NON-DESK COMMUNICATIONS
2018 COSDA Annual Meeting
WHAT IS TRIBE?

Tribe is an internal communications agency

Tribe was founded in 2002 as a creative boutique for consumer branding, but in 2009 we made the commitment to focus only on the employee audience.

Our highest goal is to align employees with the company vision.
DEEP EXPERTISE IN A NARROW NICHE

We work with national and global brands to build the employer brand, company culture and employee engagement.

Every company culture is unique, and we need to understand yours before we can offer possible solutions. But our experience with the challenges of other companies can provide a shortcut for solving yours.
TRIBE RESEARCH

Tribe fields national employee research to better understand industry issues

- Millennials in the workplace
- Collaboration across silos
- Non-desk employees
- Employee channel preferences
- Employee acceptance of mobile

We also benchmark best practices with large companies, both for specific client requests and to increase our own industry knowledge

NON-DESK

38%
Take all corporate communications with a grain of salt

19%
Feel corporate only “communicates good news”

84%
Feel change management comms handled poorly
STRUCTURE OF STUDY

*Both quantitative and qualitative*

- Employees without their own computer at work
- At companies with workforces of 1,000+
- Retail, manufacturing, hospitality, food service
- Online surveys
- One-on-one interviewers
NON-DESK WORKERS

Our most underserved audience

• Generally don’t have company emails
• Limited access to the intranet
• Hurdles of mobile communications

Ironically, these are the people doing some of the most important work in the company
WHAT ABOUT MOBILE?

They can get online with smartphones

- IF employees are open to using their personal devices
- IF it would not create safety issues on the job
- IF you’re not concerned about overtime for exempt employees
Think creatively about potential touchpoints

- What’s the worksite like physically?
- Are employees standing, sitting, walking, driving?
- Is there a building?
- Where do they park, if they drive to work?
- What are the public areas where they spend time?
- Do they drive company vehicles?
THE FINDINGS
INSIGHT ONE

Non-desk employees want more communication from leadership

• Default method in most companies is cascading through managers
• 59% of respondents find those communications satisfactory
• But they still want to hear directly from the top
COMMUNICATING DIRECTLY TO NON-DESK

Non-desk employees want communication from top management as well as direct managers.
“LET US KNOW WHAT IS HAPPENING”

“KEEP US WELL INFORMED.”

“TELL US MORE.”

“TREAT US LIKE HUMANS AND NOT COGS IN THE MACHINE.”

“Let us know who, what, why and when.”

“COMMUNICATE WITH ALL EMPLOYEES, NOT JUST MANAGERS.”
INSIGHT TWO

Lack of communication interpreted as lack of respect

• Feel leadership doesn’t value them enough to let them know what’s going on
• Feel like they have no voice to express concerns or even innovative ideas
• Particularly resent leadership not keeping them in the loop when there’s bad news
Non-desk employees aren’t being shown how they contribute to the big picture.

All employees, including non-desk, want to feel respected, valued and beneficial.

22% feel their job is important to the company vision.

47% feel connected only to immediate work group.

10% feel strongly connected to the company itself.
“WE SHOULDN’T HAVE TO HEAR ABOUT THINGS THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE AFTER IT’S ALL SAID AND DONE.”

“Be respectful.”

“GET OUT OF YOUR IVORY TOWER ONCE IN A WHILE AND TALK TO THE PEOPLE WHO ARE ACTUALLY DOING THE JOB.”

“TREAT EMPLOYEES LIKE GROWN-UPS.”

“Have more respect for people.”

“KEEP YOUR STAFF IN THE LOOP AND THEY WILL BE MORE PRODUCTIVE BECAUSE IT SHOWS THAT YOU RESPECT THEM.”
INSIGHT THREE

Two major shortcomings to system of cascading communications

• Timeliness of communication
• Consistency of message
Direct managers want communications support.

