



CREATING AN ENGAGED WORKFORCE

The Face-to-Face Communication Toolkit

By Roger D'Aprix

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PART 1: USER GUIDE

Here complete in one package, are all of the materials you need to launch an effective manager's communication initiative in your organization. It is organized in three main sections. The first is the introductory section with direction on how to use the toolkit. The second is the tools themselves. And the third includes miscellaneous items you may wish to reproduce as you see fit in crafting your initiative.

WHY LAUNCH A MANAGER COMMUNICATION INITIATIVE?

Two Crucial Questions

In a technological age like ours, face-to-face communication can seem to be an anachronism. And yet, it has clearly been demonstrated in both practice and research that such communication is crucial to quality management and employee engagement. The fact is that you ignore the manager's communication role at your own risk because disengaged managers can destroy company credibility practically with a wink and a nod.

If you're thinking about launching an employee engagement initiative based on the face-to-face communication role of managers and team leaders, two questions should come immediately to mind. The first is: why bother in a technology- focused culture obsessed with the latest e-tool?

The second is—*assuming* there is a legitimate business case for such an initiative—who is its likeliest champion? Who should care most passionately?

To the first question, if we can zap a message over a smart phone or by email and jam tons of information into a sleek company intranet, why go to the bother of pursuing and encouraging real-time, face-to-face human conversations? The answer is that technology, as wondrous as it is these days, is only another tool in our quiver... a means of instant delivery of the information one wants to send. It is no substitute when we truly need reflection, interpretation and human presence as a means of establishing and maintaining the valuable human condition we call 'employee engagement.'

Engagement is An Individual Choice

Let's be clear: Engagement is always an individual's choice. We each decide consciously or otherwise either to engage, to wait and see or to actively disengage from an organization and its concerns. And in all likelihood, the choice is variable from day to day or even from hour to hour. The motivations are twofold—a *rational* choice based on our inclination to identify our interests with the organization's interests and an *emotional* choice based on such emotions as loyalty, pride in one's work, gratitude and even affection inspired by and for true leaders. Whatever the motivation, engagement is truly an individual choice and a response to one's very personal circumstances and experiences.

The underlying presumption of this toolkit is that immediate managers and team leaders are primary catalysts in earning or destroying employee engagement by virtue of the way they treat the people for whom they are responsible. They are not the entire engagement story because there are additional factors in play, such as the success of the business, company policies and senior leadership actions and decisions. But there is no question that their communication style and practices are fundamental engagement causal factors.

The Annual Costs of Disengagement

Aside from the individual and personal issue of engagement, there is still another means-to-an-end question that most business leaders would find even more compelling than why people engage. It is the tangible and intangible benefits of an engaged workforce and the costs of the disengaged one. The Gallup Organization puts those total annual costs to the American economy alone at \$450 to \$550 billion!

“silence is almost always a disaster”

Who Should Care

Which brings us to the second question—the likely champion for engagement and, therefore, the audience for this toolkit and the issue of ‘who should care.’ In today’s competitive world with the need for performance and innovation, the people who should care range from senior leaders to human talent professionals of all shades to first-line leaders themselves. Together with the members of the workforce they comprise the engagement stakeholders. Titles and responsibilities get muddled in this changing workplace so they aren’t a reliable guide to who should be the engagement advocates. That is a shared responsibility that falls on the shoulders of anyone who cares about human performance.

Besides the matter of employee engagement, there’s still another reason for caring about communication effectiveness and its connection with engagement. If engagement is an intellectual and emotional choice, people have an inherent need to understand the ‘why’ of today’s turbulent and far-reaching change and what it means to them personally. They deserve explanations and dialogue and not simply ‘the facts.’ Leaders and communication professionals have not done well in dealing with the ‘why’s’ of organizational events and decisions either because we have chosen to remain silent or because we felt the facts spoke for themselves. Silence is almost always a disaster, and mere facts rarely convey the underlying reasons or causes for an action or event.

THE DEFICIT AND THE DATA

Gallup Research Findings

Gallup Organization CEO Jim Clifton neatly defines the problem and the opportunity in his introduction to Gallup’s 2013 report “State of the American Workplace” when he focuses on work teams and the impact of their managers.

