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Join our visual experts and special guests for an info-packed hour of insights to elevate your next video project. Tune in on June 24 at 11am ET.Register NowHow can financial brands set themselves apart through visual storytelling? Our experts explain how.Learn MoreThe Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today’s most recent coverage.Discover The Collection Franziska & Tom Werner/GettyHaving cross-cultural communication skills in a diverse workplace are absolutely essential. Having clear, effective communication between co-workers, managers and executives creates an equal opportunity workplace, in which a diverse set of individuals are empowered to excel. Inclusion and respect for everyone in the workplace stands to benefit performance and working conditions. Challenges of communication in a diverse workplace are common – but solvable.Diversity comes in many different forms in business. Gender roles, race, different culture groups - and even migrant workers - are represented in diverse workplaces. Essentially, any business environment operating without a uniform, looks like a group of employees that has diversity in the workplace.Article continues below this adThis means that nearly every business in the United States - which is not run by a very small number of people – is likely to have some level of diversity in the workplace. If two sisters open a small business together, they have a workplace without diversity. The same applies to two brothers or even a couple of friends.Outside of these small-business cases, every business operation must meet the standards of an equal opportunity workplace, according to anti-discrimination laws created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964. This means that businesses must hire without discriminatory practices and must offer offer a safe workplace that's void of discrimination.In order to operate without discrimination, employees and managers must have communications skills and communications systems. Without a baseline for communication, discrimination will always be a dark possibility in the workplace.Article continues below this adThe benefits of diversity in the workplace are evident for many businesses. Diversity brings fresh ideas and a multicultural view to the work environment. It can stimulate creativity while also serving the greater marketplace.If a business builds products for a diverse set of cultural groups, having a relatively small group of employees working on those products and marketing tactics is advantageous. The business can utilize first-hand experience and empathy from the market-test group to build a better product.They can then build more relevant, genuine messaging for marketing campaigns. Relating to the market audience is more effective when developers and marketers actually understand that audience group.Article continues below this adIn most instances, the business benefits via inclusion, because a melting pot of ideas and creativity is capable of bringing more vision to the production process. But in a job that requires no creativity, diversity issues do not necessarily change the outcome. Communication remains very important, regardless of the job functions in a diverse work environment.Working in a diverse environment requires excellent listening skills. Every cultural group communicates differently, and great co-workers and managers will listen to each other before speaking.To truly understand each other and communicate authentically, it is important to take the time to listen and to ask meaningful questions. This process is slower than communication between two people from the same cultural group and background – but the investment of time spent doing this can offer significant emotional rewards.Article continues below this adListening develops the ability to communicate more clearly and to better understand individuals and groups from different cultural groups. Ultimately, this saves time in the future, as problems are more easily resolved in an adaptive, responsive work environment.Listening is a skill that requires time and patience. Pay close attention to others, take notes and take the time to digest information before responding. Digesting the information first means that you can formulate an appropriate response that has accounted for different cultural groups and gender divisions in the workplace.Self-expression is difficult for anybody at work, but this is especially true for minority groups in a business. Encouraging positive self-expression improves working conditions, by giving a voice to everyone.Article continues below this adThis practice is inclusive, and should apply to all workers. It is, however, more difficult for minority groups to always feel free to speak freely. Common solutions to this problem include annual reviews, one-on-one meetings with managers, and an HR department that encourages communications.The most difficult aspect of expression is the fear of repercussions or of being judged. Utilize anonymous tools to open a line of communication for individuals who want to express concerns or positive outcomes without shining a light on themselves. A simple box for employees to put anonymous notes or feedback about the company is very effective.In large workplaces, the feedback box works very well; remaining anonymous with a small employee population, however, is more difficult. In this instance, using a more hands-on approach to problem solve with individuals is a workable approach.In the global business environment, linguistic barriers are a major issue. In a domestic workplace, language is less of a problem, but some linguistic barriers can still prevail. When multiple languages are involved, systems are required to make the business run, while also supporting a diverse group of workers.Article continues below this adFor example, a business that relies on temporary work visas to fill seasonal positions will have linguistic barriers, and the business may even have a work force from numerous differing cultural groups that include a variety of languages.. This creates linguistic barriers within the subsets of workers, resulting in communication that becomes difficult for diverse employee backgrounds.In this case, creating training manuals to represent every language – while also using ambassadors as a point of contact – can help overcome some of those linguistic issues. Solving the issues completely is not entirely possible, especially with a seasonal workforce, which changes each year.In a multinational or global business model, having multiple locations around the globe create an inherently diverse work environment. The location independence may also isolate each population, so that even though the workforce is diverse, the differing cultural groups are often separated from each other when they are not at work. However, these groups must communicate at work so that they can work together. This means creating a mutual point of contact in each workplace to merge the cultures and open translatable lines of communication.Equality in a diverse workplace requires equal standards for every