

Measuring communication & engagement effectiveness at BP

The need

In 2004 BP Lubricants introduced a new strategy and vision to its 7,000 employees worldwide. The strategy was a radical departure, and so required absolute clarity in its communication to employees, as well as a robust means of measuring levels of understanding of and commitment to the strategy.

ColeySmith Consulting was asked to develop a measurement approach that would:

- Ensure that communication and engagement activities are meeting the strategic needs of the business;
- Evaluate levels of understanding of and commitment to business strategy;
- Deliver deep insights (not just data) that can be tracked over time and used to influence decision-making;
- Help BP to allocate limited resources where they have most impact.

The approach

To ensure we achieved all of our objectives, we developed a clear, overarching framework for measurement. We also created a visual dashboard and branding to present outputs in a simple, logical and intuitive way. Every question asked of employees feeds in to the dashboard and in turn each dashboard dial links to strategy and performance.

Our main vehicle for measuring employees' understanding of and commitment to strategy was an online survey. We chose a survey because it delivered the hard numbers and evidence we needed and because we needed to reach every employee in the organization. We also developed Solutions Groups™ (short focus groups which aim not only to uncover issues, but also to explore potential solutions with employees) and implemented these to understand issues at a deeper level.

A best practice toolkit of materials and online project area including stakeholder communication materials, project plans, questionnaires, Solutions Group materials, results presentations and action/improvement planning guides has also been created and is widely used.

The results

- The organization for the first time now has a sustainable framework for measuring communication and engagement, which has been rolled out across the whole of BP;
- The measurement strategy and framework has completely changed the conversations communication practitioners have with their leadership teams and colleagues, and communication is taken much more seriously;
- Each area of the business has a dashboard of results on understanding of and commitment to strategy, and is using the data to inform communication strategies and plans, target activities and use resources to maximize impact;
- The framework is now being used to track improvement in each area on an annual basis.

"Helen's ability to cope with major complexity whilst providing the strategic challenge and support we needed to deliver a major programme, was the deciding factor in our choice of her as our partner. We achieved a level of success that was far beyond our expectations. Thanks Helen."

Simon Elliott, BP Lubricants

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