Here’s what you need to know: Gallup research has found that the top 25% of teams — the best managed — versus the bottom 25% in any workplace — the worst managed — have nearly 50% fewer accidents and have 41% fewer quality defects. What’s more, teams in the top 25% versus the bottom 25% incur far less in healthcare costs. So having too few engaged employees means our workplaces are less safe, employees have more quality defects, and disengagement — which results from terrible managers — is driving up the country’s healthcare costs.

He goes on to say...

Gallup research also shows that these managers from hell are creating active disengagement costing the U.S. an estimated \$450 billion to \$550 billion annually. If your company reflects the average in the U.S., just imagine what poor management and disengagement are costing your bottom line.

Confirming ROI Communication Findings

The research data corroborate Clifton's and Gallup's findings. The ROI Communication Benchmark, which measures communication performance in large organizations, defines an optimum leader and manager communication system in the following terms:

“An organization with a healthy, professional leader and manager communication system is one in which all leaders and managers recognize that robust communication is a core responsibility and capability. Leaders and managers are measured for their communication performance, and their effectiveness in communicating is factored into decisions about reward and recognition. Leaders and managers have the training and tools they need to communicate with employees effectively, and to engage and align them in support of business goals. Employees view leaders and managers as reliable and credible sources for information, and receive the information and sense of context they need to excel at their jobs. Leaders and managers are receptive to employee input, ideas, perspectives and feedback, and put that feedback into action when appropriate.”

Using that measuring stick, ROI Communication conducts its annual benchmark survey of companies on the Fortune 500 and Global 500 lists, and at privately held firms with estimated annual revenue of at least \$4 billion. In ranking the actual communication activities of the companies in the survey, the results showed that communication as a core leadership and manager competency ranked dead last among ten recognized organizational communication priorities. Specifically:

- › **One in four** managers is not considered a credible source of information
- › Only **55%** offer recognition and appreciation for a job well done
- › Only **25%** clearly understand their communication role; Which coincides with the fact that only **27%** receive communication training
- › Only **18%** are measured for communication performance in their performance reviews

Not Merely a Training Issue

It's tempting to take a simplistic approach to this challenge—to assume that it's only a matter of training or of providing the right information at the right time. But that's a disservice to the people whose communication performance we want to improve. At least four tasks need to be addressed. There's the critical matter of establishing *accountability* for the behavior. But accountability is unfair without *training and development*. And training and development do little good unless we provide *the necessary follow-up tools* to reinforce the training *and then measure* the results.

THE CONVERSATION

The Role of Internal Social Media

What we have lately taken to calling 'Social Business' or 'Social Media' as a catchall category for that dialogue, that conversation, won't happen inside institutional organizations without a deliberate initiative and accompanying strategy. Indeed, if you think about it, the ultimate expression of social media and two-way communication is human to human in real time. In such interactions there is the added value of body language, facial expression and tone of voice that infinitely enhance our ability to process and interpret any message. These are powerful communication signals that no intermediating device—no matter how 'smart'—can satisfactorily replicate.

There also is the clear and powerful business case for improving face-to-face communication in today's organizations. The jury is no longer out. We know that the most effective work organizations are the ones where there is good leadership at every level and where such leadership produces impressive levels of employee engagement.

And in the midst of workplace stress, confusion, mistrust and simple human need, there is also a powerful human case for attending to this most basic kind of communication. Our business success and our human satisfaction with our work both demand it.

Roger D'Aprix
ROI Communication

WHAT REALLY IS THE MANAGER'S COMMUNICATION ROLE?

Two Vital Human Communication Questions

Before we can accurately describe the communication role of any organizational manager, we need to look at it less from his or her perspective than from that of the people he or she is charged to lead. In short from the ultimate information- consumer's view. What are her expectations? What does he need in order to perform?

The two eternal questions from that perspective are: what does this mean to me? And why are they doing this? In each case the employee, the consumer if you will, first wants to understand the significance of the event, decision or action. And then he or she wants to understand the underlying leadership motivation and possible outcomes so that it's possible to fathom if that motivation or outcome is benign or otherwise.

Interpretation and Advocacy

Those information- consumer's desires put the manager, supervisor or team leader in the position of becoming, on one hand, the interpreter and, on the other, either the advocate or the explainer. It's an inescapable role for anyone who wants to be an effective manager. It also requires the manager to establish and maintain trust and to carve out time for the necessary relationship-building. Some of it—the more routine part—can be done with technology, but mostly it must be done face-to-face in the day-to-day exchanges of the workplace. That leads to the question of what really does face-to-face communication look like and why is it so basic and so important?

