



# Leveraging networks in a large organisation

Employee communication in  
Unilever

# Life wasn't all that bad!

## Head of Internal Communication @ Unilever





# The challenge of a **long** reach

- 240,000 employees
  - 110,000 not on intranet / web
- 2 divisions & 10 regions
  - Two Chairmen
- 100+ countries
  - 200 + operating companies
- 22,000 managers



# Unilever's Global Internal Communication Network



# Communication Networks (1)

- Do not replace the normal organisational chain of command – just support it
- Provide another conduit for planned internal communication
  - Aid co-ordinated release of key messages and breaking news (fewer surprises)
  - Allows local context to be added to global messages in a timely manner
  - Helps deliver consistency of message, audience segmentation and communication reach
  - Over time, become a means of ensuring communication representation – a contact point for stories & feedback

# Communication Networks (2)

- The network rep is a resource to leaders who have limited time for communication planning
  - Its not about 'spin'
  - But there is a time and expertise component
- Require a clear protocol and commitment to stick to it
  - One stuck boulder can cause a cascade to dry up fast
  - One surprise lobbed over the top can undermine a lot of employee good will