

Communicate Goals for Company Growth & Alignment

Sharing goals throughout a company ensures that everyone is on the same path for growth and are working toward the same objective and metrics. As a leader, it's your job to continuously communicate the company mission and the metrics that will define growth. Your employees can't help you if they don't know what you want to accomplish.

In his new book, Originals: How Nonconformists Move the World, research professor Adam Grant explains the common pitfall of under communicating a vision or new idea.

"When Harvard professor John Kotter studied change agents years ago, he found that they typically under communicated their visions by a factor of ten. On average, they spoke about the direction of the change ten times less often than their stakeholders needed to hear it."

Communicate your company strategy more effectively with these 12 tips from GeckoBoard, Fast Company, and HBR:

- 1. Empower your employees to communicate.** Create ways for employees to exchange ideas, information, and questions. Chat rooms like Slack work particularly well at company, department, and team levels. These empower people to seek answers from their peers, strengthen connections between colleagues, and transfer knowledge. You can also weave mission and priorities into day-to-day conversation.
- 2. Monthly/quarterly all-hands meetings:** This is a great way to provide a bird's eye view of how the company is doing with lagging metrics, address recent trends, and highlight specific areas of focus for the upcoming period.
- 3. Weekly team meetings + Q&A's:** Determine team priorities and set specific metrics to measure. Make this a collaborative effort to share ideas for removing roadblocks to accomplish team (and ultimately the company) goals. Foster even more open communication and team alignment by allowing (and encouraging) everyone to ask questions.
- 4. 1:1 meetings:** When each person knows how their effort impacts the bottom line, they'll take more ownership and have greater motivation to do their best work.
- 5. Live TV dashboards:** Let your employees see their progress day-to-day and foster accountability.
- 6. Plan a budget:** Evaluate and weigh the downsides of failing to invest in employees' ability to build stronger relationships with each other, share concerns and constructive feedback, and discover information that helps them be better at their jobs. Think about:
 - Recent costs of employee turnover
 - Customer loyalty and retention, and the effectiveness of your customer service team
 - Employee engagement and morale, or lack thereof
 - Missed opportunities, misunderstandings, and lost revenue because of miscommunication
 - Product or service quality and development
- 7. Leverage leadership to create change:** Executives, directors, and managers must be the champions of knowledge sharing, transparency, and worker engagement. This has to be a collaborative effort.
- 8. Think broader than typical CEO-messages – don't disappear:** Conversations can be more persuasive and engaging than one-way presentations. Designate a team of employees to serve as ambassadors responsible for delivering important messages at all levels.
- 9. Put on your 'real person' hat:** Authentic messages from you will help employees see the challenges and opportunities as you see them and understand and care about the direction in which you're trying to take the company.

10. Keep the message simple, but deep in meaning: Strategy-specific messages linked to your purpose become tools to help employees connect their day-to-day efforts with the aspiration of the company.

11. Tell a story: Use storytelling as much as possible to bring humanity to the company and to help employees understand the relevance of your strategy and real-life examples of progress and shortfalls against it.

12. Use the discipline of a framework: Georgia Everse from HBR suggests Inspire/Educate/Reinforce:

- **Inspire.** Messages that inspire are particularly important when you are sharing a significant accomplishment or introducing a new initiative that relates to your strategy.
- **Educate.** Once you've energized your team with inspiring messages, your explanations of the company's strategic decisions and your plans for implementing them should carry more weight. It is most important for these messages to be delivered through dialogues rather than monologues, in smaller group sessions where employees can build to their own conclusions and feel ownership in how to implement.
- **Reinforce.** You'll need to repeat the message in a variety of tactics, channels, and experiences. Recognize and reward individuals and teams who come up with smart solutions and positive change.

Take These Examples from Other Companies:

Nicole Munoz from Start Ranking Now, dives deeper into company get-togethers:

“We hold an annual meeting at the beginning of each year where we go over the three main company goals for the year. This is when we map out each department's objectives and assign an owner to each objective. Throughout the rest of the year, we have a combination of company-wide weekly and quarterly meetings, and weekly one-on-one meetings, to monitor and measure progress toward company goals.”

Murray Newlands from Sighted explains how retreats generate value:

“Retreat is a great way to spend time together and focus on these ideas, goals and visions. It's relaxed yet offers time to work and plan away from the office environment. Plus, we can have some social time that builds further collaboration and consensus.”

Nick Bayer from Saxbys Coffee talks ‘Mission Moments:’

“Every team meeting we share our “mission moments.” Our team members pick one moment when another colleague embodied our mission or a core value. They represent our company and remind us why we do what we do.”

Hongwei Liu, from mappedin, explains the importance of consistency:

“At a minimum, we hold a monthly town hall to go over “highlights and lowlights” and upcoming milestones. Outside of that, management meets every week to review strategy and relays information as necessary to their teams.”

More open discussions help build a strong community within a firm, allowing workers to feel confident and happy, and to outperform expectations at their roles.

<https://www.geckoboard.com/playbook/how-to-communicate-goals-to-employees-for-alignment/>

<https://www.fastcompany.com/3045455/5-tips-to-create-effective-internal-communications-with-your-team>

<https://hbr.org/2011/08/eight-ways-to-energize-your-te>

<http://switchandshift.com/share-company-goals-employees>