



# Internal Communications Strategy Template

Your Essential Guide For Creating Successful Internal Communications Plans



# Four Steps To Communications Success

Every great creation needs a blueprint for success. Buildings, vehicles, technology... and internal communications.

An internal communications strategy template is your blueprint for success. Delivering messages that build knowledge, inspire performance and boost engagement.

This guide is how you get there.

For more than ten years, SnapComms has worked with internal communicators at leading organizations across the world. Our platform has delivered over 1 billion messages.

We've distilled our experience into a four-step process for creating your own custom internal communications strategy – whatever your organization's size or sector.

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# Step 1: Where Are You Now?

Start by analyzing the current situation – your audiences, influences and existing communications performance.



## Audiences

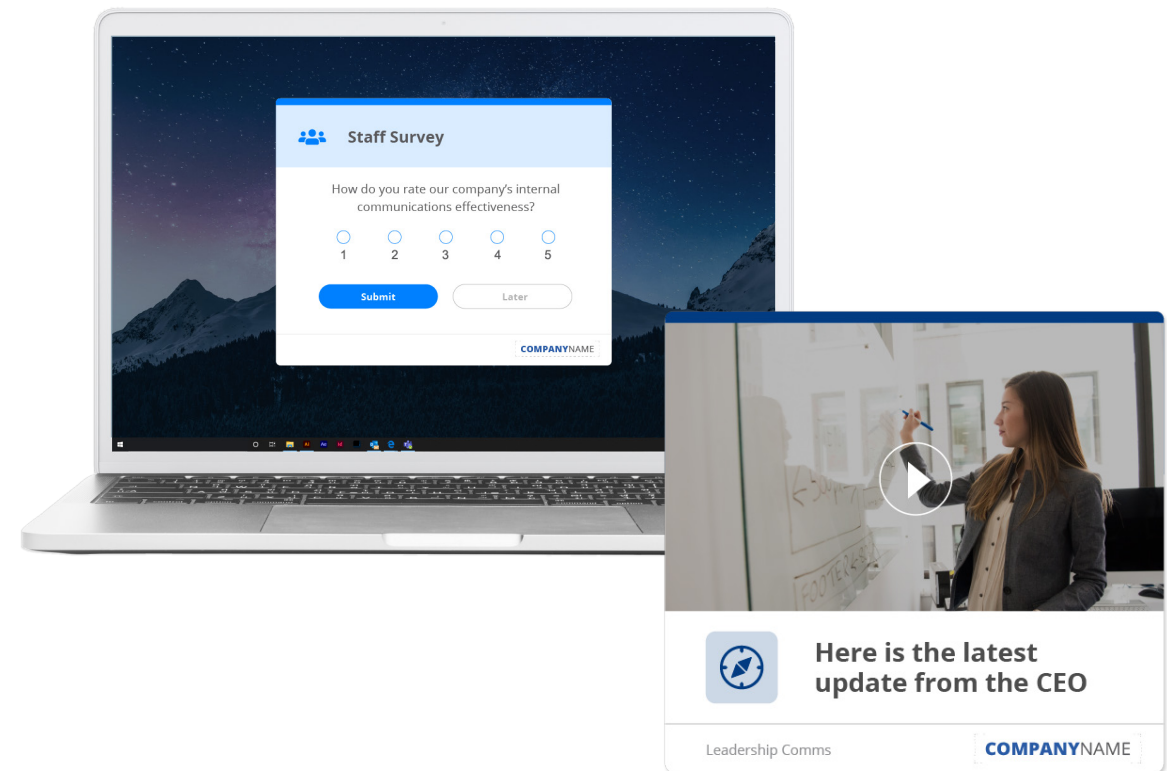
Collect information on the composition of your organization. This should include number of staff, locations, departments, demographics, devices used and any other factors related to your organizational structure.

Identify any trends or planned operational changes that could affect this. For example, will staff be increasingly working from home? Will you be recruiting more part-time or contract staff? Are there plans for expansion into new territories?