*“face-to-face
communication
is the ultimate
social medium”*

The answer seems obvious. Two human persons standing facing each other and exchanging ideas and opinions. What could be more natural and more common? We have been hard wired by our evolutionary history to have these conversations. It's partly a matter of our social natures, partly a means of reading one another's intentions and partly a simple exchange of information.

And, yet, it's a bit more complex than that. There's also the matter of learned body language and the reading of tone of voice among other subtle and not so subtle signals. Now place the conversation in a hierarchical workplace and introduce the issue of unequal power and pecking orders. Add to that, repetition and the opportunity for message distortion as the conversation is shared with others, and the experience is considerably more robust and complex than it first appears.

Perhaps that's the reason that as a profession, we have tended to emphasize the communication channels we thought we could control as opposed to relying on human channels to deliver important messages. I sometimes think that we've all been traumatized by that little parlor game of telephone and the message distortion that often results in attempting to repeat a message accurately to another person. So we have a collective mistrust of leaving managers to their own communication devices. But it's time to grow up and understand that face-to-face communication is the ultimate social medium and that today's worker wants and expects more than command and control, top-down communication.

A Personal Epiphany

In that connection in the late 1970s, I had an epiphany as a result of an interview I was conducting with a Xerox sales manager. At the time I was the communication manager for the copying business, and he was in charge of sales for Xerox's New York City office. Our goal in the interviews was to determine why people-managers were seemingly not doing a very effective job of operational communication, a fact that had been borne out in company survey after survey.

He interrupted my questions as he handed me a sheet of paper he had been scribbling on as we were talking. "You see this?" he demanded. "It's a list of all the things I'm held accountable for. Where do you see communication on the list?" The question was rhetorical. It was nowhere on the list. "But," he continued, "I'm a smart guy, and I know that if you sit down and talk to people and really listen, great things happen. So here's the problem. If I ever get the time, I'll talk and I'll listen, but for now there are just too damned many other things to pay attention to."

He then went on to tell me that he had taken his sales team off the street a few weeks earlier to hold a day-long team meeting to discuss some pressing issues. That month his team missed their revenue targets, and he was reprimanded for spending time on team conversations at the expense of sales canvassing. His final word was, "Thanks, but no thanks."

As I sat on the plane on the way home, I began to reflect on the conversation. He didn't get it, but on the most practical level he did. The trouble was that he saw the communication process as an extracurricular add-on to all of his other responsibilities. The challenge was to show him and all of his peer managers that it was really a process that could be integrated into their normal leadership activities.

A COMMUNICATION MODEL OF THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

How Effective Communication is a Catalyst for Employee Engagement

That Xerox manager, all those years ago, unknowingly launched me on a lifelong quest to understand the first-line leader's communication role and how it must be a response to a set of human needs if it were to inspire a greater sense of employee engagement. But what needs? What were the circumstances that might trigger a chain of universal questions for the manager to respond to? Was there an identifiable pattern that would help define what I had taken for granted as an inevitable conversation between a manager and his team members?

I came to understand that when companies commanded managers to 'communicate more effectively,' the manager had no road map other than his or her own view of what it meant to be a leader. So the first thing I did was to try to envision an uncertain new employee. We've all been there. Will I succeed on this new job? How will I be treated? How much training will I get? What are the boss's expectations?

Whether brand new to a company or whether promoted to a new position, what's our first question to deal with our anxieties? That actually was easy:

1. What's my job?

In short, what are your expectations of me? I want to know what success actually looks like in practice. Once I understand job expectations (usually a time-consuming and trial and error process) what's the logical next question after I'm into this thing and doing my level best? That too seemed a fairly obvious question:

2. How am I doing?

Am I measuring up to what you saw in me in the first place? Am I performing to your expectations? Okay, once I begin to get truly comfortable with my responsibilities, my confidence and my performance increase. I'm settling in and doing the work. In today's world, the demands are heavy and maybe even bordering on excessive. If so, what's my next question? Given human nature and the desire for recognition as well as our capacity for some self-pity, it could well be the desire for the boss to empathize. From the worker's viewpoint, it's likely to be something like: Has anyone noticed how hard I'm working and what a good job I'm doing? In short:

3. Does anyone care?

If I get that desired feedback and recognition, the odds are that I will move up from my self-preoccupation to a concern for and an identification with my colleagues. I will go from a position of 'I' to one of 'We' as in...

