



Exploring Business Effective Business Communication Transcript

Narrator: There is a range of communication methods employed in business, both internally and externally. We'll talk to four businesses, who operate in very different environments, and see what they have to say about effective communication and its role in business success. Firstly, internal communications.

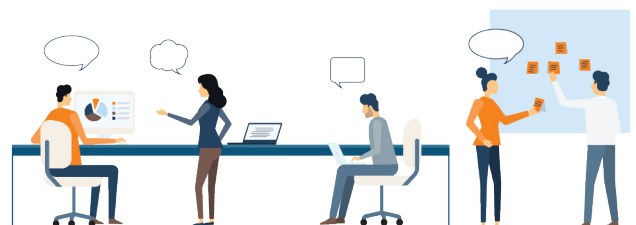
David Joy: In terms of internal communications, we've got a number of methods of communicating with our staff and our people. We use digital communication through Yammer and our websites. We use written information. We also have regular meetings and updates, and we have workshops on keeping the business up-to-date and informed.

Brent Novak: At a state-base level, we hold weekly meetings and we do that via Zoom, as well, so it's a lot more face-to-face than it is actually written. When there's messages that need to be communicated out quickly, and there's volumes of them, then email is the preferred method.

Narrator: Businesses also need to communicate messages externally, to their customers, suppliers or just the public at large.

David Joy: External communications are really important because they set the tone for the business, in terms of the public perception and the political positioning of a company, particularly a public agency, such as LCR, where we are operating in a political environment. But in terms of our external communications, we have a number of techniques and approaches that we use. We've got PR and communications consultants that we use. We do a number of projects where we're out consulting with the public in exhibitions. We release press releases. We do press interviews. We do website updates on our news and social media.

Colin Arnold: We'll often do public speaking or presentations; they can be to community groups, they can be to a business, they can be to councils, where we'll actually knock on their door, do a workshop with them, explain in detail what we do, show them some photographs, certainly some video, answer their questions. That's a really important part of our business and clarifies a lot of things that people don't quite understand. We do a lot of public speaking so, if there's a conference, we'll take every opportunity to speak at a conference.





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Lynn Cutress: With social media, using the right tool for the right message. Sometimes, of course, they do correlate but making sure that we actually are dealing with the audience and engaging those audience. So, it doesn't take a few minutes to put a post out, but it's actually working with a response to that post, which is actually how our team work really effectively and what consumes their time.

Narrator: Ensuring the message is on target, and appropriate for the audience, are crucial components of effective communication.

Brent Novak: Yeah, absolutely, technology is a very big part of how we communicate. However, when you have a hot deal that's released and you want to get it out to the market and your customers very quickly, that's where you might use things like WhatsApp or Messenger to get the message to get the to your customers ASAP, so they don't miss on a great deal. I suppose with our marketing strategy, we segment our databases based on their likes and dislikes and also where we know that they like travel, but also on current trends, seasonality and products that we know are hot in the marketplace.

Colin Arnold: People have misunderstandings and they think that it won't work, it can't work. So, to be able to effectively sit down, talk to people, explain to them why this works, why it's important, give them the broader picture, is invaluable. It's an education for most people and they really respond positively to it.

Lynn Cutress: Working with effective communication is absolutely vital to a charity. What we do is we make sure that we have a strong media team. It's not a big media team, but it's a strong one. So, very much with written journalistic material, we produce very straight forward press releases, knowing that the average journalist has very little time to sift and sort nowadays. So, making sure the message is very strong, written in plain English and in the English that actually relates to that particular publication. So, writing something for *The Guardian*, making sure that we understand and we've read *The Guardian*. If we're writing it for a small local paper, we think local.

David Joy: Being able to respond to circumstances that are unexpected is an important part of that as well. We have public relations consultants that help and support us and we provide information through them and manage our public relations internally as well.





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Narrator: There are advantages and disadvantages to all forms of communication, depending on its purpose and the circumstances in which it takes place.

David Joy: So with written presentations, the advantage is that it gives people the chance to think about the information that we're providing. So we like to send out board reports seven days before the board meeting, so the board members have plenty of time to review the reports, come up with their views and ask any questions. So, it cuts down the time of meetings if people have read the reports and can come back with their pertinent questions and challenges.

Colin Arnold: When we put in a contract proposal, we'll describe what we do and, in that, we will have spreadsheet that will detail very, very explicitly, how long we expect to be on site for, what we expect, what the charges are. And so they get a very, very complete picture of the financial aspects of the business.

Lynn Cutress: Written presentations are fantastic to work with. Unfortunately, everyone can do death by PowerPoint, so, it's making sure that you spend time with the audience to give a bit of engagement time. So, for example, with our internal communications, we ask people if they want to ask questions to do so in advance.

Colin Arnold: The advantage of the presentation is that you meet the customer, they meet you. You get to actually dispel some myths about goats and what they'll actually do. To be able to show them before and after images of what the goats have achieved on a site is invaluable. That's probably the most important thing. People are very skeptical and they usually go, 'Oh, wow, I never knew that we could do this.'

Brent Novak: I suppose the disadvantage is having that face-to-face time takes time and it can't be done as quickly as a text or a messenger or an email.

Brent Novak: Most of our senior leaders would receive somewhere upwards of 150 emails a day, so things can get missed. That's why we try and use multiple sources of communication, to make sure that if they're missed in one spot, they pick it up in another.





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Narrator: In many instances, it is a combination of communication methods that deliver successful outcomes. Lynn explains how effective communication drove improvements in horse welfare through the introduction of new government legislation.

Lynn Cutress: The introduction is the Control of the Horses Act. So, what we did is we worked with government to make sure they understood exactly what needed to be done. And from their perspective, what the problem was and how that problem could be fixed using the introduction of the piece of legislation. Then working and making sure that we produce expert witnesses, backed up by written reports, face-to-face communication and working in partnerships with other organisations, such as the RSPCA, to ensure that, somehow or another, a piece of legislation was brought in that actually fixes a problem.

David Joy: One recent success we've had is in promoting development of Manchester next door to Piccadilly station, where are working with partners, U&I, to deliver a major regeneration scheme. We've had public consultation exercise where 80% of the comments were supportive and generated positive response, which is regarded as very high in terms of promoting a development within a city area.

Narrator: Effective communication carried out using the right methods, according to the purpose of the communication and the targeted audience, is an essential element in the operations of every successful business.

