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was, "I pay my employees a salary and they should work and be grateful", workplaces are now designed to accommodate employee convenience, interaction, participation and enthusiasm for the common goals shared by all those within the organization.

Trade fairs, product launches and celebratory dinners are no longer just staged for the benefit of senior executives, customers or investors. Such events are planned and held to boost morale, show appreciation and show strength and profitability. The standard annual retirement dinners and company picnics have been expanded to include family gatherings, special scholarships for the children of employees and outreach programmes for the community, and are all designed to build a sense of belonging. Simple celebrations like monthly employee birthday parties help reduce stress in the workplace.

Organizations with multisites might schedule competitions between teams representing various offices to build cohesion and promote loyalty. For example, a public utility, faced with industry competition for the first time, organized events that featured skits and competitive games fashioned around the need to reorient

Strategic Thinking



What do you need to know to communicate effectively via teleconferencing? The Memorial University of Newfoundland (TETRA, 2006) gives these tips:

1. Introduce all participants at the beginning of the meeting.
2. Be careful with microphone placement. Noise such as paper shuffling or coughing can be distracting.
3. Mute your microphone when you are not speaking to eliminate unnecessary noise.
4. Announce your name and location when you speak.
5. Direct questions to a specific person by name.
6. Be aware of any transmission delay, you may have to wait before responding.
7. Look at the camera as much as possible.
8. Be natural. Minimize your body motion and hand gestures.
9. Wear neutral colours.
10. Set up a simple background, avoid windows and use direct lighting for participants.

How can following each of these tips help the communication process?

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Written Internal Communication

Written internal communication takes a variety of forms depending on the purpose of the communication.

This section explores some of the most common forms used in business today.

- memos
- newsletters
- blogs
- supplemental internal publications.

Memos

Traditionally, the most common form of internal communication was the paper memo, but today the email memo is more popular. In a survey of 400 respondents, when asked if they "had to be without email or phone service for five business days", nearly 75 % said not having email access would trouble them more (Nowak, 2003).

Are you confused by digital etiquette? You are not alone. According to a study conducted on behalf of Telewest Business of more than 1 400 office workers aged 16–64 across the UK, almost half felt it was rude if they had not received a response to an email within a morning, while 5 % felt it rude if they hadn't received a response within five minutes of sending the message.

Fewer than 10 % felt that it was appropriate to discuss human resources issues, financial discussions and meetings with management using instant messaging (IM) or text messaging (TM) (Telewest, 2006).

For many, email is the preferred form of inter- and intraoffice messaging. Email programs stay continually opened on some employees' computers. This enables the software to alert the user that a new email has been received. Stories abound of co-workers sending emails to each other even though they sit just a few feet away. Although this may sound impersonal, and perhaps lazy, the sent email provides the sender and receiver with a hard copy record of the message as well as a reminder of any action to be taken, questions to be answered or issues to be addressed at a later date.

As electronic memos have become widely accepted as a form of office messaging, the format of an email memo has been standardized to look much like its paper cousin. However, there has been another transformation. Memos, both paper and email, are now written in a short "high-impact" style, which, according to one study, takes approximately 20 % less time to read and is more clearly understood (Clampitt, 2005, p.110).

Here are examples of a traditional paper memo, a "high-impact" memo and an email "high-impact" memo:

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Traditional memo

TO: All employees of Stuart and Associates

FROM: Executive Training Department

9 October 2006

RE: Teamwork training

Representatives from the Gardner Training Institute will hold a team-building seminar, Thursday, 19 October 2006, for members of the following departments: Sales – 9 a.m., Customer Service – 10 a.m. and Human Resources – 11 a.m. Please mark your calendars with the date and time of your seminar. You will be expected to participate in this interactive seminar where many team building techniques will be discussed and demonstrated.

Coffee and pastries will be available 15 minutes prior to the start of the seminar. Please bring pad and pen with you and expect to spend one hour in the workshop.

The Gardner Training Institute is a leader in the executive training field and their experts in team-building will conduct the seminar. We trust you will find the time well spent as we actively strive to provide you with the most up-to-date training in a variety of areas.

High-impact memo

TO: All employees

FROM: Executive Training

9 October 2006

RE: Teamwork training

Please mark your calendars for a one-hour team-building seminar, Thursday, 19 October 2006, as follows:

- Sales – 9 a.m.
- Customer Service – 10 a.m.
- Human Resources – 11 a.m.

Coffee and pastries will be available 15 minutes prior to the start of the seminar.

Please bring pad and pen with you.

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article's authors suggest that quality communication between employees and management leads to employee satisfaction and long-term success for an organization.

employees to the realities of the marketplace. This helped the utility deal with sensitive issues while at the same time eliciting employee input and ensuring worker commitment.

Special events take creative planning, employee involvement, financial resources and commitment of participation from top management.

Simple spontaneous events take little planning, but most events require attention to detail. Issues to consider in special event planning include:

- Identifying the purpose of the event. Consider whether there is sufficient time, resources, space and staff to stage, publicize and evaluate the event.
- Matching the type of event with its purpose.
- Considering the business culture of the country or area where the event will be scheduled.
- Selecting a committee of employees to help with the planning process.
- Developing a calendar in order to identify dates, duties and responsibilities.
- Writing measurable objectives for the event. Use these objectives in the evaluation process.
- Proposing a budget.

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Email memo

From: trainingdept@stuart.net
To: mhelm@stuart.net
Subject: Upcoming team building seminar
Cc:
Date: 9 October 2006

Attached:
To: Michael Helm, Sales

From: Training Department

Re: Teamwork training

Please mark your calendar for a one-hour team-building seminar, Thurs., 19 Oct. 2006, as follows:

- Sales – 9 a.m.
- Customer Service – 10 a.m.
- Human Resources – 11 a.m.

Coffee and pastries available 15 min. before the seminar.

Bring pad and pen with you.

Newsletters

The company newsletter is one of the most useful tools to communicate with employees to foster organizational relationships.

Newsletters vary from a simple single white sheet of paper with black ink in plain text to a high-gloss four-colour magazine with graphics and photos. Some are simple daily, semi-weekly or weekly publications, while others, often of higher production quality, are monthly or quarterly publications.

Whatever the format, newsletters provide top-down (management to employees) communication as well as horizontal (interdepartmental and peer) information. They also provide valuable bottom-up communication by soliciting employee feedback, suggestions or opinions.

Because of advances in desktop publishing software, simple newsletters are relatively easy and inexpensive to produce. They provide timely information targeted to an