4. How are we doing?

As a team of people with a common mission... That question naturally leads to a larger one in the progression. What about the big picture? What is this organization, of which I am now a part, trying to accomplish and be? So...

5. What's our vision, mission and values?

Am I inspired? Is this something I want to be part of? And if all of the stars align, am I truly ready to engage by signaling my wish to be part of this thing? Simply put:

6. How can I help?

Where do I sign up to dedicate my discretionary time and effort?

I would be misleading you if I suggested that everything is as neat and tidy as this story implies. Or even if this is a set of steps that lead inevitably and finally to a sense of engagement. Truth is that to some extent, the jury is always out, and change in circumstances can take one on a deep dive to 'What's my job?' Human communication is experienced through one's individual prism and, therefore, is always a bit messy, but as a construct, this rendering reduces it to something logical and memorable.

The model as shown here is the soul of "The Manager's Face-to-Face Communication Toolkit." It has been independently verified by a number of researchers and a multitude of company users as a valid description of employee communication needs.

The Soul of Engagement: The Communication Leadership Model



The Communication Leadership Model (copyright by Roger D'Aprix; all rights reserved) can be used by all purchasers of this toolkit in connection with the included toolkit materials. However, it cannot be altered or modified from its current form as illustrated throughout the toolkit. No other use is authorized without permission of the author.

More to the point it has been an invaluable tool in showing managers, supervisors and team leaders what we mean when we say that their communication role is vital. It may remind you of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs—in his case a pyramid description that shows how those needs evolve from the basic need for food and shelter at the bottom of the pyramid up to an existential search for the meaning of one's life. In this case it is focused on the meaning of one's worklife—far from a trivial question.

If effective communication is finally about performance and the human aspiration for meaning and involvement, the model is an invaluable teaching tool and an answer to the manager's everlasting question: 'What do you mean by 'communication?''

That's the question with which we begin this important exploration and that is central to all the tools in this toolkit.

USER'S GUIDE AND FAQs

Here complete in one package, are all of the materials you need to launch an effective manager's communication initiative in your organization. It is organized in three main sections. The first is this introductory section with direction on how to use the toolkit. The second is the tools themselves. And the third includes miscellaneous items you may wish to reproduce as you see fit in crafting your initiative.

In a sense the toolkit is a collection of unfinished canvases that permit you to design an initiative that suits the needs, brand, customs and unique culture of your organization. There is no one size that fits all so the toolkit is structured to provide you with numerous options in building your customized initiative. Each of the tools provides you with a different choice—from online e-training to a classroom session or a live webinar: Throughout the toolkit you will see icons and links to the downloadable tools, which can then be tailored to your unique communication needs.

First, a generic PowerPoint presentation for your use in explaining the business case (if needed) and the value and necessity of effective people-manager communication in today's complex workplace

Second, an Online Option: a self-instruction, e-tool consisting of four sessions that a manager can experience according to his or her own schedule and needs

Third, a classroom or webinar option entitled 'Communicating for Leaders' that can be delivered in a traditional classroom or team session or delivered live online to multiple locations as a webinar

Fourth, a template that any people manager can use to develop a strategy and plan for delivering a critical issue to either a large, diverse audience or to a particular team

Fifth, 'The People-Manager's Communication Guide,' a reference tool that provides managers, supervisors and team leaders with a complete guide for their communication role, including the advice and tools they need to fulfill it

In addition to those options, there is a variety of supporting tools:

- › A self-evaluation questionnaire for participants that also permits optional team feedback
- › A communication quotient quiz
- › And the aforementioned takeaway reference guide to reinforce and refresh the initiative

USING THE TOOLS

Before you attempt to use any of these materials, please review each one with care to determine how you can best apply it either in combination with the others or separately to achieve your objectives. The elements are here. You need only to add your creativity and that of your colleagues.

To repeat an important point, experience shows that a well-considered combination of accountability, training, tools and information are the vital elements in any successful initiative of this type. It's up to you to decide how best to combine them or to add to them to suit the particular needs of your organization. To that end, here are some frequently asked questions and answers for anyone charged with finding ways to support line managers in addressing their communication responsibilities.

