

SIX WAYS TO IMPROVE

Warehouse and Distribution Center Communications



Communication: we can't get a thing done without it. And we've each had our entire lives—thousands upon thousands of interactions—to practice getting messages across to others, yet few of us have mastered this vital skill.

Communicating one-on-one or in small groups is hard enough, but when you need to get a message across to a large group of employees, things get even tougher. What's the best way to reach a large, diverse group of people who don't work at a desk, but on their feet all day? How can you ensure everyone gets the message?

No matter if you run a facility that is 30,000 sq. ft. or 300,000 sq. ft., try these tips for communicating with your employees.

one.

COMMUNICATE ACROSS MULTIPLE CHANNELS

You may think you have your bases covered if you send out mass emails to your employees announcing open shifts or announcing a team meeting. Don't be surprised if some people fail to show up.

Warehouse workers don't sit at a desk all day, and may not have access or check their email on a daily basis. That means while some may respond to the email, others may need a phone call or a text message, or an in-person reminder to know what is going on. Use this information to your advantage: the more channels you can use to communicate to your team, the more people you're likely to reach.



two.

MAKE YOUR MESSAGE CONSISTENT

Ever play the game “Telephone”? Players sit in a row or a circle, while a secret message is whispered from one person to the next. Once the message reaches the last person, they reveal the message received. What makes the game fun is that the message, without fail, gets distorted along the way. Players accidentally omit or change words, listeners mishear, and the final message has no resemblance to the original.

“Telephone” is all fun and games, but it illustrates the need for consistent communications. When it comes to communicating to your employees, this means making sure messages are standardized. That could mean distributing a written memo instead of relying on word-of-mouth communication to pass on details. Implementing automated phone calls rather than using a manual phone tree can make sure everyone gets the same message, without the having to deal with a “Telephone” situation.

three.

KNOW WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY

You have an emergency plans developed for a variety of different scenarios, from a fire to a natural disaster. But do you have a communication strategy to go along with those plans?

Developing a communications strategy as part of your overall emergency plans can be crucial in the success of how your emergency plans function in a time of crisis. Determine who will be responsible for sending messages, and how they will be transmitted. (And come up with a backup plan in case certain methods become unavailable—loss of power for example.)

Hold “drills” around your communication strategy just like you would for your emergency teams. For example, you could send a test text message to your employees, similar to one you would send if the center closes due to a gas leak or other natural disaster. These preparatory drills are a great opportunity to ensure you have up-to-date contact information and that everyone involved knows how to use your chosen system. With a tested system in place, communications will be one less thing for you to worry about if a crisis strikes.



four.

COMMUNICATE REGULARLY

Emergencies aren't the only occasion when effective communication is important. You have shifts to fill, meetings to have, trainings to complete and a myriad of other events or information that you need to let your employees know.

You may consider developing a communication calendar to help make communications as automatic as possible. For example, sending out company updates at the same time every day or week. When people get in the habit of hearing from you, they'll always know when to expect the latest updates.

five.

ASK FOR AND RESPOND TO FEEDBACK

If you want people to listen to—and possibly act on—the message you are sending, you need to keep their preferences in mind. So don't be afraid to ask for your employees' feedback regarding communication channels, frequency and content.

Ask your employees how they want to receive communications, whether they want a phone call, a text message, or an email. You can do this through face-to-face meetings, web surveys, online profiles, or other methods. Make it easy for recipients to select the communication method (and if possible, the language) that they prefer. If employees have control over how they receive communications, they'll be much more likely to listen to the message.

six.

MAKE SURE PEOPLE KNOW WHERE TO TURN FOR HELP

You try your best to include all important information in each message you send—but sometimes things fall through the cracks. If your employees have questions, need clarification, or want to confirm their attendance at an event or meeting, provide a clear point of contact for them.

One Call Now is America's largest message notification provider. Founded in 2002, One Call Now has been honored as one of Inc. Magazine's fastest growing privately held companies in America every year since 2008. Schools, businesses, churches, volunteer organizations, emergency crews, and municipalities use One Call Now's high-speed, fully redundant service to send voice, SMS text and email messages to thousands of numbers simultaneously. When Messages Matter, We Deliver!



It may be helpful for all your center's communications to originate from a single sender, say, the warehouse manager. Make sure that your employees know the email address and/or phone number that any communication would be coming from. It makes it easier for employees to know when you are contacting them, and they'll know it is important.

Implementing one or all of these tips will improve the way your center communicates with your employees when necessary. And when everyone feels informed, they're more likely to stay engaged.

If you want to further streamline communication within your center, consider using messaging services offered by One Call Now. One Call Now offers routine and emergency messaging services to businesses, including distributors, manufacturers, business services, and more. Automated voice, text, and email messages can be recorded and released at any time - from any internet-connected computer, phone, or using the One Call Now App—reaching your contacts within minutes. Integration tools make it easy to import existing contact lists. Best of all, real-time reporting lets you track who's received your messages—ensuring your employees stay informed and safe.

Additional Resources:

Want to learn more about how One Call Now can help your organization? [Click here to visit our website and learn more.](#)