Providing communications tool kits and other materials improves consistency of message.
“MAKE SURE THAT MANAGERS COMMUNICATE CHANGES TO OTHERS IN A TIMELY MANNER AND NOT LEAVE ANYONE OUT.”

“Tell us what we need to know.”

“BE CONSISTENT IN THE MESSAGE COMMUNICATED THROUGH MANAGERS.”

“(COULD) GREATLY IMPROVE STORE COMMUNICATIONS.”

“COME TO US AND LET US KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON WITH THE COMPANY.”
INSIGHT FOUR

They want leadership to understand their reality

• They want to share frontline issues and possible solutions
• They want the role they play to be respected by corporate
• They crave face-to-face communication with top management
EMPLOYEES WANT FACE TIME

In person or via technology that makes human connections possible

51% BOOMERS
51% GEN X
43% GEN Y

Face-to-face as preferred communication channel
“MAKE OUR CONCERNS A PRIORITY.”

“QUIT LIVING IN YOUR OWN FANTASY WORLD AND COME SEE WHAT IT’S LIKE ON THE ACTUAL SALES FLOOR.”

“TRY MY JOB.”

“Talk to the employees, learn about them and share what needs to be known.”

“Get to know the little person better, since they’re the ones interacting with your customers.”

“ASK FOR EMPLOYEES INPUT BEFORE GOING AHEAD WITH SOME DECISIONS.”
Vision and values aren’t real until they’re put to work

- Management often overestimates non-desk employees’ awareness of vision
- Managements’ daily interactions are generally only with other management-level people
- Missing opportunity to align all employees to vision
- And to communicate desired customer
MISSED OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE EMPLOYEES

Vision and values can guide employees in their day-to-day work and decision making.
“WE RUN OUR BUSINESS BASED ON OUR VALUES.”

“DEPENDS ON WHO IS WORKING AT THE TIME.”

“I know them but I don’t always see them.”

“WE EMPLOY THEM EVERY DAY IN ASPECTS OF OUR JOB.”

“I DO SEE THEM IN ACTION EXCEPT ONE: ‘HAVE FUN.’”
Insight Six

Honesty is critical, particularly during change

• Golden rule of change management
• Tell as much as you can as soon as you can
• Employees prefer timeliness over preparedness
• Don’t withhold bad news
Employees are skeptical about transparency

Lack of communication with non-desk employees erodes trust in management

- 38% take all corporate communications with a grain of salt
- 19% feel corporate only "communicates good news"
- 84% feel change management comms handled poorly
“Be honest with us and treat us like humans.”

“JUST BE HONEST ABOUT THE ISSUES.”

“JUST KEEP IT REAL.”

“NEED TO BE HONEST AND OPEN ABOUT WHAT IS HAPPENING.”

“KEEP INFORMATION HONEST AND OPEN.”

“Be more honest with your employees.”
EXEMPLARY OF NON-DESK COMMUNICATIONS
Use Training for Managers

EQUIP THEM TO HAVE CULTURE CONVERSATIONS

TELLING A STORY

A STORY ABOUT A BREAKFAST COOK WITH A Special TOUCH

Then there was a cook, who was a regular Guy at Embassy Suites, who always brought something special to the table when he was around. He was known for his cheerful demeanor and his ability to make people feel welcome. He would often surprise his guests with little gestures of kindness, like leaving a handwritten note on their plate to say “good morning” or “thank you” for choosing to stay with us. He was a true ambassador for our brand, and he knew how to make people feel valued. When we learned that he was leaving our hotel, we were all sad. He had become a part of our family and we knew that we would miss his presence. But we also knew that he had made a lasting impact on our hotel and on our guests, and that was something that we could be proud of.