You decide which combination of tools best serves your initiative and your unique circumstances.

Q: We have a whole array of communication media in our organization. Why should we be focusing on line managers? Isn't that approach more appropriate for an old-fashioned hierarchical organization burdened with a chain of command mentality? Can we really rely on these people to carry the communication burden that these media were first designed for?

A: Think about the typical communication experience of the average person in a work organization. For him or her, communication finally means all of the messages and signals that they received in a given day--frequently to the point of information overload. Typically, there are three major communication sources that speak to that person—*leaders* at all levels, *systems* like the reward system or policies or organizational structures, which also communicate in their own way and *formal media* whether they are electronic or print. Of the three, the fact is that leaders at all levels are the most influential. If we ignore the leadership skills of the leader closest to the actual accomplishment of the organization's work, we turn him or her into an uninformed figurehead at a time when people need human presence and direction more than ever. We also lose the one person best able to interpret what organizational objectives mean to the team. And to answer that all important and never-ending employee question: what does this mean to *me* and my work?

Q: What are the critical success factors in making a face-to-face initiative work?

A: Probably the most important one is cross-functional collaboration in conceiving and launching the initiative. Leadership is obviously a big issue with lots of organizational owners. The trick is to reach agreement on the business case that justifies the time and effort for this kind of initiative. Typically, that means that such functions as Human Resources, Communication, Learning and Development and Employee Research need to be involved once the business case has been accepted. No one of these functions, including Communication, should go it alone. And, of course, the need for senior management support and example is a given.

Q: What about the target audience—the typical line manager? What tends to motivate them to take on this responsibility?

A: It's a combination of factors. The most important is holding them accountable for the behavior essential to effective face-to-face communication, recognizing and rewarding those who do it well and coaching those who do it poorly or ignore it.

Q: But how will we know who's doing it well or ignoring it?

A: The obvious answer is measurement. The questionnaire in this toolkit is a proven instrument for giving managers feedback on their communication behavior from the people who report to them. It can be used for pre or post training to identify where a given manager, supervisor or team leader is doing well or poorly. Another obvious tool is a company's employee research if that research is designed to isolate a specific manager's results.

Q: What do you say to the manager who pleads he or she doesn't have time for face-to-face communication?

A: Time is the scarce commodity in today's organizational world. No doubt about it. But what they're really saying is that they don't have time for human leadership. How many organizations can tolerate that answer when the cost of neglecting human leadership is lost employee productivity, excessive turnover, poor quality, deteriorating customer service and a disengaged workforce? And that list doesn't even include the often hidden but very real financial implications of an uninformed and disengaged workforce.

Q: What other factors are critical to the success of such an initiative?

A: Clearly, if there's accountability, there must be training and development to clarify expectations, rationalize the task as a business priority and ultimately make the accountability a fair demand. In addition, there needs to be a constant information flow to people managers to keep them properly informed and motivated.

Q: What about skills training in things like active listening and effective presentations?

A: No question that those are important workplace skills, but there are two problems. One is that they are only fragments of the total communication process. Worse, many managers feel that such training is patronizing and fails to take into account the leadership experience they've gained on the firing line. The training tools in this toolkit build on that experience and create a powerful awareness of the employee's communication needs in the workplace.

Q: How do you overcome the manager's resistance to another task to perform in an already over-crowded daily schedule?

A: It's not an add-on task for anyone who is leading properly. Face-to-face communication is not extra-curricular because it facilitates employee understanding and engagement, not to mention his or her sense of self-worth, and leads to greater levels of engagement. Employee engagement is where the investment pays off in terms of commitment, productivity and innovation—probably the most important levers in assuring business success in today's knowledge society.

Q: What other ingredients are essential to the success of a face-to-face initiative?

A: Any additional tools you can provide are essential—strategic communication planning templates, competency guidelines that assist the leadership selection and development process, information packages for important events or strategic initiatives so that the leader can look like a leader to his or her people are all invaluable. Education for all managers and team leaders in the business, in its strategy, customer needs and options and marketplace forces are also critical if they are to fulfill the all-important role of interpreter for their people. Remember the critical employee question is always: what does this mean to me/us followed by 'why are they doing this?'

Q: What competencies seem to determine the people who will be successful at face-to-face communication?

