



The Lee Kong Chian School of Business
Academic Year 2023/24
Term 2

COMM245 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

To achieve anything substantial at work, it is essential, if not necessary to amass support from internal stakeholders – to communicate and persuade colleagues to understand, accept and support ideas. Yet, most communication efforts in organisations tend to be directed externally. Internal communication is often misunderstood and is generally assumed as unnecessary as employees are expected to comply and presumed to be docile. Recognising the importance of internal communication begins with the acknowledgement that organisations comprise sentient, thinking and diverse individuals who might not be readily agreeable and invariably obliging. Internal communication is fundamental as it can enable organisations to align missions and goals, cultivate common beliefs, coordinate activities, develop a shared identity and facilitate decision-making. In exploring the many roles and responsibilities played by internal communication practitioners in organisations, this course will examine theories, frameworks, and case studies to develop understanding, skills, and insights into the role of internal communication in fast-paced and dynamic workplaces.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Discuss internal communication and its role in driving organisational development, change management and employee engagement
- Analyse communication systems, processes, mediums, and messages within organisations
- Apply internal communication frameworks, techniques, and tools
- Develop a holistic and outcomes-oriented internal communication plan that considers organisational leadership, structure, culture, and performance indicators
- Integrate theory with the realities of managing internal communications through individual reflections on group-based project work and activities

PRE-REQUISITE/ CO-REQUISITE/ MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE COURSE(S)

Please refer to the Course Catalogue on OASIS for the most updated list of pre-requisites / co-requisites for this particular course. Do note that if this course has a co-requisite, it means that the course has to be taken together with another course. Dropping one course during BOSS bidding would result in both courses being dropped at the same time.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Course assessment consists of the following components and weightings:

- Group project 45%
- Quiz 30%
- Individual paper 10%
- Class participation 15%

POLICY ON ABSENCES

Attendance is compulsory for all sessions. The following policy for absences in relation to the final grade is a statement of the cooperative enterprise that both instructors and students will commit to:

- 5 or more absences (F grade)
- 3 absences (C+ grade or lower)

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

This course will include lectures, in-class discussions and activities, group work, individual work, and quizzes. To optimise learning, students are expected to:

- Complete all assigned readings before class
- Bring personal computers to class - and use them responsibly
- Participate actively in all classes

Individual and/ or group consultations are by appointment only.

CLASS TIMINGS

The class meets once a week for a three-hour session.

RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS

Primary: FitzPatrick, L., & Valskov, K. (2014). *Internal communications: A manual for practitioners*. London, UK: Kogan Page Publishers.

Supplementary: Men, R. L., & Bowen, S. A. (2017). *Excellence in internal communication management*. New York, NY: Business Expert Press.

See: *Course Plan & Readings* below

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Academic Integrity

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offense.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at <https://oasis.smu.edu.sg/Pages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx>.

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Accessibility

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You are also welcome to contact the

university's disability services team if you have questions or concerns about academic provisions: DSS@smu.edu.sg. Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

Digital Readiness for Teaching and Learning (DRTL)

As part of emergency preparedness, instructors may conduct lessons online via the Zoom platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the Zoom platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.

COURSE PLAN & READINGS

Week	Topic	Readings
1	Introduction to internal communication	Economist Intelligence Unit (2018) Communication barriers in the modern workplace. https://eiperspectives.economist.com/strategy-leadership/communication-barriers-modern-workplace
2	Internal communication: Theories and perspectives	Primary text: Chapter 1 Supplementary text: Chapter 1 Verčič, A. T., Verčič, D., & Sriramesh, K. (2012). Internal communication: Definition, parameters, and the future. <i>Public relations review</i> , 38, 223-230. https://search.library.smu.edu.sg/permalink/f/1oap20v/TN_sciversesciencedirect_elsevier/S0363-8111(11)00214-1
3	Engaging internal audiences	Primary text: Chapter 4 Supplementary text: Chapter 2 Omilion-Hodges, L. M., & Baker, C. R. (2014). Everyday talk and convincing conversations: Utilizing strategic internal communication. <i>Business Horizons</i> , 57, 435-445. https://search.library.smu.edu.sg/permalink/f/1oap20v/TN_sciversesciencedirect_elsevier/S0007-6813(14)00026-3
4	Structure, culture and climate	Supplementary text: Chapter 6 Chong, M. (2007). The role of internal communication and training in infusing corporate values and delivering brand promise: Singapore Airlines' experience. <i>Corporate Reputation Review</i> , 10, 201-212. https://search.library.smu.edu.sg/permalink/f/1oap20v/TN_nature_a10.1057/palgrave.crr.1550051 Garvin, D. A., Wagonfeld, A. B., & Kind, L. (2013). <i>Google's Project Oxygen: Do managers matter?</i> HBS No 313110-PDF-ENG. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing https://hbr.org/product/googles-project-oxygen-do-managers-matter/313110-PDF-ENG
5	Executive and supervisory communication	Primary text: Chapter 7 Supplementary text: Chapter 4 Kingsley Westerman, C., Reno, K., & Heuett, K. (2018). Delivering Feedback: Supervisors' Source Credibility and Communication Competence. <i>International Journal of Business Communication</i> , 55, 526-546. https://search.library.smu.edu.sg/permalink/f/1oap20v/TN_sage_s10_1177_2329488415_613338 LeBlanc, L. A., & Nosik, M. R. (2019). Planning and leading effective meetings. <i>Behavior analysis in practice</i> , 12, 696-708. https://search.library.smu.edu.sg/permalink/65SMU_INST/1ba19kd/cdi_springer_primary_2019_40617_12_3_330
6	Engaging through leaders, mediums and messaging	Primary text: Chapters 5, 6, 8 Supplementary text: Chapters 5 Groysberg, B., & Slind, M. (2011). <i>Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd.: Driving Change Through Internal Communication</i> . HBS No. 411077-PDF-ENG. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Publishing https://hbr.org/product/hindustan-petroleum-corporation-ltd-driving-change-through-internal-communication/411077-PDF-ENG
7	Group Project Updates	

Week	Topic	Readings
8	Recess	
9	Change management	Primary text: Chapter 9 Supplementary text: Chapter 8
10	Measuring the value of internal communication	Primary text: Chapter 10 Supplementary text: Chapter 9 Ruck, K., & Welch, M. (2012). Valuing internal communication; management and employee perspectives. <i>Public Relations Review</i> , 38, 294-302. https://search.library.smu.edu.sg/permalink/f/1oap20v/TN_elsevier_sdoi_10_1016_j_pubrev_2011_12_016 Meng, J., & Pan, P. L. (2012). Using a balanced set of measures to focus on long-term competency in internal communication. <i>Public Relations Review</i> , 38, 484-490. https://search.library.smu.edu.sg/permalink/f/1oap20v/TN_elsevier_sdoi_10_1016_j_pubrev_2012_03_005
11	Quiz	
12	Project Consultations	
13	Group Project Presentations	
14	Individual Paper due	