Find out the communication needs of your employees by running a short survey. Enquire into their recall of recent company communications, how they'd prefer to be communicated with and their ideas for improvement.

For example, some may prefer a short video update from the CEO that they can view at any time instead of a town hall meeting which interrupts their day.

This information can then be used later for audience segmentation to deliver targeted, highly relevant messages – key to achieving greater readership and response.



# Step 1: Where Are You Now?



## Environmental Influences

Consider which issues, needs and challenges are influencing your communications. Is it difficult to communicate with staff working in certain environments, such as call centers, warehouses or frontline retail?

What specific messaging needs do different departments have? For example, is cyber security a priority for IT teams, or new product launches a key focus for Marketing?

Assess how much these issues, needs and influences have impacted your ability to successfully communicate to staff – or are likely to in future.

Form a small working group of 6-8 people to help identify these issues and garner support. This group should represent different functional areas, demographics and seniority across the organization.





# Step 1: Where Are You Now?



## Current Communications

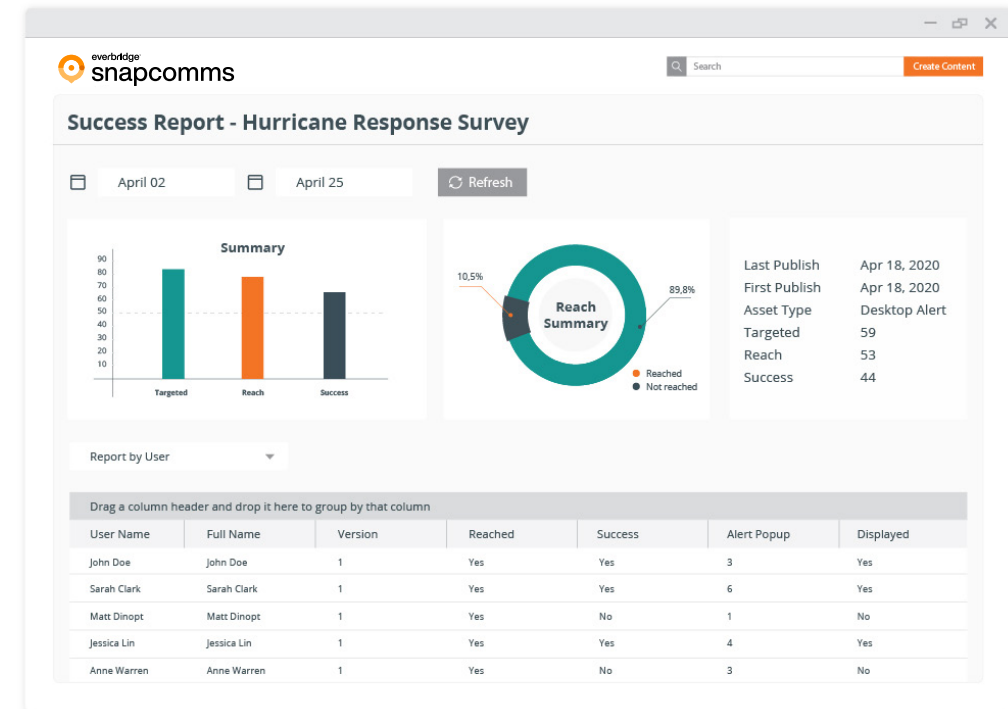
Understand how your current internal communications have been performing and what level of employee engagement has been achieved. These findings will reveal where your efforts need to be concentrated and enable you to benchmark for future progress.

Identify which current communication channels are the most effective. Are they measurable, what impact are they having, who's reading them, and do readership rates differ by location, job function or demographics?

Conversely, which channels are least effective? Are there delivery or performance issues, such as low readership, slow delivery or device incompatibility?

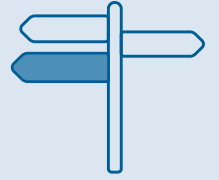
Match your current channels with your communications content. Are certain channels more effective for specific types of messages? For example, are messages about compliance with new company policies being ignored by staff when delivered via email?