A: They vary from organization to organization and depend to some extent on the nature of the task. But the obvious ones are innate leadership skills possessed by 'natural' leaders, the ability to listen non-defensively and carry on constructive dialogues, the skill to translate what major events or initiatives mean to the work unit, an understanding of the business and its strategic priorities and, most of all, the ability to inspire trust. The simple truth is that you can't communicate with anyone who doesn't trust you.

Q: If leadership communication is an issue that crosses disciplines and requires collaboration up, down and across organizations, why is it the professional communicator's responsibility to champion it?

A: The primary reason is that professional communicators presumably have the best understanding of communication as a total and complex process. They also have a high personal stake in its success. In fact, if face-to-face communication is failing, there is an excellent chance that all of the other forms of communication in that organization are also failing or at least degraded. Most of the real communication in work organizations is informal, spontaneous and pervasive. The formal communications any organization delivers are only a backdrop to this continuing drama. Here's where communication professionals can contribute their unique understandings and values to a successful leadership initiative.

Q: Has the Communication Leadership Model been independently cited as a valid management model?

A: The Communication Leadership Model, which is fundamental to much of the material in this toolkit, has been tested and found valid by various independent researchers including Dr. Walter Kirkpatrick, Professor of Organizational Communication at the University of Memphis and the late Ed Robertson during his tenure as internal communication head at Federal Express. In addition, it has been tested under fire in numerous companies and as part of one client project or another. It is the one piece of this toolkit that should not be altered or modified because of its fundamental expression of the nature of leadership communication in an organizational setting.

Q: Can the other tools be customized or given 'a company brand look?'

A: You are encouraged to customize the materials by adding or subtracting tools. Because there is an internal logic to each tool and to the package as a whole, you should consider carefully how to combine or use any one separate from the others. It's also permissible to add company logos and to match company design standards as long as ROI Communication and Roger D'Aprix are acknowledged as the original publisher and author and holders of the copyright.

Q: We have an active manager development program at our company. Can the various tools be used as part of that program?

A: That's an excellent approach since it makes the important connection between effective communication and the leadership task. Surprisingly, many leadership programs don't single out communication as a discipline, presuming that it is somehow part of every aspect of leadership. It is, but it also deserves special attention as a task in itself irrespective of the usual qualities and values of leadership.

Q: Is it possible to condense the toolkit into a one-time management session for all company managers? At our company I doubt that I could get more air time than a single session.

A: That begins to sound like a band-aid approach. It's possible as an effort to raise awareness, but it's unlikely to have much lasting effect. The better answer is to make the business case for a broader and more enlightened approach.

Q: Should the toolkit then be regarded as a 'turnkey' package?

A: Circumstances and company needs vary so much that it's impossible to design a one-size-fits-all approach for any effort like this. So no, the toolkit should not be regarded as a turnkey package. Instead you should see it as the skeleton on which you can add the muscle and flesh that suits your company needs. That means that the final products of the toolkit will be only as good as your imagination, input and innovation allow. A face-to-face communication initiative is a complex effort that should involve several disciplines in both planning and execution to be successful.

Q: Does greater employee engagement really result from face-to-face communication?

A: It's an over-simplification to assert that improved manager communication is solely responsible for improved engagement. There are multiple causes for any phenomenon as complex as engagement. But there is no doubt that one's immediate boss is a primary influencer. The Gallup Organization cites 'lousy managers' as the leading cause of disengagement. Conversely effective managers well selected and well versed in communication leadership are the likeliest catalysts for engagement. Read the work of Marcus Buckingham and the Gallup research that has been done over 25 or 30 years with thousands of organizations. Buckingham and Gallup devised the famous Q12 survey in which twelve measures tend to show the degree of employee engagement in an organization. Ten of the twelve measures are directly connected to the face-to-face communication task and behavior of managers, supervisors and team leaders.

In addition there are all sorts of corroboration of the link between effective face-to-face communication and engagement in the work of both consultants and university researchers. (See the continuing global engagement surveys sponsored by consulting firm Towers Watson.) And for the all-important link to financial results, see the *ROI Communication Benchmark* surveys, which show how effective communication performance is a predictor of higher earnings per share.

Q: Is there any help or further counsel available in the use of the toolkit?

