

INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

WHERE THE VISION FINDS A VOICE

Establishing strategic direction and organizational positioning
for a high performing Internal Communications team



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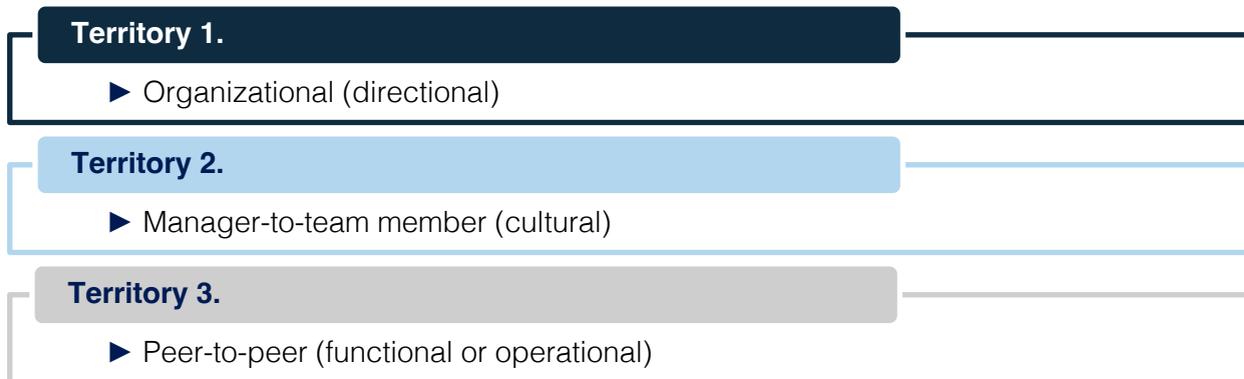
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Mastering effective internal communications is one of the most current and pressing organizational demands. Whether it is reaching a remote team, creating shared employee experience, or setting the strategic, cultural and leadership agenda, internal communications is now more than ever central to your organization's success.

As part of developing a strategic internal communications plan, it is important to understand and define what the function is responsible for and how it is going to best serve the specific needs of the organization – after all, communications happen across all levels of your business, whether it is the vertical or horizontal, one-directional announcements or two-way social interaction.

To harness the power of effective internal communications, setting a framework in which to operate is vital.

At CBCP we consider internal communications according to three territories:



Each of these territories has a role to play. Where you operate will largely depend on the organizational maturity of your communications function and the distinct characteristics of the stage of growth your business is in.

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► **Organizational Communications is the Voice of Leadership**

Within the Organizational Territory, the communicator's mission is to take employees on the journey towards the company's goal, sharing a consistent and coordinated message to help drive productivity, performance, and pride.

At its core, an effective internal communicator (and function), enables leadership to set the agenda, tone and direction for the whole team - beyond the offices, meeting rooms and conversations in which leaders directly participate.

When communicated with skill and precision, great organizational communication engages employees in the overarching goal and vision, protects and enhances internal reputation, while assisting the flow of information for the policy or process makers.

Good internal communication does not replace the role of a leader to keep their teams engaged, informed of business priorities and performance, or to break-down silos (Territory 2), it complements, amplifies and reinforces it.

► **Creating a Connected and Influential Internal Communications Function**

Across a sample of businesses, the internal communications function may have different 'homes' in the organizational structure, but no matter where the function is located, it needs to have broad and active connection across the whole business to achieve the Organizational Territory goals.

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This does not mean that it must report directly to the CEO or leadership team, but it needs to have access to them, understand their priorities and have a holistic view. There must also be an internal and external communications connection and a deep understanding of the People priorities.

The most successful internal communications structure is one designed specifically for the whole business and the people who work there.

► **Finding the Balance**

If internal communicators are embedded within multiple functions of your organization (i.e. other than in a central corporate affairs / communications function), it is even more important to define their responsibilities, as well as the direct or dotted lines of collaboration.

If the sole focus of an internal communicator is to operate in Territory 3 and share functional specific information, then it makes sense for your internal communicator to sit with that function.

However, if they are embedded within a function (for example Human Resources), and their primary responsibility is to Territory 1 (Organizational), then it is important for a wider, total company connectedness to be defined, supported and enabled.

Otherwise, all too often, the internal communicator ends up with an increased focus on their 'home function' priorities only.

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In a decentralised model, connectivity with other internal communicators within your organization (if any) is required to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach. Getting this right will deliver an authentic voice and effectively work towards driving the whole organization and its many parts towards a shared goal.

With a clear direction and team structure to support, an internal communications function will be set up to successfully deliver a strategic plan to support high performance.

Understanding the best structure and scope of internal communications for your organization is key, particularly during times of business change and transformation.

CBCP is here to help you. Contact us to conduct a Pulse Check tailored to your business and its distinct internal communications characteristics. CBCP will provide you with a range of recommendations and a clear plan for high performance.