

Leveraging Modern Communication Methods to Engage and Build Company Culture

Your organization has accomplished the hard task of attracting and bringing A-players on board. Now how do you keep them? That's a question that companies face more and more, as confidence builds in the labor market, and top performers feel more comfortable about making job moves. A focus on internal communications has become increasingly important as a way to connect and engage staff, and ultimately build a desirable company culture that encourages high-performance and instills the brand from within. Modern communication methods and tools are helping pave the way in this effort.



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There is nothing new about the concept of internal communications. Most organizations use the same basic methods to communicate information across the company, whether it's an employee publication or intranet, memo or all hands meeting. What differs among companies is how these tools are leveraged, both to keep the lines of communication open, and to maintain an enthusiastic and positive outlook about the organization. "Companies that are most successful with internal communications use a strategic approach across multiple platforms - it's not just about communicating company announcements but making a concentrated effort to define your culture," says Scott Bass, director of marketing & communications for MRINetwork. "When modern, interactive communication methods are incorporated into the process, employers increase their ability to engage staff and create an environment where people are 'checked-in' as opposed to 'checked-out' at work."

Bass provides the following insight to companies looking to engage with modern communication tools:

Johnson provides the following tips for companies looking to enhance their "cool" factor through technology:

Extend communication through internal social platforms. The success of social platforms like Facebook and Twitter can have a similar impact when used internally. Internal social networking tools like Yammer provide employees with a quick way to share

positive company news, recognize the contributions of individual staff, and collaborate on projects, with the added ability to include pictures, documents and videos. It also breaks down physical silos, exposing employees to other parts of the company they would not normally get to see.

Augment traditional company-wide meetings with video and audience polling tools. Company-wide meetings are a quick way to communicate information from the top down, but they can also become routine and mundane. Bring to life the leaders of your company and others through brief video messages or webinars. There is only so much passion that can come from a static text memo or audio conference call. This does not have to be produced by expensive, professional video companies. Most modern mobile devices have high-quality recording capabilities and available easy-to-use editing apps that are more than appropriate for an internal communication. In addition, polling tools, such as Poll Everywhere, can help invigorate meetings by expanding the capacity for a two-way conversation, and showing staff their opinions matter by letting them vote on topics, instantly showing their feedback in real time.

Involve all levels of the organization in your communication strategy. Antiquated communication methods that just focus on a business leader addressing the organization do not lead to desirable results. Highlight successful individuals in the organization and have them lead meetings or draft communications. Allowing them to share insights and best practices about their daily routines will not only help others become successful, but bring to life the personality of your company. This will also create recognition opportunities for your top performers, as they will now be perceived as the "celebrities" within the company creating even more stickiness.

Share highlights of your communication methods with clients. Companies prefer to do business with forward-thinking, modern organizations where employees have a sense of pride. Your company culture can be a major differentiator when competing. Summarize your company culture, along with your communication methods that drive it, in sales presentations. Share examples of your communication methods to not only highlight this competitive edge, but to motivate other organizations to do the same. This "behind-the-scenes" look at your company will result in stronger relationships with clients, exposing the human-element behind your company.

Implement communication tools that fit your business. Ultimately, no matter how fun or cool modern communication methods may seem, consideration should be given to whether they are right for the company culture and size. Focus on technologies that present the most potential for improved interaction, excitement and discourse across the company that will support business objectives.

Technology is enabling companies to breathe new life into standard internal communication methods like never before. "Leveraging these platforms in a meaningful way is increasingly becoming necessary to drive employees to become active participants in the work culture," adds Bass. "While modern communication methods are not a fix all for talent retention, they are key in creating an enjoyable, engaging work environment that provides top performers with one more reason to stay."



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