

CIPR Internal Comms Conference 2016

The best bits

October 2016 **Synergy.**

CIPR

If you couldn't make the brilliant CIPR Closing The Gap Internal Communication Conference then fear not – Synergy was there to bring you back all the best bits.

From event apps to global comms, there was plenty to get even the most seasoned comms professional excited about our fascinating industry.

Why ‘Closing the Gap’?

This year’s conference theme was chosen following the results of the Edelman Trust Barometer which revealed the following:

Gap 1

64% of execs believe they’re doing the right things at work, but only 48% of their employees agree.

Gap 2

When asked who they thought was a credible source of information about their companies, only 49% said the CEO.

“When it comes to closing gaps, we need to rebuild the trust and credibility of leaders.”

Case study: Bridging the gap between staff and leaders

Emma Savage and Emily Lovell from Powys County Council

Challenge: A survey told Powys County Council that only 32% of its employees would recommend working there, while just 23% felt motivated to go the extra mile. Many also felt that the vision was unclear.

The response: The team devised a programme of activities to engage staff based on the Macleod Report's Enablers of Engagement: Strategic Narrative, Engaging Managers, Employee Voice, Organisation Integrity.



The big actions:

1 **Vision “Strong communities in the green heart of Wales”**

Used plenty of image-led vision and values docs including a strategy plan on a page.

2 **Inspiring leaders**

Hosted an interactive conference and supplied good quality training (350 managers trained so far).

3 **Processes**

Introduced new measures for job satisfaction and redesigned the appraisal system to be aligned, engaging and based on conversations rather than processes.

4 **Trading places**

Sent every member of senior management ‘back to the floor’. The CEO worked in the canteen whilst the CFO did the bins!

5 **Comms**

Used 1) Video blogs to provide key updates from the organisation, 2) A Talking Points briefing sheet for team meetings, 3) Informal monthly manager forums (always fully booked), and 4) Regular employee interviews in the company magazine.

The results:

- Understanding of vision and values went up from 13% to 90%
- 4,000 views of CEO blog
- 7,000 junior managers took part in Networked Managers events
- Great employee feedback: “He was just a human being and it was nice that he cared enough to come and find out about me and my team.”

We love

Back to the floor!

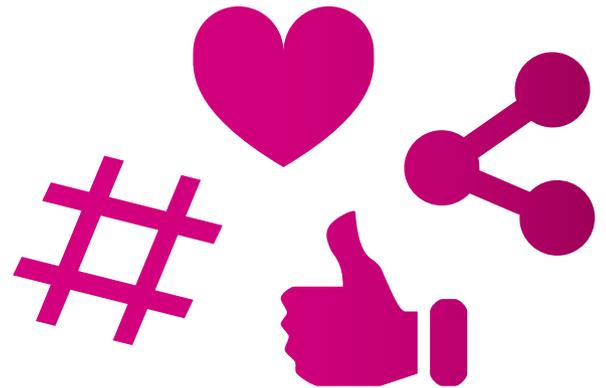
After each back to the floor activity, the Powys Council’s execs produced a 3-min film to share with employees. They were a big hit!



Lightning Talk: Closing old gaps, creating new ones – social media and internal comms

Helen Reynolds

Background: Helen's company helps organisations with a good purpose to use social media better.



5 big lessons:

- 1** Internal comms is shifting. We're no longer **doing** all the comms ourselves, instead we're **enabling** others to communicate on our behalf via social media
- 2** 24-hour access is crucial
- 3** People want conversations, not corporate messaging (so sometimes we have to lose control of the message)
- 4** It's not the tool, it's how you use it
- 5** Keep content interesting, brief and authentic.

Synergy loves...

Thinking of introducing a staff app? Then Helen recommends first asking yourself why. If it's about helping people to stay up to date with company news, why aren't they already? If the issue is what you're writing about then an app might not be the answer!

Case study: Bringing together award-winning employees

Kate Shaw, Nationwide

Background: Nationwide has 18,000 employees in over 700 branches. Their employer brand is PRIDE: Putting members first, Rewarding Membership, Inspiring Trust, Doing the Right Thing, Excelling at Service. Once a year they host a black-tie extravaganza, bringing together 300 employees who have brought PRIDE to life.

Challenge: The employees are based all over the country and have very different grades and jobs. So how do you bring this diverse group together and give them an amazing experience?

Response: A pre-event app: The team created a digital pre-event app that allowed the attendees to get to know each other well before the big day. The app included all the details of the event, an activity based competition (most active user got a free room upgrade!), allowed users to vote on the menu and even share outfit and transport plans, creating a real sense of excitement. The app was totally aligned to the event theme and was updated throughout the eight-week run-up. It cost £12,000.

The results:

95% rated the app as excellent, saying it made a fundamental difference, making them feel included and recognised

258/300 were active users, 42 dipped in and out

50,000 visits in eight weeks

4,274 likes

1,232 status updates

969 comments

796 photos

We love

Clarity on purpose

Before you start creating an event app like this, make sure you're clear on the purpose – find the hook so that you can tell people exactly why they should use it.



Lightning Talk: Bridging the divide between collaboration and communication with ESNs

Dr Kevin Ruck from the PR Academy

The challenge: Dr Ruck wanted to know why so many ESNs fail after 18 months. He carried out a piece of research to find out.