employee. Building a holistic vision means stepping back to view the workplace without bias. See it from every perspective and use that vision to build empathy and understand about the roles played by every employee, including minority groups.Article continues below this adUsing the holistic vision to find underrepresented or misrepresented people in the employee pool is productive. Apply that information to construct systems, which ensure that everyone has equal access to benefits and programs that are specifically used to create equal ground for everyone.Ultimately, approaching diversity and communication in the workplace by first stepping back to observe and better understand the existing dynamics, is a valuable skill set for managers and executives.Managing expectations and setting a training regimen that places everyone on equal footing, is an important element for communicating in a diverse environment. This means that it's important to train everyone under the same set of standards and implementing clear rules and operating procedures. This again is subject to the anti-discrimination laws created by the Civil Rights Act. Before the laws were created, discrimination based on race and sex were common, legal practices.Article continues below this adThese systems hold everyone accountable, regardless of sex, race or cultural background. It's a simple approach to doing business by the book, and it creates a baseline for accountability. The rules do not however, deal with daily interactions and relationships but they do create a foundation approach to efficiencies and operating procedures.When everyone is held to the same standard, questions regarding discrimination are removed from the equation. Implementing clear procedures is difficult in creative and subjective job roles – but in most situations, the process is simple.For example, every dock worker at FedEx is tracked, based on how many trucks that worker loads or unloads in a given shift. All of the trucks are the same size; everyone has the same equipment available and the process is consistent across the board. So, that in a results-based environment with simple daily tasks, diversity is not a factor, because everyone works independently.The Human Resources department in every business is tasked with encouraging and enforcing equality. The HR team can create sensitivity training programs to teach communication skills while bringing everyone together.Article continues below this adThe training programs create value by raising awareness about specific communication problems. They also highlight issues that are often overlooked by the general employee population.Training focused specifically on inclusion and communication are important. Also, clearly demonstrating the differences between acceptable and unacceptable conduct sets a precedent for future conflicts. HR can fall back on the sensitivity training when reprimanding poor behavior in the workplace.Utilizing strategic mentors is one of the better ways to introduce new employees to a diverse and potentially uncomfortable workplace. Focus on mentors that are successful and respected to take the new workers under their wing.Article continues below this adMentors can quickly teach new personnel the appropriate means of communication along with specific job roles. Corporations operating in multiple countries often use mentor programs when an employee moves into a position in a foreign location.These programs can work as a one on one mentor or more of a group setting depending on the company and their specific needs. For example, an employee based in the United States that is moved to an office in Japan will benefit from a local mentor who has undergone the same process.The mentor can teach the employee about local customs, work processes and show them around the city. Having an understanding point of contact makes the transition much easier. Adapting to a new culture is not easy and the mentor helps communicate the process until the employee is comfortable and adapted.Finding effective ways to communicate in a diverse workplace is often a simple matter attitude. Having a positive attitude toward coworkers is a great starting point. Genuine intent also helps, because you truly care about having an open, meaningful line of communication to achieve productive outcomes.Article continues below this adSimply approaching communications with an open mind and a willingness to listen is often enough to gain respect and to have reciprocal communications in business. Positive attitudes are infectious and are good for everyone involved.Focus on praising great work and do not use a condescending tone or punishment for mistakes. Use that energy to encourage learning and improvement over time. Taking the time to recognize great work – while building positive morale around the success of a diverse group – will build a team mindset.Even though a positive, outgoing attitude is great for communicating, using body language also should be considered. Your body language is especially important when interacting with different cultural groups.Article continues below this adIn the workplace, touching is simply off-limits. Touching can easily be interpreted as sexual harassment, and it also makes some people uncomfortable. Keep your hands to yourself in a professional setting - outside of the basic handshake. The only exception is between longtime friends, who are mutually comfortable with a hug or pat on the back. Unless you are absolutely certain, however, stick to basic formalities.Body language while speaking is great for making a point and expressing emotion. Consider the audience first, however, to ensure that you are not overreacting or misrepresenting the context of the conversation. In some cases, remaining low-key when it comes to body language is a good idea. Again, the context and comfort level with other parties involved is important.Article continues below this ad April 2, 2020 | Purdue Global In recent years, major companies such as Apple, Google, and Hewlett Packard have visibly increased their efforts to support diversity in the workplace. Many companies are now releasing diversity reports and actively touting inclusion efforts. But that leads to the question: can workplace diversity both improve corporate culture and lift the bottom line? What Is Diversity in the Workplace? “Traditionally, diversity refers to differences in race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, and education, among other variables, says Steven Cates, faculty member for graduate programs at Purdue Global. “But that definition is limiting in the current world of business. In 2020, diversity is a subset of the process as it relates to engaging and including everyone within an organization in an attempt to meld into one cohesive culture.” Cates refers to this mindset as DEI, for “diversity, equity, and inclusion.” He says there are five main considerations that businesses—particularly human resources departments—need to pay attention to: Multigenerational workforces, or the fact that workplaces increasingly are full of a mix of baby boomers, Generation X, millennials, and Generation Z, all of whom have