



Help managers overcome their communication challenges

9 WAYS TO SET
UP MANAGERS
FOR SUCCESS

Managers have an important communication role to play but are often faced with these challenges:



I DON'T KNOW MY COMMUNICATION ROLE.



I DON'T HAVE TIME TO COMMUNICATE.



I'M NOT SURE HOW TO ANSWER EMPLOYEES' QUESTIONS.

Let's **explore nine ways** to help managers tackle these obstacles.



"I DON'T KNOW MY COMMUNICATION ROLE."

Set the stage to make responsibilities clear

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1 Define manager communication roles.

Managers play an important role in communication as they are often the first person employees turn to. Managers interpret what employees need to do, as well as answer questions and address concerns.

2 Set clear expectations.

Provide specific guidelines so managers know exactly what to do. Here are two examples:

- Hold a 15-minute meeting in the next 30 days to answer questions and discuss next steps for your department.
- Set up one-on-one conversations and share the feedback you gathered in your next meeting.

3 Explain why a manager's role is important.

Dialogue is one of the most important tools when it comes to communication. Managers allow employees to participate, which helps them work through issues.

PRO TIP

Encourage managers to ask lots of questions. The more they know about what's expected, the less intimidating their communication role will be.



"I DON'T HAVE TIME TO COMMUNICATE."

Make information and tools accessible and simple

4 Help managers build communication into their schedules.

Provide a communication template that lets managers plan ahead. They can map out upcoming communication opportunities and identify what key messages they need to share.

5 Create a one-stop shop.

Develop a virtual hub where managers can find the information they need when they need it. It's the perfect place to house useful tools like on-demand learning that can be accessed quickly when they are faced with a challenge.

6 Ask for feedback.

Gather manager feedback to determine how well your communication approach is working and which methods have the greatest impact. Then, concentrate on methods that provide managers with what they need most to help employees.

PRO TIP

Bring the employee perspective to life to help managers understand the importance of making time to communicate. You can share anecdotal feedback or survey results if you have it.



"I'M NOT SURE HOW TO ANSWER EMPLOYEES' QUESTIONS."

Break down content so it's easy to understand

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7 Invest time in learning opportunities.

When a topic is complicated, facilitate workshops. During the sessions, help managers understand how it impacts their teams and how to fulfill their communication roles.

8 Provide key messages so managers can tailor them for their teams.

Key messages are a useful tool to help managers explain a change or other issues. It should include:

- Talking points: short, conversational scripts used to explain specific parts of a change or issue in greater detail
- Elevator speech: a short summary used to quickly and simply explain what the change or issue is, why it's happening and what it means for employees

9 Arm managers with change communication tools.

Provide managers with tools to have informative and productive conversations during change:

- Create a short, simple PowerPoint deck that managers can share at staff meetings and during one-on-one discussions.
- Distill essential information into a brief one-pager that managers can print out and refer to as needed.

PRO TIP

Give managers convenient opportunities to learn. For example, when a topic is complex, create on-demand modules that they can go through at their own pace.

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