

Communicating Your Compensation Study: Keys to Success

Communication Plan Design

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To an organization, conducting a Classification and Compensation Study is serious business. To employees, it is seriously personal because it impacts their lives. Employees typically want to know what is happening, why it is happening, the process, the timelines, and procedural details. A key to success is to design, implement, and monitor a Communication Plan.

Communication Plan Design

The first step is to design a strategy. Ask yourself three questions and map the answers.

1. What are the major tasks or steps? Each Classification and Compensation Study has milestone tasks that generate employee attention and a desire for information. The five most typical tasks are: study initiation, the classification study, the job evaluation portion, the compensation study, and the final report. For each task, identify employee roles and what they will want to know relative to each task.

2. Who is the audience? Employees differ in what they need to know. Some employees need more detail than others and some employees need more message repetition than others. A successful Communication Plan addresses the overall audience and its separate groupings. "All Employees" is one audience grouping. Consider looking at more

specific groupings also, such as departmental assignment, represented/non-represented status, occupational groups, or level. Your organization may also have other special groupings that are part of the organization's operational structure. Describe your overall audience and identify each separate grouping.

3. What are the methods of communication available in this organization that will most effectively communicate the messages to the various audiences? Some methods are effective for messages to all employees, and others are more effective for various specific employee groups. Among the many media sources available are memos, statements from management on videotape/CD/website, group sessions, emails, newsletters, bulletin board postings, pay check envelop inserts, and team meetings. Identify which media sources are most appropriate to each task of the study and each audience grouping.

Communication Plan Implementation

The second step is to implement the plan with appropriate messages delivered within an appropriate timeline. After you have mapped the audience groupings, the tasks, and the media, you already have a general idea of what needs to be communicated and when. In this step you get more specific by answering two more questions:

1. For each task and each audience

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TASK & MESSAGE	AUDIENCE		
	SR Mgmt	ALL EEs	HR Staff
STUDY INVITATION 1. Overall plan and timetable 2. Employees will attend a meeting 3. Employees will fill out a form	X		X
	X	X	
	X		X
CLASSIFICATION 1. Process overview 2. Individual role to be interviewed or involved in a panel 3. Updated classification structure 4. New job descriptions	X		X
	X		
	X	X	X
	X	X	X
JOB EVALUATION 1. Method Selection 2. Application Review			X
			X
COMPENSATION 1. Survey process 2. Benchmarks 3. Draft Report	X	X	X
	X		X
	X		X
FINAL REPORT 1. Summary overview 2. Implementation of results	X	X	X
	X		X

grouping, what is the message I want to communicate? Consider if you want the audience grouping to receive logistical information only, or process information, or a combination of both. Identify the messages you want heard and create a draft of each message. Messages should be simple and clear.

2. What are my message release timelines? In choosing when to release a message, consider the task timelines and the speed of distribution of the media source. Also consider when the audience groupings will receive the messages. For example, if a message is distributed via pay check envelop inserts, some employees may receive the information in two weeks and some may receive it at the end of the month. Identify a release timeline for each message that ensures it gets to the right people at the right time in accordance with your Communication Plan design.

Communication Plan Monitoring

The final step is to monitor its effectiveness. There are two kinds of feedback you can receive to monitor the success of your Communication Plan: unsolicited and solicited. A successful Communication Plan notes all feedback and distinguishes between the two. Unsolicited feedback comes from many sources and needs to be weighed based on the source, levity, and frequency. Solicited feedback has various methods and asks for specific information. Identify how you are going to solicit feedback, when you are going to solicit it, and exactly what you want to know.

The Communication Plan is complete when you have completed the three steps of design, implementation, and monitoring. You have also, then, completed your preparations for conducting a successful Classification and Compensation Study.

If you need assistance in developing a communication plan for your compensation study, contact us at 800-383-0976. Press 12 for Jim or 20 for Bruce.