different needs and working styles Unconscious bias in the workplace, or dealing with different worldviews shaped by more than ethnicity or socioeconomic background Gender identity and expression and the increasing visibility of LGBT employees in the workplace Employee engagement as an extension of diversity and inclusion Political expression and diversity in political thought in workplaces; Cates says younger generations value the opportunity for political expression >> Learn More: Generational Differences in the Workplace [Infographic] How Diverse Is the Workforce? According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the United States, the labor force has become more diverse since the mid-20th century. Women, in particular, have made great strides in workforce representation, rising from 30 million in 1970 to more than 75 million in the years since. According to labor force participation data from the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, Asian and Hispanic workers have similarly made gains, albeit incremental ones, and there is more visibility of the LGBT community in the workforce, according to a recent Catalyst study. How Does Diversity Impact Business? Diversity, it turns out, does pay. Over the past two decades, as scholars have sought to quantify the economic effects of workplace diversity, a growing body of research has emerged. Collectively, it suggests that diverse work environments boost profitability, culture, and public perception. Diversity Improves Company Performance Companies with diverse workforces often outperform companies that do not. A Gartner study predicts that through 2022, 75% of companies with diverse and inclusive decision-making teams will exceed their financial targets. The study found that gender-diverse and inclusive teams outperformed their less inclusive counterparts by 50%. Weber Shandwick, in partnership with United Minds and KRC Research, released a 2019 study in which 66% of executives at companies that aligned their business goals with diversity and inclusion goals agree that diversity is an important driver of company financial performance. Companies with more diverse leadership teams report higher innovation revenue—45% of total revenue versus just 26%, according to a 2018 BCG report. Diversity Improves Employee Retention and Engagement Research has found that morale, culture, and employee engagement all thrive in diverse and inclusive workplaces: In a Deloitte survey, 83% of millennials reported higher levels of engagement when they believed their company fosters an inclusive culture. 70% of respondents in a 2019 Yello survey said they would consider looking for a new job if their employer didn’t demonstrate a commitment to diversity. A 2017 report from The Kapor Center and Harris Poll found that workplace culture drives turnover, significantly affecting the retention of underrepresented groups, and costing the tech industry more than $16 billion each year. Diversity Improves Public Perception of Your Brand Purdue Global’s Cates says that DEI affects all aspects of the business, including what prospective customers think of your business. “Possibly 50 years ago, DEI might not have been an issue,” Cates says, “but today, people want to know who made the product and who's involved in the service. Do any workers look like me? Do they talk like me? Do they act like me? Do they have the same value systems I do?” In Cate’s 2017 paper “Do Physical Traits of Sales Professionals Play a Role in the Customer Decision Process?” published in The International Journal of Business, Marketing and Decision Science, he argues that the diversity of your sales staff can impact purchasing decisions. Diversity as a Core Value Of course, promoting diversity is not a silver bullet. Increasing employee diversity cannot magically resuscitate a poorly run business or immediately spur disruptive innovation. Cates says that to really model DEI in the workplace, you can’t just hire a diverse workforce; you need to keep diversity and inclusion as a core value of your business. “DEI is not a policy. It has to be a mindset, and it has to be an organizational value,” Cates says. “It becomes what your executives actually model so that it evolves into a deep, ingrained, corporate organizational value that is not questionable. It becomes part of the very fabric of the organization itself.” To reap the long-term benefits, a company must adopt a systematic approach, one that cultivates diversity continually, from the hiring process and staffing to leadership training and more. Many companies may balk at the scope of commitment, but when they look at the now-established benefits to morale, culture, and the bottom line in an increasingly multicultural society, it’s the obvious choice. Learn More About Purdue Global Purdue Global is proud to teach a diverse population of students. Part of the respected Purdue University system, we provide a world-class education that's tailored to the unique needs of working adults. Learn more about our 175+ online college degree and certificate programs. About the Author Purdue Global Earn a degree you're proud of and employers respect at Purdue Global, Purdue's online university for working adults. Accredited and online, Purdue Global gives you the flexibility and support you need to come back and move your career forward. Choose from 175+ programs, all backed by the power of Purdue. Diversity in communications has always been important in the workplace, but it's become even more critical today. If you compare the current workforce to that of 20 years ago, you'll notice a stark difference. It is markedly more diverse now in terms of race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, socioeconomic background and most other metrics you can imagine. These shifting demographics mean it's more important now than ever before to be considerate of diversity in communication strategies.When discussing diversity in communications, the first level to consider is awareness. At first glance, you might assume that diversity in communication entails conveying everyone's perspective evenly or including voices from all "types" of people. While those things can be important in the right situation, it isn't the whole story.Article continues below this adDiversity in communications is more about recognizing that different people have unique points of view and life experiences based on their backgrounds. It's about educating every team member that they have privileges and hardships not shared by others and that they need to be aware of this when they communicate within and outside the company.For example, a person with a privileged socioeconomic background may have grown up going to a yacht club and learned to sail. However, they should be aware that not everyone had that opportunity and that making sailing analogies and references in their communications is insensitive. This is a surface-level example; the situation is usually more complicated than that.The writers at Business News Daily emphasize that diversity in communications starts internally with how members of an organization participate in workplace dialogue. Experts