.** Cut through the complexity with a simple summation of your argument.

Employee communication tips and ideas

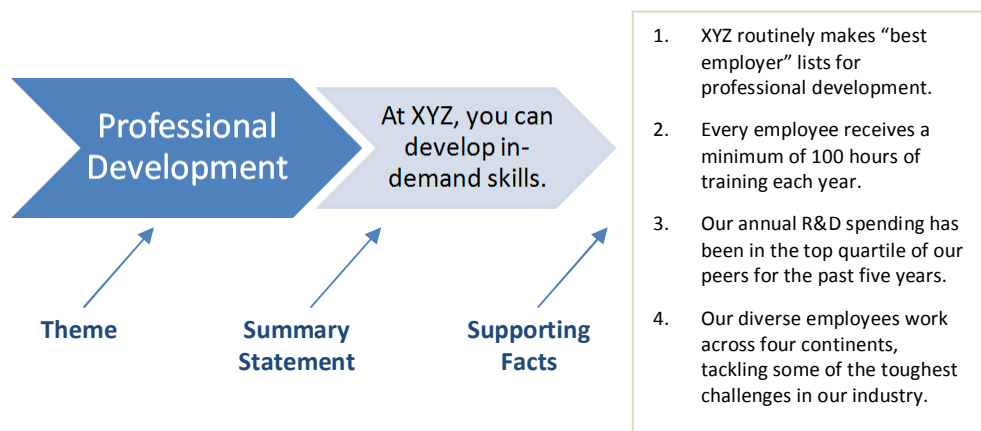
Planning Change Communication

To come up with the right messages when communicating change, you will want to gather some information from two key stakeholder groups: people who need to change and people necessary to implement the change. Begin by probing the issues below.

Consider stakeholders'...	By probing...
Knowledge and feelings about the current state	How well do people understand what exists today? Is the status quo seen as positive, neutral or negative? What perceptions shape people's beliefs?
Potential reaction to change	Does the change mean real or perceived takeaways? Will the change mean new responsibilities? What's likely to delight and disappoint people?
Advice on communicating the change	What would influence people's perceptions? What might be confusing or unclear? What's the principal communication challenge?

How to Organize Key Messages

Once you have determined what you wish to say – i.e., your key messages – it is helpful to organize your thoughts in terms of themes, summary statements and supporting facts. For example, the diagram below shows how one company, "XYZ," tries to influence candidates' opinions about what it's like to work there. Its research revealed that professional development is very appealing to the target audience.



Notice how XYZ summarizes the message and supports it with compelling facts and statistics, which convey credibility. The company will need to organize its other key messages similarly. After doing so, it will be ready to communicate these messages through print and electronic media, live presentations and one-on-one discussions.