



The IC Space

Case study: How BIS evaluates effectiveness of its internal communications

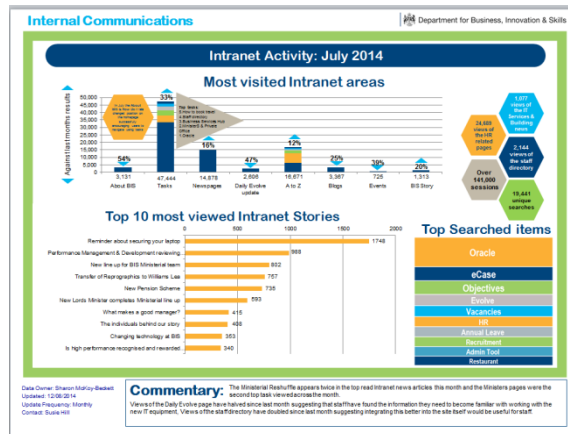
The Internal Comms team at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills tell us how they use evaluation to show how they add value and make a real difference to staff engagement.

Setting our objectives

Ensuring we achieve what we set out to and that our work contributes to Department objectives makes evaluation of what we do and the effectiveness of our work indispensable to us as the Internal Communications team in BIS.

The main objectives of our Internal Communications strategy sit under four communications themes: communicating the Department's vision and objectives; supporting engagement between leaders and their teams; showcasing and celebrating achievements and encouraging employees to exercise their voice.

We evaluate progress against achieving these communications goals and objectives by tracking: the Inputs – channels used and messages communicated; Outputs – take-up of the communications channels and messages; Outtakes – how staff responded or changed their behaviours based on our communications.



Inputs, outputs and outtakes

We produce a monthly internal communications dashboard which monitors quantitative take-up of all our communications channels. This includes quantitative data on the number of readers for intranet articles, attendees at events, deliveries of monthly cascade sessions and openings of all-staff emails, as well as information on most popular intranet search terms.



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We also analyse the messages communicated by theme to ensure we are giving equal weight to the key messages we prioritise in our strategy. This quantitative data is complemented by qualitative feedback from staff forums, such as our Critical Friends Network, feedback gathered from post-event surveys and through the monthly staff cascade process.

Over the past 15 months, our dashboard data have been aggregated against our four communication objectives so they build into a detailed picture of what has been done to communicate each theme, what level of take-up there has been and what people thought, felt and did as a result.

This evidence is complemented by the quantitative and qualitative data obtained through our independently conducted, annual communications audit, based this year on telephone interviews with a representative sample of 400 staff (13% of the workforce).

Outcomes

Our main drivers are to impact the BIS People Survey scores around visible leadership, leaders setting a clear vision and direction and communicating change in the Department. The People Survey report in October 2013 demonstrated that the Internal Communications strategy was making a difference in BIS with increases of 7% around vision and direction, 4% around leaders being visible and 6% where staff said they felt informed about changes that affect them.

Some of the additional outcomes we are trying to achieve include working with BIS managers to ensure they feel supported in improving their face-to-face team engagement through use of quality communication tools and clear messages. We are also focussed on ensuring our communications activities give employees regular opportunities to have their say in changes planned for the Department.

The most significant outcome we are trying to impact through our communications strategy is to contribute to an uplift in staff



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motivation and pride - and a consequent improvement in the overall BIS People Survey engagement index.

Again, the trend from the People Survey report 2013, tracked against our own evaluation and dashboard shows an upward trajectory with a 2% increase in overall engagement and a 4% increase in staff saying they are proud to tell others they are a part of BIS.

Our internal communications dashboard and evaluation ensure we continue to focus on achieving these objectives and enable us to track our progress month on month. They are a vital part of every internal communicator's toolkit and we have found great value in building use of them into our strategy from the outset so we can demonstrate to the Department the contribution we make to achieving the BIS objectives, and the progress we continue to make.