recommend bringing in outside specialists in diversity and inclusion to evaluate your company's practices, suggest changes and develop training programs for staff. This type of training can make a world of difference. In addition, it also sends the message that diversity in communications constitutes a significant priority for the company and something that it's taking seriously.Article continues below this adIt isn't just about how people talk to one another, either. It's also about forming teams and making sure they have the language and mindset to communicate and work effectively.Not only is diversity in education and implementation the right thing to do, but it can also be a game-changer in terms of employee retention and satisfaction, which has a massive effect on your bottom line. Staff who feel respected and included are more likely to work passionately and stay with the company longer.Diversity in communication shouldn't stop at your office walls. The experts at G2 Learn Hub explain that you must infuse diversity in your communications into all aspects of how your company communicates with its customers, clients and the general public. Some of this will happen naturally as you better educate and train your team. When they communicate outside the organization, they'll carry their new information into those interactions. You can even conduct training for promoting inclusion and diversity on social media, in press releases and more.Article continues below this adThere are other ways to communicate your attitude on diversity with the public. Consider whether it's reflected in the social responsibility initiatives your company embraces, whether charitable giving, volunteering or something else. If not, consider changing your focus. Also, examine whether your company's mission statement, stated values and other public documents reflect your new priorities regarding diversity. Once again, you might want to consider changes.The bottom line is that the importance of diversity inside and outside the workplace is not going away and will likely become more critical and complex in the coming years. Start now if you want your organization to thrive in this changing environment. Process of sharing information between employees within and outside a company This article needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.Find sources: "Business communication" – news · newspapers · books · scholar · JSTOR (January 2008) (Learn how and when to remove this message) Business communication is the act of information being exchanged between two-parties or more for the purpose, functions, goals, or commercial activities of an organization.[1] Communication in business can be internal which is employee-to-superior or peer-to-peer, overall it is organizational communication. External communication is business-to-business or business-to-consumer, the act being outside the organization. These methods can happen verbally, non-verbally, or written. It is often that these external and internal forms come with barriers which can cause conflicts between the sender to the receiver. Barriers that can effect communication on both external and internal is language, intercultural communication and behavior, and environmental.[2] The word communication has been derived from the Latin word "Communicare" which means to impact, participate, or transmit. Now communicare is also obtained by the word "Communis" that is known to share.[3] Thus, communication may be defined as the interchange of thoughts and information to bring about mutual understanding on the subject's significance. Business communication focuses primarily on achieving goals and, in the case of a public company or organization, increasing the dividends of shareholders.[4] Thirty years ago organizational communication and company policies were still in use of via paper, which now in the digital age there is companies allowing information to be exchanged virtually. From desktop to mobile, communication and commerce has been digital as desktop computers are becoming relic.[5] Internal Internal communication also known as workplace communication or organizational communication is the interchange of information within the organization. From employee-to-employee or employee-to-superior the purpose of all information is to develop trust and/or to increase productivity.[6] Organizational communication involves meetings, exchange of email messages, or collaboration for projects. It is determined that the success of communication within the individuals of the organization underlined the companies success. For business leaders it is important for them to understand the role of communication in order to motivate employees in accomplishing goals for the company. Low engagement in an organization can cost the global economy trillions of dollars a year.[7] Since information is being shared up and down the hierarchy of communication channels, it is shared in various forms such as; verbal, written, and digitally within teams and the company as a whole. Importance of internal communication Boosts up employee productivity and satisfaction; communication between staff and leadership where employees feel encourages to give out their ideas and opinions on matters, makes them feel valued. Promotes the supply for information; information being passed at the right time to the right people decreases the chances of information overload. Sharing goals and objectives; keeping employees a flow of the companies goals makes them feel well-informed and capable of taking action on it. When conflict arises in detaining certain goals then, being allowed to communicate fast between the company reduces stress and faster thinking to get things done.[8] External External communication is any party outside the company such as; business-to-business or business-to-consumer. The audience can be the suppliers, clients, potential business partners, associations, and the news media among others. Whether the messages be informational or promotional the aim for external communication to take place is to share information about the business and its products or services.[9] Business-to-consumer communication, also known as direct-to-consumer, is when a company directly communicates with its consumers about product details or company information. The opposite is when a consumer leaves reviews on a product (or service), which may identify how the company could improve its product. Importance of external communication Developing community relations; external communication helps build relations among other businesses. Communicating and leveraging information; Sharing the companies products or services helps attract potential consumers, retain current consumers, and gain a competitive advantage. Building brand identity; consistent external communication channels will benefit you to receive brand awareness. Optimizing external networks; external communication helps the company gain more suppliers, investors, and partners. Relations with suppliers; Maintains a healthy relationship with suppliers. In sharing information, plans, and requirements helps the company to have a steady supply of products or services.