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Improving Employee Communications

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Improving Employee Communications

Site Communications Team

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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the findings and recommendations of the Sandia/California Site Communications Team based on activities during FY98. The important conclusions are that effective communications are everyone's business; careful planning and execution are required for effective communications; and communication planning can be described in steps easily understood by everyone. Included in this report is a quick reference (toolkit) for communication planning and implementation.

About the Site Communications Team

The Team owes much of its success to diverse knowledge in applied communications. Our pooled experience is summarized below.

Bob Tucker (team leader), Technical Communications Department: technical communications manager, technical writer, journal editor.

Randy Christman, Site Planning & Integration Group: marketing & planning specialist, library & records management manager

Beverly Kelley, Human Resources Department: human resources consultant

Jill Micheau, Site Planning & Integration Group: graphics arts specialist, production and management

Alan Pomplun, Technical Communications Department: broadcast media specialist, video productions

Barry Schrader, Public Affairs & Employee Communications Department: former newspaper editor, public affairs & employee communication manager

Acknowledgment

The Team would like to thank Paul Brewer for his support, from the time of the initial proposal for the group, to its implementation, and then throughout the year.

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Improving Employee Communications

Introduction

Everyone appreciates the importance of candid, relevant, timely business communications. When we receive such communications, they can assure us that we are working on the right things and have the right information for making decisions. They can also assure us that we are being supported with adequate compensation, benefits, etc.

What about when we are the sender? Given today's overwhelming flood of communications, how can we transmit important information to others and have some assurance it has been received and understood?

In fiscal year 1998 (FY98) the Sandia/California Site Communications Team was formed to address several questions about internal communications related to this one. The Team's initial charter was to design and implement processes for continuously

- (a) identifying key Sandia business issues and communicating them effectively; and
- (b) measuring and improving the effectiveness of internal communications.

The Team's approach to addressing this problem was iterative, based on the following simple methodology:

- form a model based on the Team's pooled knowledge, along with information from external sources;
- test the model on a project;
- evaluate the results;
- revise the model.

After a year of study, experimentation, and practice, the Site Communications Team concluded the following:

- Although a dedicated professional group can play a vital role in identifying and communicating key business issues, good communications are everyone's business and are important for mission success.
- There is no simple solution to good communications; careful planning and execution are required for effective implementation.
- Communication planning can be described in a few steps easily understood by anyone.
- There is a wealth of communication channels available, thanks to modern electronics and computers.

The next section describes the communication planning everyone should be aware of and practice.

Communication Planning

If there is one lesson everyone should remember, it is that good communications require careful, thoughtful planning. Upon first hearing a problem, there is a temptation to skip immediately to solutions, and the temptation only worsens as one learns a diverse set of communication techniques. The danger of yielding is to fall into a reaction mode of responding, which can only negate fundamental principles and purposes of communications. As a result, we recommend that this temptation be firmly pushed aside every time, and the analysis steps presented below followed diligently. The discipline of careful planning will be rewarded with sounder communications and greater respect for the communicator.

The steps in the process of communication planning can be summarized as a series of questions:

- ❖ **Why do I need to communicate?**
- ❖ **What do I want to achieve?**
- ❖ **Who are the target audiences?**
- ❖ **How should I communicate?**
- ❖ **How will I know if I have been successful?**

The subsections below discuss each step in more detail. For practical assistance, we have designed a Communication Plan template as a guide and quick reference (see Appendix A).

Why *not* Communicate?

Throughout a business day, each of us acquires new information, makes plans and decisions, and changes processes. Because of the sheer volume of these activities, we need a way of assessing and prioritizing the necessary communications associated with each. If you are unsure about communicating, a straightforward way of assessing and prioritizing is to ask,

- What are the consequences of poor communication?
- How will conduct of business be affected?
- How will individuals be affected personally?

The degree of severity will indicate the relative need for communications.

What should I Communicate?

Having decided that some form of communication is important, the next step is to ask, "What should the communication achieve?" Or, "What is the preferred future state, from a business and personal view?"

All business communications should have intentional business purposes. Is it desirable to achieve increased

Awareness?

Understanding?