Do you need a mix of formats that suit different content to get message cut-through? Remember that achieving better results means exploring new ways of doing things.



# Step 2: Where Do You Want To Be?

Now that you know your current situation, you can begin to plan what you want it to be. This step is about defining your objectives and ensuring alignment with overall company direction.

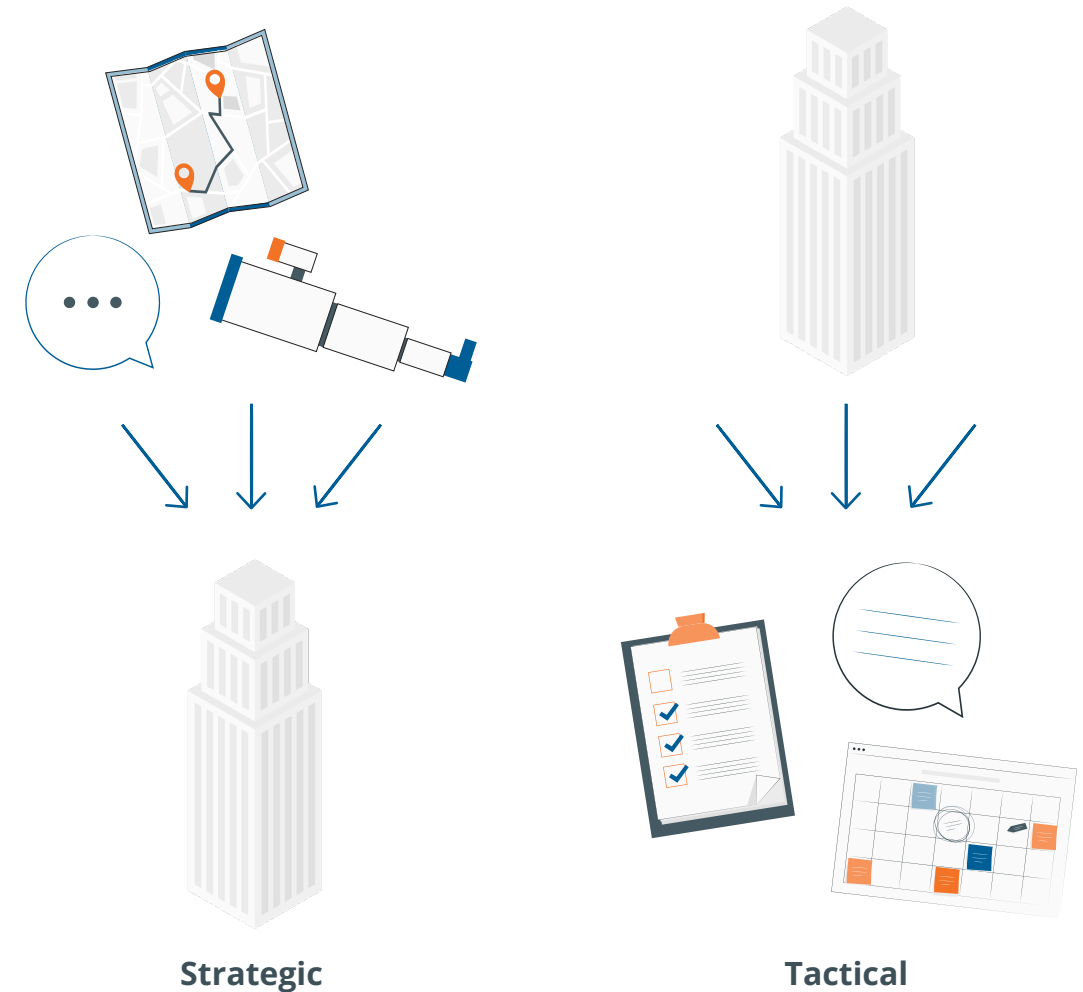


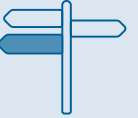
## Future Focus

Start with your vision for the future of internal communications in your organization. How does it look – is it a centralized IC function or decentralized by location or functional area?

