

*The Ultimate Guide*  
**to Deskless  
Employee  
Communication**

**Nudge**



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# The deskless workforce. A powerful group.

They comprise **80% of the workforce**, and yet they have been more or less forgotten when it comes to helping organizations grow and thrive. But what top brands have known for decades is this: **ignoring the power of your frontline staff is the biggest mistake that organizations can make.**

Whether you're in retail, foodservice, manufacturing, hospitality, or any other predominantly deskless industry, your workforce is the most important asset in creating a profitable, stable business that can adapt to the changing world.



## The most important way to invest in your workforce? Communication.

Effective employee communication can boost engagement, increase revenue, reduce turnover, improve workplace safety, and much more. It can culturally inspire your workforce and empower your teams to do their absolute best... if it's done right.

And, believe us, it's not always easy to get it right.

But we're here to help. This guide has everything you need to create an effective employee communication strategy for your frontline and deskless workforce.

**So, let's get started.**

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# Understanding employee communication

*The first step in creating an effective strategy is understanding the challenges of communicating with deskless workers – and the specific challenges facing your organization.*



# What is employee communication?

There's no shame in starting from the very beginning – especially when it comes to deskless employee communication, which is a relatively new concept... at least in its current form.

At its most basic, employee communication (or, corporate communication or internal communication) refers to the way that information flows within an organization. Traditionally, this flow was almost exclusively top-down, with communication coming from head office to managers to employees.

The relationship between head office and its employees dates back to the 1800s, with forward-looking companies quickly recognizing the relationship between employee engagement and a steady flow of two-way communication. But things get really interesting from the 1960s onward, with deskbound employees enjoying a steady stream of new innovations: computers, fax machines, email, the internet, not to mention the technology boom of the 2000s and beyond.

But while technology for deskbound workers continued to evolve, the communication channels for frontline and deskless employees more or less stayed in the '90s, with email, intranet sites, paper surveys, and bulletin boards remaining the preferred methods to engage with the largest workforce in the world.

And that's a problem, because the deskless workforce presents a number of unique challenges that need to be addressed through communication.



# What makes the deskless workforce unique?

*You can't communicate with your deskless workforce the same way you would a deskbound team. Here's why.*

## **They're distributed and disconnected**

Some deskless workers are on the frontline, working in retail, foodservice, or hospitality in small teams dispersed across the country (or the globe). They might have little to no connection to other locations, or even direct coworkers that work different shifts without overlap. Other deskless workforces are even more distributed and disconnected, particularly employees that don't operate in a location at all (think delivery workers and other supply chain or logistics employees that are on the road, working solo). These workers are particularly at risk for disengagement and fractured communication.



### A heightened need for real-time info

If the COVID-19 pandemic showed us one thing, it's that deskless employees need to be agile and responsive. Even when your organization isn't navigating such uncertain times, your workforce still benefits from real-time communications that allow them to react to sudden changes to promotions or strategies, not to mention valuable insights from other locations or even unexpected safety protocol changes.

### No access to technology

Employee communications have almost entirely moved online. For deskbound employees, that means email, Slack, and any of the countless other office communications platforms that have emerged over the past couple decades. For deskless employees, communication has stayed slightly more analog – verbal updates from management, memos on the bulletin boards, or a poster in the break room. Technology has stayed a bit more dormant for this workforce, with communication shared via intranet sites and email that employees can't even really access during work hours, if at all. In fact, **one research study** found that 45% of non-desk workers have no access to their company intranet at work, and 83% don't have a company email address.

### More SOPs

Frontline and deskless industries – especially manufacturing, facilities management, retail and foodservice – tend to have more standard operating processes in place that need to be followed by employees. Think opening and closing procedures, food-handling protocols, machinery handling, workplace safety processes, and so on. It's crucial that these teams have up-to-date information on these processes at all times – and are able to access it quickly and efficiently.

### A lack of community

A distributed deskless workforce makes it incredibly difficult for your employees to feel like they're part of a larger community, working toward a common goal. This fragmentation is even greater in franchise locations, where communication with head office is even more fractured. This lack of community can be detrimental to morale and lead to huge turnover costs if not properly addressed.

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# Why employee communication is so important

*Employee communication has huge impacts on your bottom line. Here are some of the ways effective employee communication can save or make!) you money.*

## Increased operational agility to change quickly

The ability to respond quickly to changing local, national, and global conditions means something a lot different than it did a couple years ago, and the role of employee communications has been a huge differentiator for companies looking to accelerate change to stay relevant (or even just open) during a crisis.