Belief?

Commitment?

or some combination? By increased belief and commitment is meant increased belief in the importance of, and commitment to, a policy, program, process, etc. Since ultimately a company needs everyone to be committed to its mission, all business communications should have that end goal in mind, taken in the major steps listed above.

From a communications standpoint, before employees will be committed to a new policy or process, they must believe in it; before they will believe in it, they must understand it; and before they can understand it, they must become aware of it. The corresponding communications to achieve each must be crafted with the characteristics shown below¹:

Business Purpose-Increased	Primary Communication Characteristics
Awareness:	major points, timed for maximum attention
Understanding:	details, relevant to the audience
Beliefs:	evidence, consisting of facts and clear logic
Commitment:	involvement, such as through dialog or feedback

Who is (are) the audience(s)?

Audience analysis is crucial to communication planning. Steven Covey considered it so important that it became one of his seven principles: *Seek first to understand, and then to be understood*. Some basic questions to answer about the audiences—primary, secondary, etc.—are:

Who are they? (How many people are involved and what are their demographics?)

When should you communicate to them? (Now? In the future? After some event?)

How will the subject matter of the communication affect them? (Little? A lot?)

Will the subject matter be purely business, personal, or a combination?

Will they be affected temporarily or indefinitely?

Is the subject matter something in a planning stage or is it a final decision?

The answer to each question affects communication design. Audiences that can be gathered together in a single location can be addressed with one set of methods, whereas large, diverse groups require special techniques. If the subject matter of a communication will not become important until the distant future, it will take extra effort to get and keep everyone's attention; it is a good time to begin awareness, but also an opportunity to obtain feedback. As the time for a decision or its implementation becomes shorter, communications become increasingly urgent if they are to achieve employee

¹ A. Curely, 7th Corporate Communicators Conference, May 1998.

commitment. Communications left until immediately before or (worse) after a major decision will likely generate angry responses and degrade trust and respect in the decision maker(s).

Positive communications are relatively easy; negative ones require more attention, not only in picking the communicator, but in preparing the communicator (messengers may "get shot," no matter what they say in advance). As a rule of thumb, the larger the (negative) impact, the higher in management hierarchy the communicator should be, and whenever possible, the ultimate decision maker should be the communicator.

Purely business decisions are generally easier to communicate than those affecting employees personally, temporary changes are easier to communicate than permanent ones, and plans are easier to discuss than final decisions with no opportunity for change.

Appendix A contains a rubric summarizing these guidelines and for helping design communications.

How should I communicate?

Communications channels can be divided into written channels, from traditional paper to modern electronic ones, and oral channels, which include face-to-face interactions, telephone (live or recorded voice), and video (live or recorded). Because of their capabilities for great interactivity, oral communications tend to be more effective than written, but a combination can be more effective than either alone. A communication analysis should take into account that each channel has strengths and weaknesses (e.g., type of information most easily communicated by a channel), and that some people are more receptive to one form than another. If the audience is large and diverse, multiple, redundant-information channels are recommended to reach everyone.

In constructing the communication itself, one should pay attention to the following basic principles for effective communications:

- candidness: tell the whole story, honestly
- relevancy: match the message to the audience;
- interactivity: provide for and encourage feedback, set up opportunities for dialog
- timeliness: not too early, not too late
- clarity: clear and easy to understand
- accuracy: totally reliable

Appendix A contains tables of channels available at Sandia/California and descriptions of when they are most useful.

One highly regarded channel known to all companies is the cascade from top management through various levels down to all employees. In principle it ought to be the most thorough since each layer of management should take seriously the task of communicating to all those immediately under. Unfortunately, each layer (a) has its own time frame for communications, (b) has its own process for eventually contacting everyone, and (c) filters the information based on the perceived relative importance of the

subject matter² In particular, this filtering can be severe in cascading communications because different layers of management are focussed on different perspectives of the company's business, as shown in the table below.

Who	Focus of Interest
VPs	High Level Vision, Mission, Objectives
Directors	Center Mission, Objectives
Managers	Dept Results, Processes
Staff	Work Results, Processes

To overcome these deficiencies, some companies have communication programs for management.³

How will I know if I have been successful?