What role do you envisage internal communications having in the overall company – is it tactical (such as supporting internal promotional campaigns) or strategic (such as informing and guiding company direction)? What elements of the organization's structure and operations will enable this – and what could detract from it?

Don't feel constrained by what you think is likely to happen – the important thing is to visualize where you want to be. From this, you can begin to create objectives, priorities and plans.





# Step 2: Where Do You Want To Be?

## Business Goals

Internal communication is most effective – and most valuable – when it aligns with overall business goals. Consult your organization’s business plan for detail on KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) and core projects at both company and departmental level. This will provide you useful information on where to expend your internal communications efforts.

For example, your business plan may include a KPI like Increase up-sell revenue from customers by 20%. That means Customer Success teams will need to be armed with the right information and resources to encourage customers to purchase more of your products.

Therefore, the communication priorities are to:

- 1. Ensure Customer Success Managers (CSMs) know where to find the resources they need
- 2. Keep CSMs focused on working towards the 20% goal

Key initiatives for functional areas should also be included in your planning for communication activities. For example, an IT Department goal around improving cyber security performance can be summarized as:

**Business Goal:**

Achieve 100% success in thwarting malicious cyber-attacks

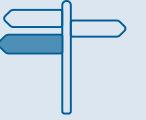
**Staff Action/Response:**

All employees aware of and comply with information security policies

**Communication Priority:**

Reinforce importance of proper process and test understanding





# Step 2: Where Do You Want To Be?

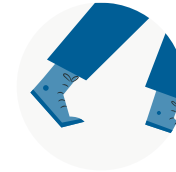
## Communication Priorities

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Now you know what the primary business objectives are, you can start to form your communication priorities. Some examples are listed here but try to add as much detail as you can to help achieve the right outcome.

- Promoting the organizational mission and values
- Improving employee engagement
- Driving behavioral change (such as around adoption of new processes)
- Building workplace culture
- Launching a new product, system or campaign
- Promoting collaboration and innovation

Consider what response you want staff to have to your communications. What do you need employees to do? This could either be a physical action or an emotional change – that is, a response of act vs feel.



**Actions** could include visiting a website or taking a survey – these are generally noticeable and measurable.

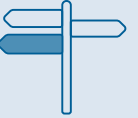


**Behavioral changes**, like following a new process or adhering to organizational values, are often longer-term and more subtle in effect.

Remember that it's often easier to increase awareness and understanding than it is to change behaviors and attitudes. An extended campaign, comprising a range of messages that get drip-fed and repeated over time, can be highly influential.

Other initiatives, such as a deadline-driven sales incentive, will require high-impact, short-burst tactics.





# Step 2: Where Do You Want To Be?

## Setting Objectives

When you come to set objectives, be specific about what you want to achieve. For example, 'Improve employee engagement' is quite broad and difficult to measure.

Consider what the success indicators for each objective are. Is it a hard metric, such as 'Achieve 100% readership of all important announcements within 60 seconds' or 'Maintain a workplace satisfaction rate of 80%'?

Alternatively, is it a softer metric, such as 'Increase employee engagement by 25%'?

Other examples could include:

- Increase staff retention rate by 20%
- Improve participation in training programs/company events by 50%
- Achieve average employee survey completion rates of 85%
- Ensure 100% employee acknowledgement of new HR policies

Whatever your objective, make sure you have the means to measure it. Do you have a tool for collating information on employee attitudes and beliefs? Can you measure staff engagement with platforms like the company intranet?

Enlist the assistance of any admins or IT staff early, before your campaign begins – that way you're collecting valuable data right from the start. This is where it's wise to have good relationships with your IT teams!