[10] Methods of business communication These internal and external types of business communication occur through verbal and non-verbal methods of communication.[11] Therefore, business communication can be broken down into different categories such as; Electronic communication Almost all businesses require the use of technology to communicate outside and inside an organization.[12] They are; Emails Text messages Voice and video calls Employee intranet and HR software Non-electronic communication There will be time where in an organization will have to require documents are non-electronic and submitting physical paperwork.[13] They are; Face-to-face meetings Physical copies of documents Written Communication Written forms of communication can be provided electronically and non-electronically.[14] They are; Written emails Written letters Written contracts Written documents have saved time and money, keeping a record of what was said in order to avoid any unfair dismissal claims. Verbal communication Verbal communication can leave costumers or stockholders confused and unsatisfied if communicated poorly. In using positive language you are most likely to achieve a positive outcome.[15] They are; Meetings and job interviews Presentations and some training Conversations between employees Conversations between potential partners Conversations between external parties Effective communication mainly revolves around how employees and management interact with one another to reach organizational goals. They accomplish this by improve organizational practices and reduce errors. All organized activity in a company relies on the process of business communication and your communication strategy. The importance of effective business communication also lies in: Presenting options/new business ideas Making plans and proposals (business writing) Executing decisions Reaching agreements Sending and fulfilling orders Successful selling Effective meetings Providing feedback to employees and customers [16] There are several barriers that a business might experience when communicating with business partners. Such barriers can prevent one from receiving or understanding messages others use to convey information, ideas, and thoughts.[17][18][19][20] Language Language is an essential source for human communication because without it, it is not easy for people to communicate among each other. Individuals use language to convey their thoughts, feelings, opinions, information, and emotions to other people. Language barriers can make communication between internal and external parties difficult with misunderstandings, inefficiencies, and mistrust. Forms of barriers can be cultural differences, psychological differences, and dialects and jargon.[21] Intercultural communication and behaviors Intercultural communication is often used to describe a range of communicational issues that increase inside an organization of different variety of religious, social, ethnic, and educational backgrounds. Intercultural communication becomes more complicated because individuals interpret communication between colleagues based on past experiences and their cultural backgrounds. If two people of different cultural backgrounds interact, intercultural communication is most likely to take place.[22] Different cultures also have different behaviors on what they consider to be a polite behavior and negative behavior. An example to be set is, in certain cultures it is the right norm to bargain about prices while in other cultures it may seem rude.[23] Environment Environment barriers in business communication become to be distractions, errors, faults, or anything outside the person you are communicating with. Among space, noise and climate, time becomes an environment barrier when an organization that expects quick results will not afford slack from their employees. Higher learning institutions offer communication courses, and many are now offering business communication courses. These courses teach students how to communicate more effectively.[24][25] Attending these courses help students understand the communication barriers they might experience when communicating with others. It is suggested that 93% of employers believe that clear communication skills are more important than the students' actual major area of study.[26] Communication competence is an ability that is sought after by employers and often leads to professional success.[27] Many scholars have analyzed employee performance and have come to find that positive performance is far more than competence and skill but also the use of effective communication. Through better communication, employees stimulate productivity in their own work as well as their colleagues and promote long-lasting improvement in the workplace environment. From the manager's perspective, a relevant understanding of business communication allows them to guide the organization in a more effective and productive manner. Specifically, an open communication line connecting departmental units is greatly reliant on business communication. Through sound practice, managers and portray and employees can understand a business's goals and objectives. Founded in 1936 by Shankar is the Association for Business Communication (ABC),[28] originally called the Association of College Teachers of Business Writing, is "an international, interdisciplinary organization committed to advancing business communication research, education, and practice." The IEEE Professional Communication Society (PCS) [1] is dedicated to understanding and promoting effective communication in engineering, scientific, and other environments, including business environments. PCS's academic journal,[29] is one of the premier journals in Europe communication. The journal’s readers are engineers, writers, information designers, managers, and others working as scholars, educators, and practitioners who share an interest in the effective communication of technical and business information. The Society for Technical Communication is a professional association dedicated to the advancement of the theory and practice of technical communication. With membership of more than 6,000 technical communicators, it's the largest organization of its type in North America. The International Business Communication Standards are practical proposals for the conceptual and visual design of comprehensible reports and presentations. Strategic talk ^ Sergy, Lauren (2016). "Business communicaton". search.credoreference.com. Retrieved 2024-10-23. ^ Sergy, Lauren (2016). "Business communication". search.credoreference.com. Retrieved 2024-10-23. ^ "communicator, communicatoris [m.] C - Latin is Simple Online Dictionary". www.latin-is-simple.com. Retrieved 2024-10-24. ^ Reinsch, L. (1991-09-01). "Editorial: What Is Business Communication?". Journal of Business Communication. 28 (4): 305–310. doi:10.1177/002194369102800401. 