



Prosci's **Communication Checklist** draws from benchmarking research with over 900 participants and the feedback and input of hundreds of training participants. The checklist can be used as an audit tool to see if you are utilizing best practices in your current and future communication plans. The [Change Management Toolkit](#) and online [Change Management Pilot](#) include complete guidelines and templates for creating effective communication plans. Contact one of Prosci's change management analysts at 970-203-9332 or [changemanagement@prosci.com](mailto:changemanagement@prosci.com) for more information.

### Prosci's **Communication Checklist**

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|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you using the preferred senders to deliver communications in your organization?</b></p> <p>Benchmarking research shows that employees prefer to hear messages from two people in the organization - the person at the top of the change (for messages about the business issues and reasons for change) and their immediate supervisors (for messages about the personal impact of the change).</p>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you answering the questions "why is this change happening" and "what is the risk of not changing"?</b></p> <p>When individuals learn of a change, their first question is "why is this happening" - whether personal or professional change. Senior leaders tend to focus on the 'vision' of the future state, and project teams tend to focus on sharing their great new idea. Your first communications should be focused on why the change is happening. And don't forget to continue and reinforce the 'why' throughout the entire project, especially if time elapses between your first communication and the start of implementation.</p> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you answering the question "what's in it for me (WIIFM)"?</b></p> <p>Making a change is a personal choice, no matter what senior leaders believe. Communication about change must resonate. To be effective, communications must get at what I, as an employee, care about and value. To gain my support, you must provide a compelling case for how I will be better off or what I get out of engaging in the change. Answer WIIFM - "what's in it for me?" - early and often in your communications.</p>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you resisting the urge to have communications come from the project team or project leaders?</b></p> <p>Employees prefer to hear messages from two people in the organization, and neither is the project leader. One of the biggest and most common mistakes you can make is to have a project team sending all of the communications.</p>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you using face-to-face communication?</b></p> <p>Face-to-face communication was identified at the most effective form of communication. While it is more time intensive, do not underestimate the value that face-to-face communication creates.</p>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you repeating key messages 5 to 7 times?</b></p> <p>It is important to repeat key messages a number of times. The first time you announce a change to employees, they are often wondering how it will impact them and not focusing on the details of what you are communicating about. Repeating key messages is important to ensure that what want to get across is being heard by employees. Share messages more often than you think you need to.</p>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you creating opportunities for two-way communication?</b></p> <p>You need to craft and plan for two-way communications. Give employees the opportunity to share their concerns, provide their feedback and ask questions. Two-way communications create buy-in and provide answers in real-time.</p>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you preparing the communicators to deliver effective communications and have the necessary conversations?</b></p> <p>One of your key roles will be to prepare the preferred senders of change messages (typically your senior leaders, managers and supervisors). This includes sharing with them the important messages that need to be delivered, creating alignment between different senders, and planning the delivery sequence. It also includes educating them on how to deliver key messages.</p>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you finding effective ways to reach your audience?</b></p> <p>A holistic communication plan uses numerous channels to reach employees - for example meetings, one-on-one, newsletters, presentations, brainstorming workshops, lunch and learns, Intranet Q&amp;A forums, CDs, screen saver messages, etc. Be creative in how you communicate and gather feedback from employees.</p>  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <p><b>Are you using assessment tools to evaluate the effectiveness of communication messages?</b></p> <p>Communications cannot be viewed as an activity that is planned, delivered and then checked off the list of work to be done. You must find ways to ensure that employees are hearing and interpreting the messages you are trying to send. Assessment tools will help you identify when you haven't communicated effectively, or when the message is being misinterpreted so you can continue to correct and refine your communications.</p>   |

The contents of the checklist are based on Prosci's **2005 Best Practices in Change Management** benchmarking report and the Prosci change management methodology, which is available in the hardcopy **Change Management Toolkit** or the online **Change Management Pilot**. Email a change management analyst at [changemanagement@prosci.com](mailto:changemanagement@prosci.com) or call 970-203-9332 for more information. You can find out more about the products at [www.change-management.com/bookstore.htm](http://www.change-management.com/bookstore.htm).