**Create your Communication Strategy Overview using the example template provided**



Communication Strategy Template  
Prepared by [name] – [date]

1. SITUATION  
Summary: (brief overview of current situation and issues to be addressed)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Considerations: (summary of environmental influences and relevant company changes)  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. OBJECTIVES  
Communication Objectives: (performance metrics, process improvements etc. to be achieved)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Company Goals: (alignment to overall company objectives or KPIs)  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. TACTICS  
Tactical Activity: (summary of key activities including audiences, timing and success measures)  
1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Who's Involved: (staff or teams required to support activities)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Resource Requirements: (technology, tools, budget or other requirements)  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Step 3: How Will You Get There?

This step is where the rubber hits the road. It's where the best tactics and most effective communication channels are combined to hit your objectives out of the park.



## Communication Tasks

With the help of your cross-functional working party, make a list of all the main communication tasks scheduled for the year. Each task will require a tailored Communications Plan. A simple spreadsheet like the example below can be sufficient, and will act as a useful, reusable checklist for each new communications initiative.

[illegible]

Consider achievement timeframes – not just your overall goal, but also milestones you need to hit along the way. What results will you need to achieve by halfway through the campaign, in order to hit your ultimate objective? How far should you expect to be a week after the initial launch?

Tasks targeting behavioral change will require a sustained, repeated program of activity using multiple communication channels. A one-off email sent to all staff explaining the risks of cyber-attacks will be ineffective in addressing poor online habits and driving permanent change.

# Step 3: How Will You Get There?



## Audience Targeting

Your employees' working environments will influence how best to communicate with them. For example, call center staff are constantly dealing with customers, and therefore dislike disruption. Visible but less intrusive channels (such as Desktop Tickers) would be appropriate.

Similarly, workers in distribution or manufacturing roles would need to be targeted through broad-reaching, high-visibility digital signage.

Other staff who are not permanently working at desk-based computers, such as healthcare workers on wards or sales teams out in the field, rely heavily upon mobile communications.

The diverse workforces operating in today's organizations require different approaches to communications. Staff in different age groups, or from different cultural backgrounds, will consume information differently. Younger employees will favor highly-visual, interactive messaging, for example.

Segment your employees into distinct groups based on their working environment or communication preferences. Set these groups up in your communication platforms to enable easy targeting of relevant messages – in the format and channel best suited to them.



# Step 3: How Will You Get There?



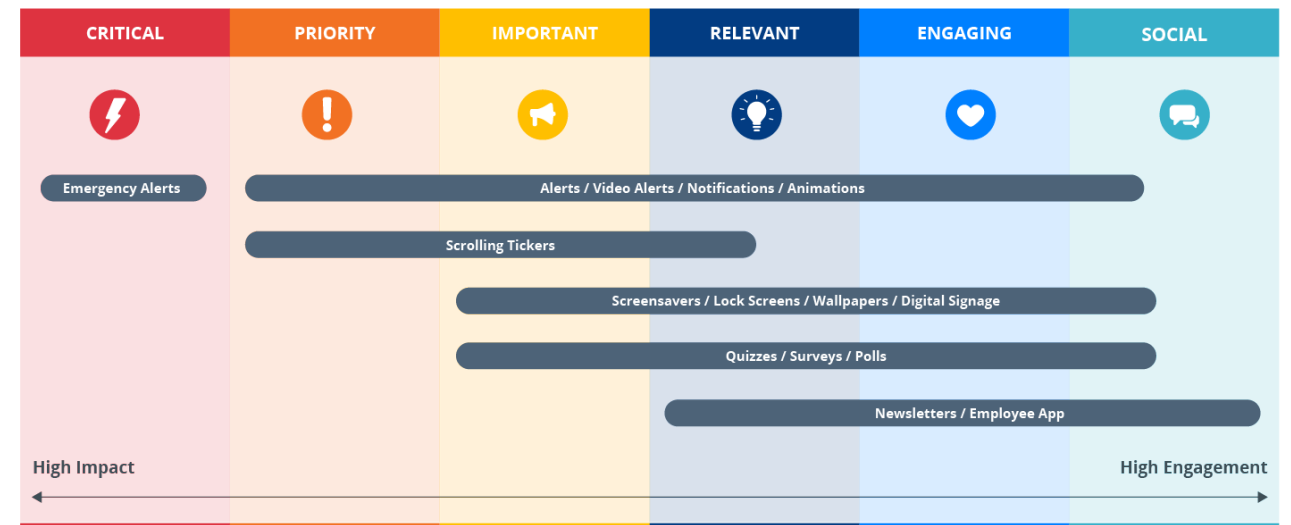
## Channel Selection

When it comes to sending messages that get attention and engagement, you need to think beyond traditional formats like email and intranet.