Every communication should include feedback to determine its effectiveness. At a minimum, those receiving the communication should learn where to send feedback and should be encouraged to do so. Appendix A covers additional methods for assessing.

Major Team Activities

The activities described below illustrate the communication planning steps.

Space Reduction Program

In December 1997, senior management at the CA site decided to close and demolish one of the original buildings, as part of a plan to reduce building space on site by 10% and to prepare for a new building, the Distributed Information Systems Laboratory (DISL). The Team became aware of the impact as a result of a memo from a director of those who would be affected, which happened to include one of the Team members. Although the building contained a number of vacant labs and only 50 employees, it had always been central to the site's mission and still housed a number of functions important to that mission.

Why Communicate? The Team concluded that the consequences of poor communication would be lack of planning for moves, lack of knowledge about how functions and services would be affected, and the emotional impact of seeing a 40-year-old core building demolished, perhaps without understanding the justification.

What Should the Communications Achieve? First, the entire site needed to become aware of the facts and how they would impact everyone's business. Second, it would be necessary to communicate a thorough understanding of the reasoning behind the demolition, and instill the belief that it was in everyone's long-term interests. Third, even though the decision was final, to gain employee commitment to the implementation there

² For further discussion, see for example R. D'Aprix, J. Emp. Comm. Mngmnt., March – April 1998, p. 56

³ E.g., Johnsons Wax, as reported by A. Curley at the 7th Corporate Communicators Conference, May 1998.

needed to be opportunities for feedback, allowance for the venting of frustrations, and validation of those frustrations by senior management.

Who are the Audiences? The Team identified three audiences: Those residing in the building (the primary group, small), those relying on functions carried out in the building (the secondary group, much larger), and the remainder of the site (tertiary). The first two groups were affected immediately; the rest of the site would be affected over the next two years. Similarly, the closure decision had high business and personal impact on the first two groups, but medium to low impact on the rest of the site.

How Communicate? Based on the above analysis, the Team developed a strategy for implementing the plan and obtained upper management support for carrying it out. In general, the more important the group, the more communications were directed toward the members and the more personal the communications became. For additional implementation details, see Appendix B.

How Successful were we? During the course of implementation, the Team assessed the effectiveness of the techniques through surveys and critiques of communication events. For example, survey cards were passed out and collected at dialog sessions, and the Team carried out a self-assessment debriefing after the sessions. Some other indicators of success were that over time surveys showed increased understanding of the decision, attendance at the dialog sessions dropped off and there was less venting, and Human Resources personnel reported that the building closure became less of an issue for employees.

CA Site VP Newsletter

The first VP Newsletter was prepared by one of the Team members (RC) in order to provide direct communication from the VP to all site employees, promote understanding of leadership decisions, and increase the credibility of senior management. Before publication, the first few issues received numerous rewrites by several people over several weeks. The Team concluded a more efficient approach would be to video tape an interview with VP8000 Tom Hunter, publish a transcript of the interview, provide copies of the tape to all centers, and construct a web page for viewing the interview via video streaming. This approach would have the added benefit of giving the VP practice in front of a camera. In the future the Team hopes to persuade other members of senior management to participate in similar types of interviews.

The current plan is carry out around six interviews per year. Each will have a three-part format to ensure continuity and consistency:

- 1) a review of previously discussed issues (final outcomes, lessons learned)
- 2) a discussion of one or two topics of current interest
- 3) a preview of future issues.

The first session took place in early June, with Sheryl Buck as the interviewer. After some inadvertent delays, the published transcript and video tapes for centers were

distributed in early July, and web-based video streaming was ready for a small test audience a week later.

Feedback on the printed and web versions has been generally positive, but by no means overwhelmingly so. The Team has identified several process improvements for future issues.

Bicycle Safety

The bicycle safety issue provided an opportunity to put a number of communication techniques to the test.

In early June, an employee had a bicycle accident on site that could have resulted in a serious injury. As it happened, numerous examples of unsafe riding practices had been observed around the site, and bicycles accidents had become the principal contributor to on-site injuries. Consequently, environmental safety and health managers recommended, and Site Operations management implemented, a stand-down of all bicycle riding on site. Within 24 hours of the accident, all Sandia bicycles were taken to an off-limits storage area, and no personal bikes were allowed to be ridden on site.