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Retrieved from " GettyThe main categories of business communication are critical for performing basic operations and for effectively running and managing a business. Without effective communication processes and tools, operating a business would be inherently difficult. The business world is highly competitive, and most companies stay on the cutting edge of communication technology to ensure that they are receiving and delivering clear messages both internally and externally, to their audience or customers. Businesses have internal communication processes, external communication processes, marketing and sales communications, formal communications, informal communications and a variety of different styles for communicating in different roles and levels of the business. The way in which a business communicates has evolved dramatically, with the inventions and mainstream acceptance of postal mail, telephones, the internet and mobile phones. Specifically, the internet and mobile phones are responsible for broad-sweeping changes in business communication models internally and externally.Business communications happen in several different formats that are completely driven by technology. Although businesses often use in-person, face-to-face communications for internal meetings and external communications, technology remains an important driver for most business that happens outside of in person meetings. For example, a business that is recruiting will setup a booth at a recruiting fair for face to face interactions. Sales meetings and presentations are also very common in the business world. While these interactions can take place in absence of technology, typically, they are are still driven by technology designed specifically for business communications.Article continues below this adPhones and the internet create national and international opportunities for businesses. Conference calls are standard for business communications, and they connect individuals and groups of people on phone calls without a location-based requirement. A group of individuals can setup a conference call from their boardroom to connect with another group of individuals in a different board room. Other individuals with the conference number or an access code can call in from the airport, their hotel or the road as well. Mobile phones have also changed the game, making it possible to do business on the move with a high-speed phone and internet connection in a portable and convenient device. The world of smartphones places a calendar, conference line, chat room, video call, email composer and reader, search engine and networking tool in the palm of your hand. The flexibility offered by this technology makes a business more effective when external communications are a regular part of their schedule. Email is also a major technology for business communications. Email is used for internal and external communications, sales and for coordinating and sharing documents and media. Email is really the backbone and heavy lifter for many business communications. In addition to email, many apps and devices are used to communicate internally on a daily basis.Several apps and programs exist specifically for internal business communications with some overlap into the external. They are designed for team environments where regular feedback, questions and media sharing is a necessity. These apps are essentially chat rooms where individuals can organize tasks and teams can collaborate and work on projects. The process is far more efficient than walking to each office or calling back and forth all day. The ability to work in the group or directly with other individuals in programs like Slack and Basecamp is becoming commonplace. Adding contractors and even clients to these communication channels is used as a method of streamlining processes while keeping everyone on the same page. The ability to customize channels and create groups around specific projects really makes these programs an excellent business communication tool.High-level business communications utilize memos, reports, directives and initiatives to communicate and guide a business across all levels. Larger businesses are especially prone to formal processes based on board meetings, shareholder feedback and organizational standards for communicating. Board meetings and operations at this level are not always publicized or transparent. This applies to outsider and insider knowledge. A CEO may send a memo only to department heads who are relevant recipients of the information. These department heads will then implement the new procedures and practices by instructing and training their managers and workforce. A large business almost operates like a government at the higher levels with confidential meetings and communications that are protected by legal confidentiality and non-compete agreements. Planning at these levels requires the communication of sensitive information and protecting that information from competitors and potential thieves is imperative to the success of a large business (or small for that matter). Big picture company philosophy and practices are often communicated at all levels through internal documents, training exercises and meetings but there are different daily communication styles and practices segregated across each level of a business.Article continues below this adFormal communication practice include quarterly and annual reports, company wide documents and anything that has legal ramifications for the company or individual creating the document. Reports are especially important for business communications. They show the big picture trends and performance. Some reports remain internal and are only read by employees but a publicly traded company will release their reports to the general public. These reports show earnings, losses, capital investments and earnings across the quarter or the year. They are important for inspiring investor confidence and proving performance or explaining shortfalls. For example, one quarter may show losses but the business can use the report to show where they made capital investments that will create future growth greater than the temporary loss. Other formal communications used in business are legal documents like liability waivers, non disclosure agreements, human resources packets and documents and official reports being delivered to coworkers and clients. Most meetings, business dinners and situations where the business is being represented call for some formality as well. Anything negatively said or done when representing the business can have backlash and repercussions. Even when the scene is one of general entertainment, the communication process requires a special touch to stay within the bounds of being formal and respecting the other parties involved.Face to face meetings are an important aspect of business communications despite the availability of communication specific technologies. The personal meeting is valuable and it provides individuals or groups the opportunity to connect, build morale and understand each other better. Conferences are another form of face to face communications in a semi-formal setting. Industry specific conferences are used to provide networking opportunities while learning from leaders within the specific industry. Conferences range from local networking events