Channel selection is fundamental to communication effectiveness. There are many channels now available, all with attributes and drawbacks. Some are effective at fostering dialogue, but weaker at fast notifications. Others are useful for blanket coverage, but not for targeted messaging.

The type of content you need to communicate, and the urgency with which staff must consume it, will help define the most appropriate channels. For example, communicating IT outage notifications, promoting campaign events and soliciting feedback to company announcements all have very different purposes – and require very different communication selections.

It's advisable to use multiple channels to maximize the best attributes of each and reduce the risk in relying on a single, overloaded channel.







# Step 3: How Will You Get There?

Consider the following when selecting the communication channels to use in your campaign.

- 1. Objective:** Which channel best aligns with your objective (e.g. to raise awareness, allay fears, influence attitudes, change behavior etc.)? If your objective is to achieve widespread workplace behavioral change, for example, you'll need a channel with broad reach and high repetition.
- 2. Response:** How do you want employees to react to your message – and which channel is best suited to deliver this? Some channels are ideal for time-critical mass notifications (such as [Desktop Alerts](#)), while others are better suited to lifting employee engagement (such as [Surveys](#) or [Quizzes](#)).
- 3. Audience:** Which employees need to see the message – and which channels will ensure they don't miss it? Some staff will prefer certain formats (e.g. video), while some will need to consume information via specific devices (e.g. mobile or digital screens).
- 4. Urgency:** How critical is it that your message is sent and read fast? Emergencies and other crises are times when staff must see messages immediately to keep themselves and others safe. Important leadership updates may have lower criticality but still need to be read today, whereas culture or wellness messages can be read at the most suitable time for staff.
- 5. Practicality:** Which channels give you best 'bang for buck', considering your communication schedule, budget and resources? The value of each channel lies in weighing their cost against their effectiveness in achieving objectives.

## Channel selection and the Communications Spectrum:

The Communications Spectrum is a unique strategic framework for successful communications. It aligns business objectives with communication priorities and message outputs to improve channel selection and effectiveness.

The Communications Spectrum is a highly-effective resource for communication plans – [contact the SnapComms team](#) to learn more about this.

CRITICAL	PRIORITY	IMPORTANT	RELEVANT	ENGAGING	SOCIAL
 Emergency or urgent communication I need to read this now to be safe.	 Time-sensitive communications I need to read this as soon as possible.	 Crucial for business operation I should read this sometime today.	 Valuable information for staff performance I should read this during the next 2-3 days.	 Helpful content for all staff I should try to read this sometime this week.	 Workplace culture and wellbeing content I'll read this if it interests me and I have time.



# Step 4: How Will You Know If It Worked?

The final step is about tracking results and implementing a cycle of continuous improvement.

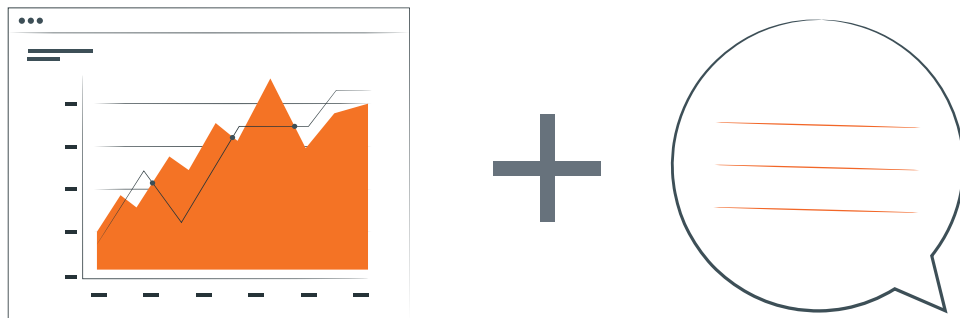


## Measurement

With all the hard work you've invested in your plan, it's essential to measure the outcomes. Put systems in place to track how achievement is progressing against your objectives. What's working well – and, more importantly, what isn't?