A communications analysis showed that

- essentially everyone on site was affected by the decision,
- the timing was immediate with no advanced notice,
- the impact was perceived as severe and possibly permanent, and
- relatively few people had any say in the decision.

This meant the site would have a highly volatile situation that would require rapid communications from directors, an opportunity for face-to-face communications between directors and employees, and a mechanism for site-wide feedback.

To get the word out as soon as possible regarding policy, implementation, and updates, redundant mass-communication channels were used: AMRs (immediate email, site-wide or managers only), TNT (site-wide daily announcements, next day), site-wide voice mail, and posters.⁴ The next issue of the site newsletter carried the story in depth.

Opportunities for employees to voice opinions were provided in two formats: a session in the auditorium hosted by the directors ("brown bag" lunch), and a discussion database ("chat room") on the internal web.

The Team also helped with the meeting design of the brown-bag lunch, starting with the purpose/expectations of the meeting (better understanding of the policy, opportunity for employees to vent and directors to validate employee frustrations, and a means to channel energy into ways to improve bicycle safety), and including the approaches to achieve those expectations (presentation of events and data leading to the policy,

⁴ Posters were of two types: those placed at entrances and near bikes—put up by staff from the environmental, health, and safety group—and those placed in department locations—put up by secretaries who received them via email.

acknowledgment of employee adverse response, invitation for employees to suggest improvements, and non-defensive listening to employee venting).

From the speed at which employees adhered to the new policy (e.g., walking personal bikes on site), and the numbers that participated in the brown bag lunch and chat room, the communications were successful.

Recommendations

Although the Site Communications Team learned a great deal in ten months, there remain a number of opportunities for improvement:

- This learning needs to be communicated to the rest of the site, such as through presentations, training sessions, and dissemination of the Communication Toolkit.
- We need to take advantage of new developments in communication. To do so, we should listen to what other professional communicators are saying about new communication vehicles and how to introduce them to a corporation.⁵
- Before there can be improvement, there must be measures to gauge improvement. Thus, we should also learn how other professional communicators are measuring communication effectiveness and what metrics are being used to judge the communication health of a corporation.
- Finally, to understand where we want to be, we need to find role models for effective employee communications and devise steps for achieving our own vision.

⁵An example of an exciting new communication vehicle is video streaming to the desktop, whose potential we are just beginning to exploit.

Appendix A: Communication Toolkit

This appendix summarizes the recommended tools for good communications. They are intended as guide lines and not recipes; i.e., each communication should be analyzed on its own merits.

Overall Planning Questions

Why not communicate?
What do I want to achieve?
Who are the target audiences?
How should I communicate?
How will I know if I have been successful?

Communication Planning Sheet

Title/Description: (Issue or event)			
Purpose/Expectations: (What should the communication plan/event accomplish)			
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Audience: Groups, subgroups, individuals; may change over time			
Audience Needs: What are their expectations? OK to work back & forth between this block and overall Purpose			
How/Who: Match message to audience needs; match messenger to message.			
When/Where: (Time/Location)			

How to answer "Why not Communicate?"

After acquiring new information, or planning or making a change in a policy or process, ask:

What are the consequences of poor communication?

How will conduct of business be affected?
How will individuals be affected personally?

The degree of severity of the answers will indicate the relative need for communicating.

How to answer "What do I want to achieve?"

Every business communication should have a business purpose. The table below lists distinct purposes—the ultimate goal being employee commitment—along with key characteristics required for the associated communications.

<u>Business Purpose—Increased</u>	<u>Primary Characteristics: Principle</u>
Awareness:	major points, timed for maximum attention
Understanding:	details, relevant to the audience
Beliefs:	evidence, consisting of facts and clear logic
Commitment:	involvement, such as through dialog or feedback

How to answer "Who are the target audiences?"

Audience analysis is crucial to communication planning. It occupies a central location on the Communication Planning Sheet (previous page). On the next page is a useful rubric for audience analysis.