to large conventions with booths, vendors and standing room only presentations. These face to face opportunities offer the ability connect in a personal way that simply is not possible on a phone call or through email. It also makes it easier to do business with someone when you have a strong personal relationship.Article continues below this adInformal communication is something that tends to happen naturally in the workplace. You can call it water cooler talk or simple banter in the office or workplace but it remains an important aspect of many jobs. The ability to communicate ideas quickly and without a formal process makes on the job learning possible. Brainstorming and talking about projects and process without any oversight spurs creativity and allows employees to test ideas while giving and receiving feedback. If creativity is an important aspect of the business, driving and encouraging informal communications is possible by creating a friendly work environment where employees are happy and social. Numerous companies follow the trend by setting up recreation areas, cafeterias and other gathering spaces to encourage a social atmosphere within the company. Informal communications are rarely acceptable in a customer facing capacity but general chatter and gossip among friends and acquaintances who are not involved with or directly impacted by the business is normal and expected.External communications involve everything customer and public facing. External lines of communication directly impact the company image and overall brand. The press release is a classic form of external business messaging. A company can craft the press release to communicate important news, new products or a response to any good or bad publicity. It's an opportunity to put a message in front of journalist and a relevant business audience. Using the same previously mentioned conference scenario, a business can display a booth or provide presentations as a form of external communications. They can do interviews, sponsor events and capitalize on a number of public facing opportunities to grow their brand recognition and name. Other forms of external communications are company cards, brochures, websites and anything that is distributed and potentially viewed by outsiders. The company website and social media profiles are especially visible in the 21st century business world. These internet communication modules are used to display the brand identity while sending a clear message about products and services to the outside world. Social media is especially prevalent as an external communication tool. After forming an audience, the business can communicate any message or share media with that audience instantly.Article continues below this adCommunity events overlap with external communications but they are intended as a form of community support that can have a positive impact on the company image. Sponsoring a little league team or organization, sponsoring fundraisers and participating in community oriented events builds trust and shows that the business is a valuable and caring asset within the community. As a side effect, the efforts often draw new and loyal customers to the business. There is a fine line between advertising and communicating with the community through support and outreach. Adding the business name and slogan to anything intended as community support means the business is not seeking a direct return. Any incidental return is fine but the employees should not be out hard selling products and services at a fundraiser or event. The community focus must be the priority in this scenario.The final form of business communication is through marketing and advertising, both of which are extremely common and overlapping with several of the previous sections. For example, the business website and brochure are both forms of advertising and marketing. It's an external communications process that requires paid capital or sweat equity to earn an audience. Paid scenarios for business advertising and marketing are found just about everywhere. Television commercials, radio advertisements, online banner and text advertisements, paid search ads, billboards and even the ads found above the stall in a public bathroom are forms of paid media. Earned media does not require the capital to buy an existing audience from a network or location, but it requires effort to get in front of an audience. This could be something simple, like twirling a business sign on a street corner, or something more complex, like writing search-engine friendly content to rank high, and to drive organic traffic to your business website or location.Article continues below this ad This article was originally published on January 25, 2021, and was updated on October 13, 2023. In today’s increasingly digital workplaces, effective communication is critical for clarity and understanding, higher employee engagement and satisfaction, and increased collaboration, problem-solving and innovation. But teams can’t reap these benefits if they don’t incorporate diversity in communication. Let’s look at why inclusion and diversity in communication is important to building a strong digital workplace and how you can use more inclusive language and messaging within your organization. Let’s get started! Diversity and inclusion in the workplace is the process of creating an environment where individuals from all types of backgrounds, cultures, perspectives and identities are respected, valued, and provided equal opportunities. Diversity refers to the range of attributes that make individuals unique and how those characteristics are represented within a group. The attributes may relate to race, ethnicity, culture, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, physical abilities, socioeconomic status, education, professional backgrounds and more. Inclusion refers to the interactions and actions that make employees from diverse backgrounds feel welcomed, supported and empowered to contribute their perspectives and talents without fear of discrimination or exclusion. Diversity and inclusion in the workplace is often collectively referred to as DEI — Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. DEI has a place in many areas of the workplace — from human resources and hiring to training and education — and it is especially important in the area of internal communications during the age of virtual work. In a virtual workplace, teams must work together through digital platforms, which has increased the need for communication platforms and strategies that connect people with diverse backgrounds and needs. Organizations must implement inclusive communication strategies to improve accessibility, remove potential technology and cultural barriers, and support more authentic connections and collaborations. Check out our Guide for diversity in the workplace Back to top Diversity in communication is an approach that considers diverse audiences when developing verbal, written, visual or nonverbal messaging. It adapts and tailors communication styles, approaches and content to effectively engage and connect with individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, identities and perspectives. Inclusive communication considers and respects the diversity of individuals by eliminating barriers that might arise from differences in culture, language, abilities, backgrounds and perspectives. Inclusive communication: Uses clear and plain language Is accessible (it accommodates visual and auditory impairments) Utilizes both text and visual representations Is easily converted to different languages Uses respectful language Is mindful of cultural sensitivity Avoids stereotypes Discover how a chief people officer fights against stereotypes to improve diversity in the workplace Inclusive language refers to the words and phrases that make audiences feel represented, rather than excluded.