Delve into the data to identify improvements that can be made immediately. Seek to enrich the data with feedback and suggestions from employees themselves.

Continuously re-evaluating your communications strategy will ensure your communications remain aligned with your overall business goals.



## Evaluate and Evolve

Use channel tracking and analytics tools to identify which channels have been more successful. This could be measured through reach, message opens, readership, interactions, video views or any other metric which matches your objective.

Also confirm which messages employees engage with the most, and which ones they avoid. This can provide valuable clues about constructing your messages better, using different wording, increasing (or decreasing) repetition or using different formats (such as imagery, video or interactive tools).

Build a quarterly evaluation of your communications strategy, but keep in mind the bigger picture. For example, if your communication strategy is responsible for alerting staff about an IT outage, then your timely notifications are likely to have reduced the number of Helpdesk calls and tickets logged with the Technical Support team, saving time and improving productivity.

Your evaluation should also include response to and attendance levels at training sessions and company events, employee engagement survey results and any other results which demonstrate the value of your internal communications activities.

# Step 4: How Will You Know If It Worked?



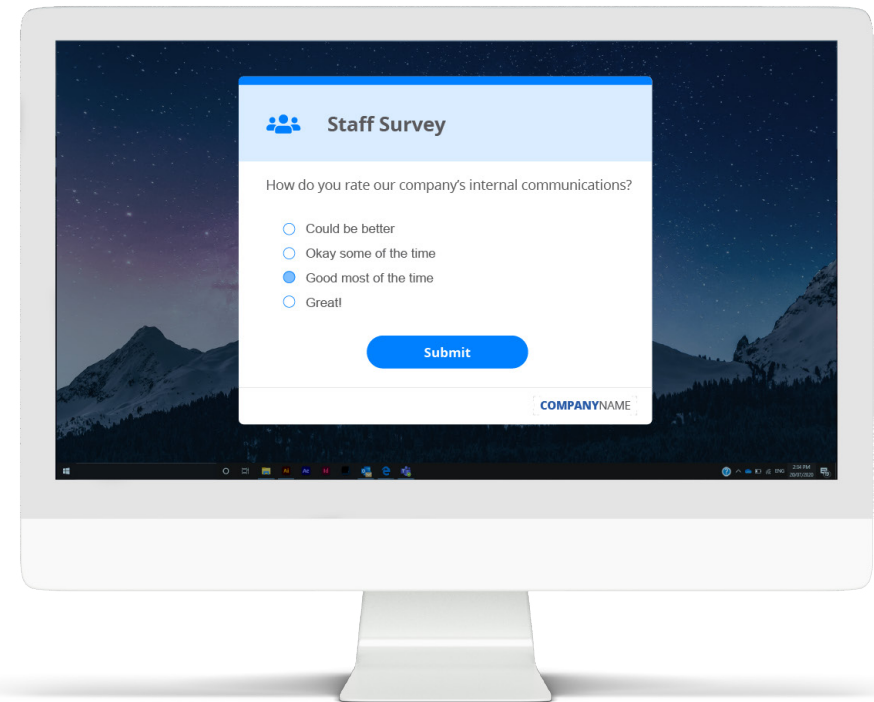
## Two-way Feedback

Be open to requesting, collecting and reporting on employee feedback. Mechanisms such as staff sentiment surveys and intranet forums can be fertile ground for honest and helpful views.

Some questions to ask include:

- How well do you think we're communicating internally?
- Are we doing enough to promote organizational vision in our communications?
- How well are we keeping you informed of company progress on projects?

Comments and suggestions from employees can be a goldmine, so build a feedback loop into your communication plans and use any valuable nuggets to improve your efforts in future campaigns.