Another important consideration is cultural analysis of the target audience(s). What is their knowledge level, what environment do they primarily work in, and, as a result, what are their key motivators (sometimes called "hot buttons"). These considerations are especially important for communications up and down the organizational hierarchy of a company. The table below lists a few characteristics of different levels.

<u>Who</u>	<u>Focus of Interest</u>
VPs	High Level Vision, Mission, Objectives
Directors	Center Mission, Objectives
Managers	Dept Results, Processes
Staff	Work Results, Processes

Audience Assessment Rubric

1. Who is Affected?

Small Group

- "Small" means accessible by direct verbal communications
- Use memos to document details

Large Group

- Requires mass communication tools and multiple channels to reach all of those affected
- Use meetings to reach out to interested groups

2. When are they affected?

Future

- Heads-up notification to those most likely to care
- Allow those affected to influence implementation
- Opportunity for communication plan

Soon

- The closer to implementation, the more urgent the communication
- Allow those affected to voice concerns; validate those concerns

3. How are they affected?

Low (negative)

- Use standard communication channels for purely business changes

High (negative)

- Maximum communication effort
- Match messenger with message

- The more personal the change, the greater the impact
- The longer the duration of the change, the greater the impact
- The more rigid the decision, the greater the impact

How to answer "How should I communicate?"

Basic Principles:

- candidness: tell the whole story, honestly
- relevancy: match the message the audience; match the messenger to the message
- interactivity: encourage feedback, set up opportunities for dialog
- timeliness: not too early, not too late
- clarity: clear and easy to understand
- accuracy: totally reliable

Trust Rule: Managers should hear news before staff; staff should hear news before the public.

The tables on the next pages describe communication channels at Sandia/CA.

How to answer "How will I know if I have been successful?"

A communication is effective when it accomplishes its objective(s). There are two types of data for assessing communications:

qualitative (such as comments, receptive attitude, participation), and
quantitative (metrics).

The most important characteristics of these data are that they should be prompt, simple, frequent, and shared (with the communicator or decision maker).

The primary tool for measuring effectiveness is the survey, and the best surveys are interactive ones that take place immediately following the event (these are known as point-of contact surveys; in contrast, mass surveys, sent out on paper or via e-mail some time after the communication, provide the fewest responses and the least information).

For a site-wide survey (1,000 people), one only needs 40 responses for a 95% confidence level.

In preparing the a survey, the following guidelines (courtesy John Wheeler) are helpful:

- Design the questions to answer exactly what do one wants to know.
- There are two types of questions: fixed answers and open answers. The advantage of fixed answers is that they can be analyzed statistically.
- Always include one general question with a scale from 1 to 10 (Sandia required, for benchmarking and future comparisons).

For live events (town meetings, etc.) other characteristics can help gage overall effectiveness, such as the percentage of invitees attending, the mood of the attendees (alert? interested? etc.), the amount of interactivity, and the types of questions asked.

Some Communication Channels Available at the CA Site

Channel	When to Use	Advantages	Disadvantages
Presentations & dialog sessions	For messages directed to targeted groups	Allows one to engage group in dialog; real-time addition of more information.	Group size limited to 250 (auditorium); need communication & extra time to bring grip together; may not reach entire group of interest.
Paper Memo	For messages directed to targeted groups	Allows details for archival purposes; "push"	Noninteractive; delivery about one day
e-mail	For messages directed to targeted groups	Fast; allows accurate details & archival record.	Feedback loops have time lag; entire group may not read message.
Site e-mail News (daily)	For site-wide broadcasts	Reasonably fast (next day); allows accurate details & archival record	May not reach everyone intended. One-way communication.
Corporate e-mail News (daily)	For news of corporate interest	Reasonably fast (next day); distributes summaries corporate-wide	Must be of sufficient interest to corporate Sandia
Immediate site-wide e-mail broadcast ("AMR")	For urgent site-wide broadcasts	Fast (same day); allows accurate details	Limited to a one-paragraph summary; may not reach everyone intended
Voice Mail	For telephone messages to groups or the site	Fast (same day); voice message more personal than e-mail	Limited to a summary; may not reach everyone intended
Web Page	For site-wide distribution of detailed information.	Relatively inexpensive (compared to paper)	Pull technology; target must have access
Site Newsletter	For site-wide distribution of stories with a human-interest angle	Paper, delivered to everyone on site (push); people take it with them	Comes out every two weeks; should be of sufficient interest to corporate Sandia
Corporate Newspaper	For corporate-wide distribution of stories with a human-interest angle	Corporate-wide distribution; space for detail and pictures	Published biweekly
Posters/Flyers	For site-wide distribution of announcements	Eye-catching if placed at entrances; can also email to all department secretaries for posting	Large ones are expensive to produce; limited detail; labor-intensive to put up