Instead of using terms that imply a certain age group, like “young” or “elderly,” use more neutral terms like “younger people” or “older adults.” Explore inclusive language guidelines from the American Psychological Association Back to top Diversity in communication offers many benefits to organizations and employees. Language, communication and words are some of the most powerful tools we can utilize. An inclusive approach to communication can be the difference between pulling people in or pushing them away. Consider the downside of not incorporating inclusiveness in the transfer of ideas, directions, thoughts and messaging. Communication that does not consider diversity can easily turn off individuals and groups of individuals. It can trigger or elicit uneasy responses when it excludes or overlooks various individuals or groups and makes people feel like they’re being unvalued, trivialized, judged and stereotyped. On the flip side, when diversity in communication is considered, it can lead to: More trust in leadership. When building trust in the workplace with employees, the last thing an organization wants to do is make individuals feel excluded or judged. Using inclusive language lets individuals know their leaders care about their unique qualities, which builds trust and loyalty. Increased feelings of employee satisfaction and belonging. When employees feel represented at work, they are more likely to feel like they belong. Inclusive environments lead to greater job satisfaction, higher morale and better employee experiences as individuals are able to feel valued for who they are. A Deloitte study found that inclusive leadership could make employees feel up to 70% more belonging at work. Better decision-making and innovativeness. Diverse teams consider a broader range of perspectives, which results in well-rounded and more informed decisions. A diverse workforce brings together a variety of viewpoints and experiences, leading to more creative problem-solving and innovative ideas. The Deloitte study also showed that inclusive leadership could lead to a 20% increase in decision-making quality. Improved talent acquisition and retention. Organizations that prioritize diversity and inclusion are more likely to attract a wider pool of talented individuals seeking an inclusive workplace. A Glassdoor survey found that 76% of job seekers and employees report that a diverse workforce is an important factor when evaluating companies and job offers. Organizations are also more likely to keep talent when individuals feel more satisfied and welcome in the workplace. Higher organizational reputation. Inclusive communication matters to your team as well as customers. Organizations that prioritize diversity and inclusion are seen as socially responsible and are more likely to gain a positive reputation, especially with Gen Z. A Microsoft Advertising report found that 70% of Gen Z consumers are more trusting of brands that represent diversity in ads. Back to top In the workplace, it is all about creating an environment of inclusiveness where every employee feels like they’re welcomed, valued and empowered to be their true self. Organizations need to create an inclusive atmosphere to ensure that every individual within the organization is treated equally and respectfully regardless of their differences. Communication teams need to take a mindful approach to the language, visuals and even their channels of communication for the audience they’re targeting. Take time to listen and understand different perspectives and experiences before making organizational changes. Take an opportunity to ask meaningful, impactful questions, and use time to digest information so that responses are not reactive but rather proactive and beneficial. Learn how Simpplr can help you listen to your employees Communication teams need to have diverse voices to truly encompass different experiences and various strategies. Empower your internal comms team to allow them to speak up and out about their insights on both business and worldly matters. Also, learn what communication style and channel works for your diverse workforce. Some may prefer digital communication through a modern intranet or instant messages, while others prefer a more face-to-face approach. It’s important to find out what your teams are most comfortable with. It’s easy to default to your own personal experience as the collective experience, and it often shows up in our written and spoken communication. Be conscious that you don’t use your experience as the ‘normal,’ thus placing everyone else in the ‘abnormal’ or inferior category. Give employees an opportunity to identify which categories they feel comfortable being identified in. There are many complexities that make up a person’s identity, and making assumptions based on presentation can make individuals feel excluded. Don’t pressure employees to disclose this personal information, but give them an opportunity to do so if they feel comfortable. This will help tailor your communication, verbal and written, to each individual and make them feel accepted in the organization. Written words are not the only element included in diverse and inclusive communication. Ensure that the imagery used in your organization matches up with what you want representation to look like. But don’t approach this in a generic manner — make sure you’re actually being authentic to what your company culture stands for. Back to top Diversity in communication helps build an inclusive company culture that keeps employees engaged with the company and moving forward in a positive and bright manner. Embracing differences — whether they’re cultural, language or even age — helps ensure that all employees feel seen, heard and included. And this will make your team happier, more united, and more engaged. Keep these strategies in mind as you work toward building a more welcoming digital workplace and internal communications plan for your organization. Simpplr is the modern intranet that transforms the work experience for all employees — wherever and however they work. A platform that’s as simple to maintain as it is to deploy, Simpplr leverages state-of-the-art AI models to deliver a seamless, cohesive and personalized employee experience. Request a live demo to learn how Simpplr can help you connect, inspire and engage your workforce. This article includes content originally contributed by Hani Khan.