# Bringing It All Together

Now you have everything you need to put together a successful program of internal communications – from concept to completion.

Here's a summary of the templates you can use right now, plus some useful communications tips and best practice to help your content creation and delivery.



## Communication Strategy Template

Use this strategy template to plan your communications priorities and match planned activities with overall business objectives.



## Communications Plan

Use this planning template to define the goals, timing, audiences, channel selection and other details for your communication tactics.



## Communication Tips and Best Practice

Improve your communications performance with best practice on delivering urgent, time-sensitive messages that demand attention, promotional messages that drive employee engagement, and everything in between. Read [44 Tips For Internal Communications Best Practice](#)

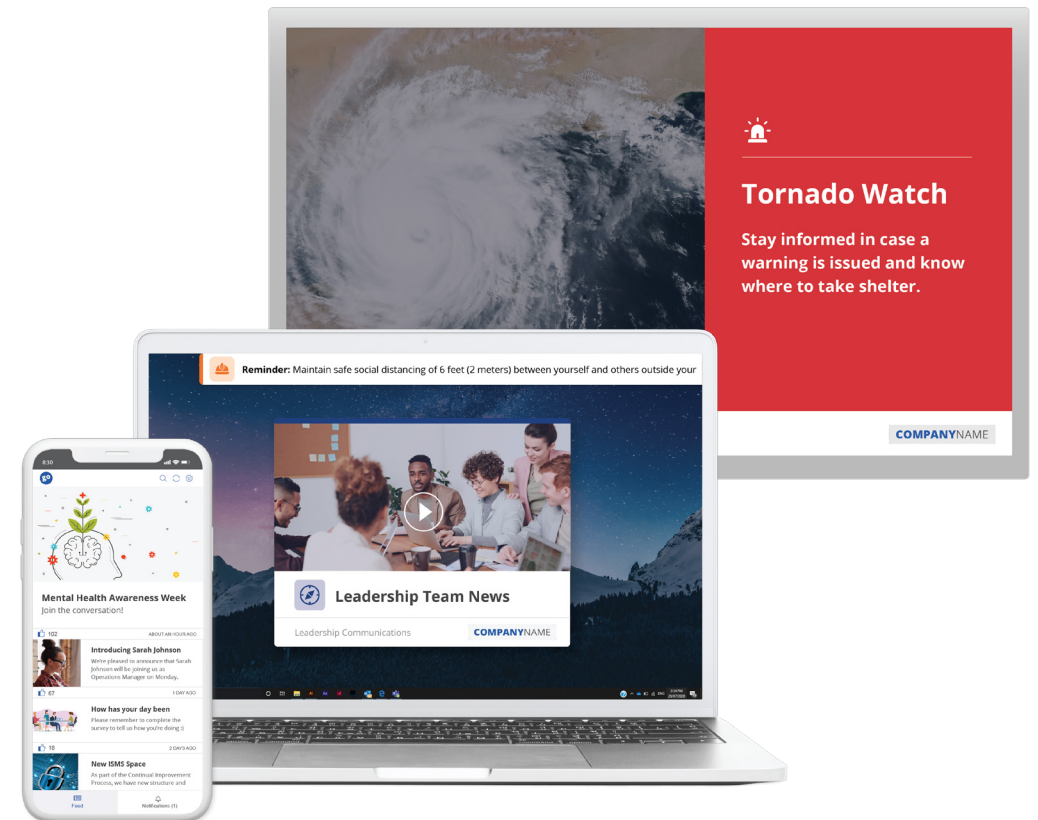
# About SnapComms

SnapComms is the global leader in multi-channel business-to-employee communications. Our award-winning digital channels are used daily by more than **2.5 million users in 75 countries**.

We help organizations across the world achieve better communication, more efficiency and greater performance. Our clients include leading healthcare, financial, government and other organizations, as well as several Fortune 500 companies.

Start better communication today.

**Speak to a SnapComms expert** or take a **FREE 30-day trial**.



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