## Less employee turnover

According to the **U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**, the retail and hospitality industries consistently have the highest “quit rate.” Depending on the industry, turnover rates can be as high as **300%**. And it goes without saying that high turnovers can take a huge chunk out of your profits. **One estimate** puts the cost of losing a single retail employee at over \$3,000, while **this research** found the cost of losing a hospitality worker is between \$3,000 and \$13,000. There are several reasons frontline turnover is such an issue – and salary isn’t really top of the list. Frontline workers want a sense of purpose, clear information, and a company that listens – all of which has traditionally been lacking at frontline organizations, where communication can be somewhat of a broken telephone.

### Fewer workplace accidents

Financially – and this is really a no-brainer – there are a number of reasons why you want to avoid workplace accidents among your frontline workers. There are medical and administrative expenses, as well as loss of labor, but **according to the National Safety Council**, there's also time lost by workers indirectly involved: cost of time to investigate and report on injuries, damage to work property and vehicles, and overall productivity loss. All told, the cost of workplace injuries in the U.S. is estimated to be over \$170 billion a year. But with a proper communication strategy in place, safety training becomes an ongoing process that keeps deskless and frontline workers engaged and well-informed on protocols and daily tasks.

### Higher profits

Yes, deskless employee communication boosts engagement, but employee engagement isn't just about happiness. Deskless workers armed with the right information are more engaged in their job – and are more productive and profitable as a result. In other words, to make more money, you need to give your frontline workers the information they need to make you more money.

### Better CX and guest loyalty

The value of customer retention can't be overstated, and the cost of losing customers is a serious concern. Better customer experience starts with better employee experience. While some industries (we're looking at you, retail) have moved into an omnichannel approach, where brick-and-mortar and e-commerce sites work in tandem to provide the best possible customer experience, it's crucial the organizations ensure that their deskless and frontline workers are keeping up – and a proper communication strategy is the solution.



### Fewer costly mistakes

In industries like retail, foodservice, and hospitality, mistakes can have an especially huge impact on customer loyalty and revenue – not to mention workplace safety. What makes it even more frustrating is how many mistakes can be easily avoided by standardizing tasks and clearly communicating with your deskless workforce. That means sharing easily digestible information and then finding ways to test retention and identify knowledge gaps on an ongoing basis. It also means leveraging upward feedback to hear directly from your frontline on what’s working – and what’s not – so you can keep processes as regulated as possible.

### More valuable ideas

One of the most profitable benefits of deskless employee communication is that amazing ideas find their way from your workforce back up to head office – and to other locations. After all, if one location discovers an easy way to improve the customer or guest experience through a tweak in a display, or boosts sales through a simple upsell, wouldn’t you want the rest of the company to leverage that learning?

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### The psychology of uncertainty with Dr. Wendi Adair

*Fun fact: no one likes a lack of information.*

From a psychological point of view, a lack of information leads to feelings of uncertainty, which **leads to a stress response**. “We are motivated as humans to feel like we have a good sense of what’s going on. A lot of what our brain is doing is trying to figure out what’s going on around us and find ways to feel like we have a sense of control,” explains Wendi Adair, Professor of Organizational Psychology at the University of Waterloo. That’s where you see **disengagement and demotivation** kick in. When employees are feeling that uncertainty, they’ll naturally try to distance themselves from it as much as possible. “When there are feelings of uncertainty or ambiguity, we’re motivated to reduce those feelings.”

# Reviewing your existing communication strategy

*Before you can start creating an effective communication strategy, you need to take stock of your existing one. And yes, even if you don't have a formal strategy in place, you still have communication – or lack thereof – to audit. Here's what you need to know.*



# How to run an internal communications audit

An internal communications audit is a review of how well your organization and its leaders distribute and collect information to and from your workforce and how well the current setup aligns with your overall strategy. This audit is especially crucial for organizations with deskless and frontline employees, who spend very little face-to-face time with management and don't have regular access to computers, so a specialized strategy is crucial. A communications audit will ensure you identify the right way to share information.

So, let's get started. At the end of the guide, you'll find a **worksheet to run your audit** but here's an overview of the steps.





## 1. Create an audit team

If you don't have a dedicated internal communications team to run the audit, put together an ad-hoc team composed of delegates from operations, HR, and marketing. You may also want to include someone to represent the frontline employees to provide additional perspective.



