

Organization Communication: Five Issues

1. The Six Symptoms of Communication Problems

Do you see any of these symptoms of communication problems in your organization?

- Lack of teamwork** – The people who need to collaborate aren't doing it well, or are unable to have productive communications.
- Poor planning or workload-overwhelm** – There is too much to do in too little time, and/or people are not managing their calendars and workload.
- Insufficient resources and support** – We have problems of people needing more assistance, money, equipment or other resources to do their work properly.
- Lateness** – There is a lack of respect for deadlines and due dates, and people arrive at meetings late, deliver results late or don't respond to requests promptly.
- Poor work quality** – Our products and services don't meet standards or don't look or function the way they should.
- Difficult people** – We are accommodating personality issues or some people's personal problems are affecting the workplace atmosphere and productivity.

2. The Six Causes of Communication Problems

Which causes of communication problems do you notice in your organization?

- People are not aligned with mission and vision** – Too many people do not understand why our organization's work is important, and how their results contribute to the big picture.
- People are fuzzy on accomplishment** – Not everyone understands what their managers want to accomplish, what results they need to produce to achieve that, or what those results should look like and how they should work.
- People are not responsible for performance networking** – People don't always realize who their internal and external customers are, who they need to work with, and who has the information or other resources they need.
- People require micro-management** – Some people do not know where their resources come from or consider where and how their own results will be used by other people or groups.
- People are undisciplined about timelines** – Some people do not grasp the importance of timing, such as when we want things to happen, when their due dates are, and when to communicate with other people.
- People with poor work habits** – Some people do not plan how to get their work done, how to manage their schedule and promises, or how to communicate appropriately with managers, staff, and others.

3. Five Benefits of Good Organizational Communication

In which areas do you most want to see communication improvements in your organization?

- Performance** – We want to have individuals and groups deliver their high-quality communications, services, and materials to the right people and places at the right time, meeting budget requirements.
- Culture** – We want people to interact positively and productively, implementing strategies, meeting objectives, and resolving workplace problems for our organization and our mission.
- Personal Effectiveness** – People need to know how to manage their communications, create and use their calendars to schedule their work (not just their appointments), and account for changes and interruptions without a loss of their productivity.
- Collaboration** – We want people working well together to implement changes in process, structure, and objectives without losing momentum to meet their fundamental performance requirements.
- Management & Meetings** – We want our managers and staff members to know what results they need to produce, who to interact with to produce those results, and how to create and manage agreements for achieving objectives, no matter what level of authority they have.

4. Four Options to Pick Up the Pace at Work

What types of conversation and communication are needed most in your organization?

- Initiative** – We need to get better at starting new things and setting goals for a new future and new possibilities. We want to jump-start some changes and get things going.
- Understanding** – We need to have more people engaged and on board with the projects and programs we have already begun. We want more teamwork and understanding of different roles and responsibilities.
- Performance** – We need to have people manage their own communications, ask for what they need, and make promises for results. We want people to be productive and efficient without relying on authority to get things done.
- Closure** – We need to have people be complete with the past – the projects, failures, and successes of yesterday are over. We want people to have a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.

5. Interventions to Improve Workplace Communication

What is your plan to resolve your communication problems?

- Training for senior-level executives and managers
- Training for mid-level managers, supervisors, and team leaders
- Training for all staff, associates, and other specialists and workers
- Books, newsletters, and blogs
- Cross-functional meetings and discussion groups
- Issue-centered focus groups
- Other