A: ROI Communication consultants and toolkit author Roger D'Aprix are happy to provide further counsel and professional consulting assistance for anyone who wants to customize a company approach specifically for his or her organization or to organize a train-the-trainer experience. The contact information can be found at www.roico.com or daprixpbk@gmail.com.

AND FINALLY...

There are different motivations for launching a manager communication initiative. The following chart captures those according to the particular objective you are trying to accomplish and directs you to the proper tool for that purpose:

	IF YOU ARE TRYING TO...	THEN USE THIS TOOL :
RAISE AWARENESS	› Sell the importance of manager communication in your organization	› <i>The First Tool: The Business Case</i>
	› Assess your communication capabilities	› Self-assessment questionnaire for managers, team leaders › Team member questionnaire for feedback at the manager's option
BUILD SKILL	› Understand what your employees want from you	› <i>The Second Tool: the Online Option-Session Two of four-session e-training</i> › <i>The Third Tool: Communicating for Leaders</i>
	› Build your communication skills, using a self-paced format	› <i>The Second Tool: the Online Option</i>
	› Build your communication skills, using a live format	› <i>The Third Tool: Communicating for Leaders</i> with notes pages and directions for administering the training
COMMUNICATE	› Build your communication skills, using reference materials	› <i>The Fifth Tool: The People Manager's Communication Guide--a reference to reinforce the training and provide useful tips</i>
	› Develop a communication strategy for a specific initiative or event	› <i>The Fourth Tool: Developing Your Communication Strategy or Plan</i>



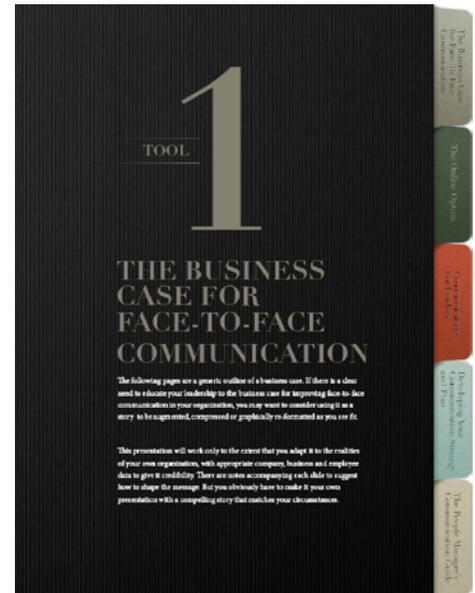
PART 2: THE TOOLS

Here complete in one package, are all of the materials you need to launch an effective manager's communication initiative in your organization. Five separate but related tools are available according to your objectives and needs. A description of each of the tools and their respective uses follows.

THE FIRST TOOL

The Business Case for Face-to-Face Communication

The following slides are a generic outline of a business case. If there is a clear need to educate your leadership to the business case for improving face-to-face communication in your organization, you may want to consider using it as a story line to be augmented, compressed or graphically re-formatted as you see fit. This presentation will work only to the extent that you adapt it to the realities of your own organization, with appropriate company, business and employee data to give it credibility. There are notes accompanying each slide to suggest how to shape the message. But you obviously have to make it your own presentation with a compelling story that matches your circumstances. (see PowerPoint notes Pages)



THE SECOND TOOL

The Online Option

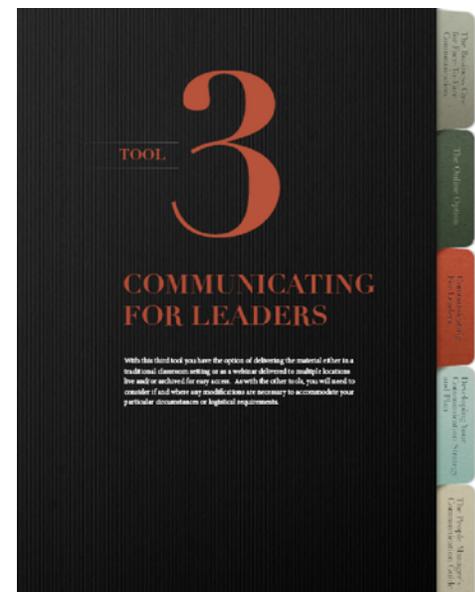
In today's hectic and demanding world, online instruction is an accepted and flexible delivery channel. The following four modules are designed to be delivered over a designated time period—say four consecutive weeks, for example. The timing is at your discretion depending on the pacing you determine is most effective in your situation. The emphasis is on self-learning and self-reflection with as much centralized support and promotion as you can muster. Whether or not you make this a mandatory or optional developmental activity is a decision that must be made consistent with your culture and customary practice.