## 2. Set goals

Audits work best when they focus on improving specific aspects of your internal communications. The narrower and more measurable the goals are, the greater the chance your audit will succeed. Develop your goals by asking questions about how information is shared with your frontline or deskless workforce:

- *What information is shared with my frontline?*
- *What formats and channels are used to share information?*
- *Who is sharing information with my frontline?*
- *Who might want to communicate with them?*



- *Are my communications being read? How easy are they to find, read, and remember?*
- *Do I have a way of measuring the impact of my employee communications?*
- *Is the information being shared having an impact on workplace safety and consistency of execution?*
- *Are our communications effectively driving profits and revenue?*
- *Is the information being shared having an impact on turnover rates and employee morale?*
- *Are our communications boosting productivity?*  
*Are we sharing the information employees need to do their job better and more efficiently?*
- *Are we collecting ideas and best practices?*



### 3. Collect information and insights

*Collecting the intel for your communications audit is a multi-stage process. The steps can be done in any order, but we recommend collecting your information in the following stages:*

#### **Metrics review**

Workforce insights are a critical step in any communication strategy and are extremely informative in your internal communication audit. Raw numbers can be used to either support or challenge the anecdotal feedback you'll be collecting later. Depending on what types of communication technology and tools you already have set up, these numbers can come from multiple areas:

- *Email/newsletter readership and engagement rates*
- *Information retention test results*
- *Employee survey completion rates*
- *Metrics on employee ideas and suggestions*
- *Employee turnover rates*

### *Communication tools review*

An internal communications tool is a method, product, or software that you use to send and receive messages to and from your team. The tools you use should make your communication strategy more effective and streamlined – but they can do the opposite. As you review your tech stack, answer the following:

- *What tools or platforms are we using to communicate with our frontline?*
- *Who manages those tools?*
- *Whose decision was it to use those tools? What was the objective behind this decision?*
- *How often are these tools used to send internal communications? To whom?*
- *How well do these communications fulfill their objectives?*

### *Anecdotal information*

Numbers can tell you a lot, but the human side can tell you just as much, if not more. It's important to interview both sides of the conversation: executive management and the workers. When talking to management, get their perspective on what they prioritize, how they think the company should be communicating, and what they think the gaps are. When you do get to talk with frontline workers, don't ask leading questions. Balance quantitative and qualitative responses and give respondents an opportunity to free-write their answers.

- *Do you feel in-the-know and up-to-date?*
- *How much do you know of what's going on in the company?*
- *Who would you go to with an idea or with feedback?*



#### 4. Analyze the intel

Once you've harvested your information, you can analyze the data to uncover weaknesses in your internal communications strategy and look for signs your communication is broken (check out our sidebar for warning signs). Compile your findings into key insights, then go back to your audit goals to see what conclusions you can derive. From there, you'll develop a list of recommendations to share with stakeholders and start to prepare a plan of action. Here are a few examples of recommendations you might bring back to the organization based on your audit findings:

- *Choose a new communication tool or platform to make communication simple and easy.*
- *Create a monthly or quarterly communication calendar to ensure your communications are targeted around a core goal or objective.*
- *Identify the metrics you want to track and how you'll track them.*
- *If you don't have one, create a dedicated communications lead who will work with various stakeholders to create and share information.*

Remember, you don't have to overhaul your entire internal communications system all at once. You can improve one component at a time, focusing on the area that will deliver the most value to the organization and its employees.



### Signs your employee communication is broken

*Here are seven signs you have internal communication problems. Look for these as you analyze your audit findings:*

#### 1. Your employees are disengaged (and you don't even know it)

Morale has taken a hit. Productivity has come to a standstill. You're hemorrhaging money from employee turnover...***all are signs of disengagement and low morale.*** If you don't have a way to measure this in your current channels, you're missing out on a huge early warning sign of productivity loss and turnover.



## 2. No one knows anything

You have info that needs to be shared, and *it's not getting to the right people*. This can be a sign that info isn't making its way from head office to every single employee. Or it's a sign that employees are getting your communications but not reading them because they're too long, too confusing, sent too often or at the wrong time – or sent to the wrong place.

## 3. Everything is top-down

What does your internal communication look like? Maybe a monthly update sent to all locations? A weekly overview of new promotions taking place? Maybe communication stops at the frontline manager? ... See anything missing from this picture? This means your *internal communication strategy lacks an upward feedback component*.

## 4. Customers or guests are complaining (or worse – leaving)

If your customers or guests aren't happy, it means there's *a problem with your CX*. And most often, that problem lies in your employees not having access to the information they need to create an amazing experience.

## 5. Your internal communications can only be read... when they're not at work

You need to share some information. Maybe you put it up on your intranet. Maybe you share it via email (here's hoping your list is up-to-date!). The problem is: *your employees won't see it when they need to* – they might not see it until hours after their shift.