Selecting Communication Channels

Who is affected?

Channel	Small Group	Large Group
Presentations & dialog sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for interactive communications; can be organized quickly for small groups when you invite entire group by name - Oral information evaporates unless steps are taken (e.g., flip charts, minutes); need special follow up for those that do not attend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for personal delivery of information - Size of group limited to space of location although video links can help Oral information evaporates unless steps are taken (e.g., flip charts, minutes); need special follow up for those that do not attend
Paper Memo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use when no electronic channel available, or you want to make a special impact - Many people now turned off by unnecessary paper mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use when no electronic channel available, or you want to make a special impact - Many people now turned off by unnecessary paper mail
e-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use to get information quickly to targeted group(s) - Entire group may not receive e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- Not recommended unless specific mailing lists available; do not use for site-wide distribution
Site e-mail News (daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- Not recommended except when exact group membership is not known 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Highly recommended for announcements when exact makeup of targeted group is unknown - 5 -10% of the population do not read
Corporate e-mail News (daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- Not recommended except when exact group membership is not known 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for announcements of corporate-side interest - Permits only about a paragraph of detail
Immediate site-wide e-mail broadcast ("AMR")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- Not recommended except when exact group membership is not known 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for brief announcements that must appear immediately - Only those logged in to computer e-mail will receive
Voice Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for personal delivery of short messages - May not reach everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for brief announcements that must appear immediately - May not reach everyone
Web Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Not recommended unless target group is going to be around for some time (e.g., a standing committee) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for resource information - Passive; can be partially overcome by active message drawing attention to pages
Site Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not recommended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for human interest touch on communications Paper travels easily - Appears every two weeks
Corporate Newspaper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not recommended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for human interest touch on communications of corporate-wide interest Paper travels easily - Appears every two weeks
Posters/Flyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use for announcements in group locations - May not necessarily reach entire group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use for announcements at entrances and frequently visited locations - May not necessarily reach entire group

Selecting Communication Channels (continued)

When are they affected?

Channel	Future	Soon
Presentations & dialog sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for interactive communications and feedback on proposals - May be difficult to get interested group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for personal delivery of information - Takes some lead time to plan and execute
Paper Memo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for "heads up" announcements - Many people now turned off by unnecessary paper mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Use when no electronic channel available, or you want to make a special impact - Many people now turned off by unnecessary paper mail
e-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for "heads up" announcements - Entire group may not receive e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- Not recommended unless specific mailing lists available; do not use for site-wide distribution
Site e-mail News (daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for "heads up" announcements - 5 -10% of the population do not read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Highly recommended to announce same-week events & changes - 5 -10% of the population do not read
Corporate e-mail News (daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for "heads up" announcements of corporate interest - Ability to reach interested readership unknown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for announcements of corporate-side interest - Permits only about a paragraph of detail
Immediate site-wide e-mail broadcast ("AMR")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not recommended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for brief announcements that must appear immediately - Only those logged in to computer e-mail will receive
Voice Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +/- Not recommended except for short "heads-up" messages with a personal touch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for brief announcements that must appear immediately - May not reach everyone
Web Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for "heads up" announcements and planning documents - Pull technology may not reach intended audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for resource information - Unless framework already exists, takes time to implement
Site Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good to advertise planned events and changes, with a human touch - Ability to reach interested readership unknown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for human interest touch on communications Paper travels easily - Appears every two weeks
Corporate Newspaper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good to advertise planned events and changes of corporate interest, with a human touch - Ability to reach interested readership unknown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for human interest touch on communications of corporate-wide interest Paper travels easily - Appears every two weeks
Posters/Flyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good to advertise planned events and changes in group locations - May not necessarily reach entire group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for announcements at entrances and frequently visited locations - May not necessarily reach entire group

Selecting Communication Channels (continued)

How are they affected?