5 big lessons:

- 1** ESNs can cut through clutter and have the potential to lift the productivity of knowledge workers by as much as 25%. They help people search for information, identify subject matter experts and crowdsource ideas in real time.
- 2** We need to look at ESNs from two perspectives: communication AND productivity.
- 3** 40% of organisations use social media in internal comms. However, 70% of internal comms practitioners rate the use of digital channels as poor/average – getting dialogue going is really tough.
- 4** 68% of people said getting employees to post comments was really difficult. Peer to peer comms was much easier and less threatening. So collaboration inside the organisation is key.
- 5** Getting your senior leaders on board is critical. They need to talk about themselves and respond/listen to employees.

Case study: How one event can change everything

Leanne Taylor-Flett, Employee Communication and Engagement Manager, AXA

Challenge: AXA was suffering from a drop in employee engagement. Changes in their business structure had made people uneasy and there was a big divide between management and staff. Employees were even beginning to resent the customers because they felt that the business only cared about them, not the staff.

Response: An event-centric campaign to introduce the idea that change is a positive thing, make people feel valued and inject real energy into the business.

Before the event: The team sent out Valentine's Day cards saying 'You complete me' asking employees to state one thing they loved and one thing they wanted to change at AXA. This was used to set the agenda.

At the event: Had McFly's 'It's all about you' song playing as people entered, used headphones with 'We're listening' on them, played a game of higher or lower/play your cards right, to talk about changes in the business, invited anonymous feedback, showed an animation to sum up all the feedback received in the Valentine's cards.



The results:

20% increase in understanding of key messages

91% felt feedback is being listened to and acted upon for positive change

91% felt the session was a good use of time

91% really enjoyed the session

82% strongly agreed the session was engaging

Immediately after, eNPS (employee Net Promoter Score) increased from +25 to +26. They built on this, and six months later it rose to +47!

Their annual survey revealed a 13-point increase in response to the statement 'I believe management will act upon feedback'.



We love

Challenge

Challenging the norm!
Who says corporate events need to be dry and boring?



Lightning Talk: Developing global competence

Dr Barbara Gibson



The big idea: The whole world of global business has changed. Now, some businesses are trading internationally within three years of start-up. Here are Barbara's top five intercultural competencies for global communicators:

- 1 Cultural self-awareness:** Awareness of your own biases and being aware of how your culture may be viewed in other cultures. Not 'my way is the right way'.
- 2 Cultural sensory perception:** The ability to sense when culture is in play – reading body language and verbal cues – reading between the lines of emails etc. These cues may differ greatly depending on culture.
- 3 Open-mindedness:** Holding off making a decision until you have had time to examine from different cultural perspectives.
- 4 Global perspectives:** Viewing the business as transnational rather than 'domestic first, ROW second'. E.g. when your strategic level team is all from the home country.
- 5 Adaptability:** It's not about adapting yourself to one culture – change your behaviour, comms style or strategy as needed.

Synergy loves...

**Barbara suggests
assessing your personal
global competencies before
looking at others.**

Case study: Closing the gap between Employee Brand and Business Brand

Sarah Goodall

Opportunity: What you do as a brand is no longer controlled by PR or advertising – thanks to social media, it's now real and transparent. This means companies have a massive opportunity: letting employee advocacy lead the way. There shouldn't be a big gap between the company brand, the employer brand, and the employee brand – employee stories are the ones that make the company credible.

Good to know

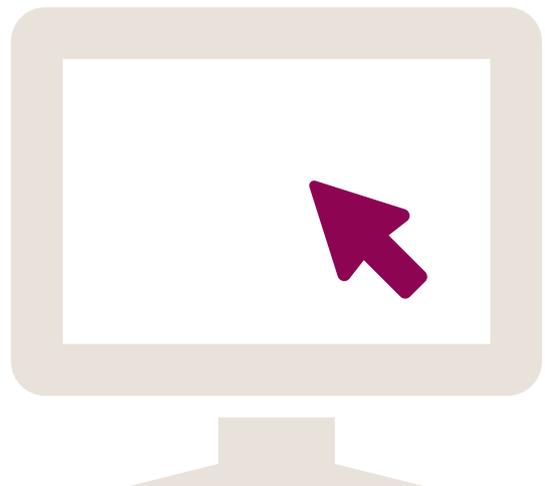
- 57% of workers want to work for a social business – where they can tell their story and there's a collaborative culture.
- In terms of revenue, leading social sellers create 45% more opportunities and are 51% more likely to achieve their targets.
- 39% of employees have already shared positive comments online about their employer.



How to make it happen

- 1** Recognise that your employees will be at different levels of social media maturity. Pick your advocates: people who are enthusiastic and have networks.
- 2** Build your case to get investment: employee reach versus brand reach.
- 3** Close the skills gap by inspiring confidence and using a training programme. Take employees as far as they want to go but don't make it mandatory. Spot the ones who are eager and want to move, and the others will follow. This takes time and patience.
- 4** Make your content relevant, timely and valuable – help your employees to develop by giving them content to position themselves in the market.
- 5** Make things easy. Simplify sharing and use authentic, credible content.
- 6** Create tools with sophisticated measurement (i.e. 40% of attendees came as a result of our social media network.) Tie usage into to your NPS.
- 7** Reward appropriately. Freebies inspire the wrong kind of behaviours. Instead, choose time with senior leaders, job swaps etc.

Request a copy of our mini-guide to Social Advocacy by emailing gemma@synergycreative.co.uk



Brand engagement inside out

We engage people with award winning creative communications.

Our inside out approach inspires your employees to be brand ambassadors and turns your customers into brand advocates.

The result is a seamless customer experience at every contact with your brand.

Get in touch

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**Thank
you!**

**We'd like to say one last
thank you to CIPR for a
brilliant day. We learned
loads and can't wait till
next year!**

Be sure to check out
our internal comms hub
for all things employer brand.