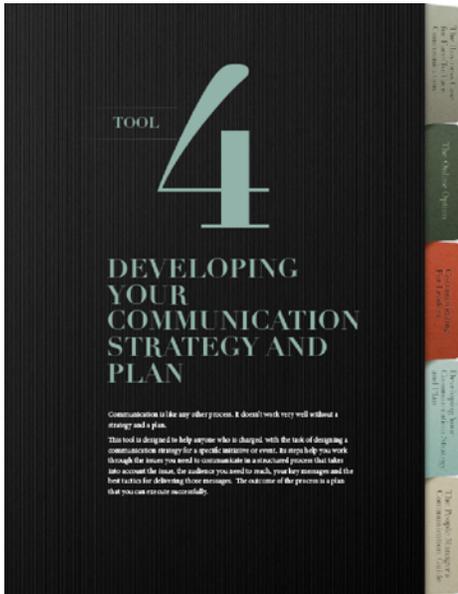


THE THIRD TOOL

Communicating for Leaders

With this third tool you have the option of delivering the material either in a traditional classroom setting or as a webinar delivered to multiple locations live and/or archived for easy access. As with the other tools, you will need to consider if and where any modifications are necessary to accommodate your particular circumstances or logistical requirements.





THE FOURTH TOOL

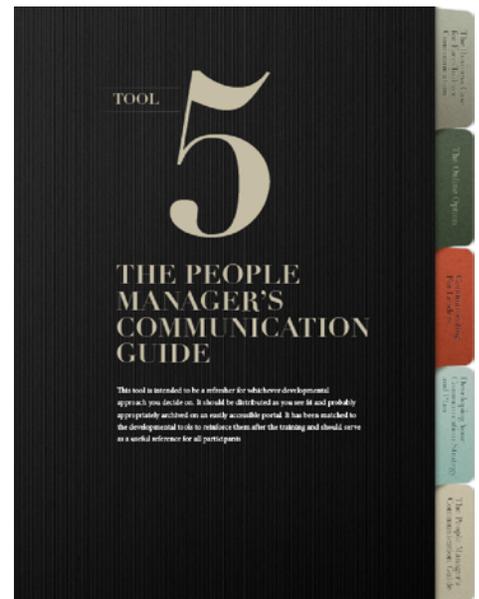
Developing Your Communication Strategy and Plan

Communication is like any other process. It doesn't work very well without a strategy and a plan. This tool is designed to help you work through the issues you need to communicate as a structured process that takes into account the issue, the audience with whom you need to communicate, your key messages and the best tactics for delivering those messages. The outcome of the process is a plan that you can execute successfully. Examples that comprise a step-by-step tutorial are provided so you can use them as models for your own planning.

THE FIFTH TOOL

The People Manager's Communication Guide

This tool is intended to be a refresher for whichever developmental approach you decide on. It should be distributed as you see fit and probably appropriately archived on an easily accessible portal. It has been matched to the developmental tools to reinforce them after the training and should serve as a useful reference for all participants.





ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Roger D'Aprix is internationally known as a practitioner in the theory, strategy and practice of employee communication. His ground-breaking work at Xerox Corporation beginning in the 1970s qualifies him as one of the pioneers in employee engagement.

As a communication consultant, lecturer and author he has assisted scores of Fortune 500 companies in developing their communication strategies and designing their communication training. In 1998 IABC named him 'one of the most influential thinkers in the communication profession in the last 25 years.' He was named an IABC Fellow, that organization's highest honor, in 1978.

For 15 years he held senior positions with two of the leading human resources consulting companies. He served as vice president and global practice leader for Towers Perrin's human resource communication practice and as principal and service developer for Mercer Human Resource Consulting. Before that, he led employee communication for Xerox Corporation and held executive communication positions at General Electric and Bell and Howell.

In addition to his own consultancy, D'Aprix & Co., Roger is a member of the board of advisors for ROI Communication – a consulting firm that specializes in employee engagement and communication. He divides his time between residences in Rochester, New York and New York City.

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