Channel	Low (negative) Impact	High (negative) Impact
Presentations & dialog sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for personalized messages to small groups - May be difficult to get interested group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Highly recommend for personal delivery of information, feedback, venting - Messenger may be personally attacked
Paper Memo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for announcements - Many people now turned off by paper mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommend only when no electronic channel available, or you want to make a special impact - Many people now turned off by paper mail
e-mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for announcements - Entire group may not receive e-mail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for fast announcements to targeted groups - Entire group may not receive e-mail
Site e-mail News (daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for announcements with some detail in an attachment - 5 -10% of the population do not read 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Highly recommended to announce same-week events & changes - 5 -10% of the population do not read
Corporate e-mail News (daily)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for announcements of corporate interest - Ability to reach interested readership unknown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for announcements of corporate interest - Permits only about a paragraph of detail
Immediate site-wide e-mail broadcast ("AMR")	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not recommended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for brief announcements that must appear immediately - Only those logged in to computer e-mail will receive
Voice Mail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for announcements and invitations - Not good for a lot of detail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Recommended for brief announcements that must appear immediately - May not reach everyone
Web Page	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good as a resource location - Pull technology may not reach intended audience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good to as a resource to explain decisions - Pull technology may not reach intended audience
Site Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good to explain decisions, with a human touch - Ability to reach interested readership unknown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for human interest touch on communications; paper travels easily - Appears every two weeks
Corporate Newspaper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for explaining decisions with a corporate interest, with a human touch - Ability to reach interested readership unknown 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good for human interest touch on communications of corporate-wide interest; paper travels easily - Appears every two weeks
Posters/Flyers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good to advertise planned events - May not necessarily reach entire group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Good to advertise planned events - May not necessarily reach entire group

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Appendix B: Communications for the Space Reduction Program

When one of us (AP) joined the Sandia/CA Space Reduction Team, little effort had been applied toward communicating the Program's objectives to the site staff. Residents of the buildings identified as candidates for demolition by a Facilities study were understandably upset by the rumors and misinformation circulating about the site, having had little or no direct communication from upper management. The Site Communications Team developed a strategy to (1) quickly bring site staff up to date on the Program's objectives, processes and current status, and (2) keep them informed throughout the course of the multiyear program.

The first action was to draft a memo to all residents of the immediately impacted buildings in order to describe the reasons for space reduction, why those two buildings were impacted, and the processes for staff and function relocation. The memo also introduced the Program's primary communication vehicles, a web site and several bulletin boards in the impacted buildings. The web site and the bulletin boards contain program plans, schedules, status reports, upcoming activities, copies of management presentations and a question/answer/feedback section. Both have been updated roughly every two weeks, or whenever any significant information becomes available. Site-wide news announcements over email have informed everyone of major web site updates. As of the first of August, the web site had been visited more than 1,500 times.

Another communication vehicle, the brown bag lunch, has provided staff with more detailed, first-hand program information and has given them the opportunity to ask questions and express their concerns. The first of three such meetings (with more planned around major milestones) was held approximately one month after the communication plan was in place. Management was represented by the program manager and two directors. Turnout was good, with approximately 75 attendees. The following two meetings had much lower turnout, presumably due to the effectiveness of the continuous communication campaign, but perhaps only because the "fire had died down" and there had been no new contentious issues. VP Tom Hunter (8000) participated in the most recent meeting.

Communication responsibilities to the Space Reduction Program included development of a Communications Management Plan and the Document Management Plan, both of which are part of the overall Program Plan. The Communications Management Plan defines the types of information to be communicated, stakeholders of information, who is responsible for communication, the frequency of communication, and the methods of communication. The Document Management Plan explains the information server used to store all program documents and provides user instructions.

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