A STORY ABOUT A HOUSEKEEPER AND THE BUGS WITH THE FURNITURE FLY

She was a housekeeper who was known for her attention to detail. She would spend hours making sure that every piece of furniture in the hotel was properly dusted and polished. One day, she noticed that there were small bugs crawling around the furniture in one of the rooms. She was concerned that this might affect the guests who were staying there. So, she went to work to find a solution. She spent hours looking for the source of the bugs, and eventually, she found a small hole in the floor. She fixed the hole and made sure that the furniture was clean and free of bugs. She was proud of the work that she had done, and she knew that it had made a difference for the guests who were staying there.

PRAISING IN FRONT OF GROUP

Examples of Praise

- "Great job, Sarah! I was really impressed with your work on the marketing campaign. Your attention to detail is outstanding."
- "I wanted to thank you, John, for going above and beyond to help our guests. Your dedication is truly inspiring."
- "Today, I wanted to acknowledge the hard work of our entire team. Your commitment to excellence is what makes this hotel the best in the city."
- "I want to praise our new hires, Michael and Emily, for their quick learning and dedication. You are a true asset to our team."
- "I want to recognize Sarah for her leadership and her ability to inspire her team. You are a true leader."

Examples of Compliments

- "Thank you for always going the extra mile. You truly make a difference here."
- "I appreciate your willingness to help. It makes a big difference."
- "Your positive attitude is contagious. Keep up the good work!"
- "I want to acknowledge your hard work and dedication. You truly make a difference."
- "Thank you for always being so helpful. Your kindness is truly appreciated."

Examples of Compliments You Could Give Other Team Members in Front of a Group:

- "Your leadership is truly inspiring. Keep it up!"
- "I want to thank you for your hard work and dedication. You truly make a difference."
- "Your commitment to excellence is truly remarkable. Keep it up!"
- "Your dedication is truly inspiring. Keep it up!"
- "Your positive attitude is truly contagious. Keep it up!"
Use Managers as Channels

BY PROVIDING TALKING POINTS AND DISCUSSION TOPICS

WEEK 1
Manufacturing Excellence
Zero Accident Safety Culture (ZASC)

Monday

INTRO
While discussing recent unacceptable incidents and wanting to share some of the actions we are taking to address those issues, this week, we’ll be talking about the first of four key employee surveys.

YOUR FEEDBACK
Leadership only makes sense after someone gets hurt.

ACTIONS: PLANS & RESULTS
While making workplace safety a higher priority and involving employees in how we get there:
- Safety Standouts
- Final to-do:
- Other activities to help identify safety topics - ahead of time.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSIONS
Can you think of other steps we could take to be proactive about safety?
Are there any things that we as a team would be doing better?
Remind employees to fill out feedback/suggestion cards if they want more coverage of this topic or others.

WEEK 2
Winning Culture
Employee Survey Actions/FALSE

Tuesday

INTRO
Today, we will look at progress made in forward-looking communication, front-line to Safety, and Overtime, the three main areas of focus from the survey feedback.

YOUR FEEDBACK
Site leadership will not act upon any surveys.

ACTIONS, PLANS & RESULTS
- We are working hard to improve forward-looking Communication, and this feedback is one of the first steps in that effort.
- There were 11 days between the recordable injuries to the end of the year in 2016, and we are taking further steps to ensure that trend continues.
- Overtime is a very complicated issue, and we are starting to formulate strategies to take the issue out of the meeting please involved.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSIONS
What steps would you like to see taken toward improvement in these areas?
Remind employees to fill out feedback/suggestion cards if they want more coverage of this topic or others.

WEEK 5
Growth
Key Metric Improvement

Wednesday

INTRO
Today’s discussion addresses the concern that quick growth leads to less-trained employees.

YOUR FEEDBACK
We are hiring a tribal knowledge due to rapid growth and many new employees.

ACTIONS, PLANS & RESULTS
We are working hard to achieve our company-wide goals. We are also committed to the development and training of each employee to support our processes, our markets and our growth goals. Each new employee will begin 10 days of on-the-job training on 3000-80 training.

SUGGESTED DISCUSSIONS
What steps would you like to see taken toward improvement in these areas?
Remind employees to fill out feedback/suggestion cards if they want more coverage of this topic or others.
Use Printed Magazines

IDEALLY, MAIL TO EACH EMPLOYEE’S HOME

CHALLENGE:
Non-desk workers in various business units feel nearly invisible to management and each other. They have limited access to intranet and no email.

SOLUTION:
Use a print publication to build pride in the company and the role frontline workers play in its success by showing actual employees at work in a range of facilities.

YEAR-IN-REVIEW MAGAZINE

NOTE:
You can flip through the full publication at: http://joom.ag/P2zp using password tribe123
Use A Vision Book

HELP EMPLOYEES SEE THEIR PERSONAL ROLE IN THE VISION

THE NEW EMPLOYEE

Why do we care? It's why we're here!

The purpose is why we care. The purpose is why we exist. The purpose is why we're here. The purpose is why we care.
Use Posters

NOT SEXY, BUT THEY STILL WORK
Use Postcards

COLLECTIBLE CULTURE PIECES IN BREAK ROOMS
Use Collateral

HOME-MAILER WITH CAR DECAL
Use Digital Signage
EASY FOR EMPLOYEES TO ABSORB QUICK MESSAGES

Ask for mustard instead of mayo
Making even small changes in your food choices can add up to big changes over time.

WHAT’S OUR WHY?
To enable National Trust to protect places of beauty for ever — for everyone

“No matter what role you have in the organization, you have an impact on how we achieve our mission, vision and values.”
- Meredith Graham

Pack fruit for a snack to avoid the vending machine
Making even small changes in your food choices can add up to big changes over time.

WHAT’S OUR WHY?
To enable Eddie Bauer to keep its customers warm in the winter

“When we have a strong culture, the way we talk to ourselves internally will come across in the way we talk to our clients.”
- Brian Klingbell
Use Back-Room Wall

A CALENDAR CAN BECOME A COMMUNICATIONS PIECE
Use Company Vehicles
PRELOAD WITH COLLATERAL, FLOOR MAT OR MIRROR HANGERS – OR A BOX
Use the Parking Lot
OR SIGNAGE ON THE PARKING LOT SHUTTLE

CLICK
MAKES EVERYTHING EASY TO FIND
EXCEPT A PARKING PLACE

CLICK
MAKES EVERYTHING FASTER
EXCEPT THE SHUTTLE
Use an Event

ENGAGE EMPLOYEES IN PERSON
Use Elevator Doors

OFFER A LARGE CANVAS FOR MESSAGING
Use Long Hallways

BEACH THEME FOR FITBIT WALKING CHALLENGE
Use Stairwells

CAN ALSO PRINT MESSAGE ON STAIR TREADS
Use Mirror Clings

AN UNEXPECTED SPOT OF MESSAGING
Use the Restroom

POSTER EXCERPTS FROM DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS

01. Safety: The Ultimate Team Sport

Earlier this year, La-Z-Boy’s new installing facility in Dayton, Tennessee was recognized by the home furnishings industry for achieving a four-star home worksite in just one year. That number brings the previous record of 0.4 million hours, selected by the Dayton facility.

To celebrate this milestone, we held an event at which the leaders of our organization came together with representatives from Tennessee’s daily and community from to recognize the excellent work from the men and women at the facility who made it all possible.

Safety is more than a priority at La-Z-Boy. It’s the way we do business, and it’s a core part of our company culture, not just in Tennessee, but worldwide.

Thread
August 2016
WHAT WORKS FOR YOUR PEOPLE?

Map touchpoints by audience

- Group employees by physical environment
- Think through their daily movements
- What are new potential touchpoints?
- When do they have attention to spare?

What works for one segment of your audience may not work for another – so include a variety of channels.
WANT TO KNOW MORE?

Pick up the phone or shoot us an email

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