## 6. Your most crucial information is in different places

Quick: what's your SOP for disinfecting high-traffic areas? Where are the new opening guidelines? If you had various answers for where all these pieces of information are, you've got a problem. *A lack of central information means employees are less likely to follow standard procedures and tasks lists* when going through their day.

## 7. There's no way for your teams to talk

One of your midwest locations comes up with a fantastic way to boost loyalty program sign-ups that other teams could try... if they knew about it. Without a way for employees to talk, you're *missing out on great ideas and best practice-sharing coming from your teams*.

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# Building out an effective strategy

*Once you've identified your organization's communication problems, it's time to address them with a new strategy better suited to your workforce. These steps will help you get started.*



# Step 1: Tying your strategy to brand identity and business goals

Like with so many organizational processes, the best way to create a targeted communication strategy is to go back to your brand identity and goals. After all, your communications are where you'll live and breathe who you are, what your values are, and what your culture is.

Start by identifying the business goals you'd like to address with your communications (*see page 8 for more on the business outcomes your communications can help with*). Using your communications to share the goals you're focused on will create a clear roadmap to keep your entire workforce on track.

From there, make sure you have a clear definition of your brand purpose, and consider ways to use your communications to ensure your entire workforce is educated on that core purpose and how their actions contribute to this larger goal.



## Step 2: Understanding the components of an effective communication strategy

*An internal communication strategy should be so much more than a quarterly newsletter or memo on the bulletin board. Here are eight components of an effective deskless employee communication strategy:*

### **Timely information and real-time updates**

Have you ever tried to redeem a promo coupon, and the cashier has no idea what you're talking about? It's frustrating for the customer, but imagine what it's like to be the cashier. Your customers are getting mad at you, but you were never told about the promotion in the first place – and now you're both in a bad spot.

### **A central hub of procedures, processes, and SOPs**

Having a central information hub is foundational to an effective employee communication strategy. It lists all the protocols, procedures, and policies that dictate how employees should function. Businesses are very good at formulating and compiling these documents, but when it comes to access... let's just say it needs work. Quick access to crucial operational documents is important for every industry, but it's especially valuable for complex industries like manufacturing and facilities management.

### **Standardized task lists**

General policies are great, but sometimes deskless employees need something a little more tactical to help with their day-to-day duties. For example, retail or restaurant employees might need a standardized task list to walk them through opening and closing. Or management might want to publish new COVID cleaning and safety protocols to ensure their teams and their customers stay safe. No matter the case, standardized task lists help employees comply with approved procedures, even without direct on-site supervision.

### Knowledge tests to boost retention

Knowledge tests are often used to test awareness of basic safety and security procedures, but they're also valuable in less critical situations. For example, these tests can be used to gauge employee familiarity with your new loyalty program or with seasonal product offerings.

### Feedback forums (upward and downward)

If your company wants to get serious about upward and downward employee feedback (and you should), you need a communication channel where these conversations can happen organically, ideally with a way of capturing those insights for the head office to digest.

### A channel for idea sharing

Many deskless employees in retail, foodservice, and hospitality are widely dispersed, with locations spanning various regions or even worldwide destinations. This makes it difficult for people to get together and exchange ideas in person. But employers can work around that distance restriction with a channel through which employees can share best practices and offer suggestions – and head office can review these suggestions to take immediate action.

### An internal community

The simple truth is that people accomplish more when they feel like they belong. Yes, this may be difficult when retail or foodservice employees are working at fractured locations with only five to 10 employees on each team, but it's still possible to create a sense of community across the whole organization. All they need is the means to connect to the larger community.

### Bite-sized “micro-communications”

Deskless employees have limited time to consume and engage with information, so it's crucial to keep communications short and to the point – we call these “micro-communications.” Try gamification to increase participation and engagement through a points or rewards system.



## Step 3: Choosing your tools and processes

*Communication channels and tools are a huge component of a deskless employee communication strategy.*

One of the biggest mistakes that organizations make is assuming they can share information with these workforces in the same way they would communicate with office or deskbound employees. Frontline workers require a much different approach to ensure that information is being shared when and where they need it.

**Our communication tool comparison chart** at the end of the guide will help you weigh your options, but here are a few do's and don'ts to consider when choosing your communication channels:

### ▲ **Don't: Rely on email**

Sure, email has changed the way we all communicate – but it's not ideal for getting real-time updates to frontline workers on the floor (especially if you don't have a BYOD policy in place).

It also makes it far too easy to accidentally leave a cohort of employees out of the loop if they change their email address or haven't yet provided it.

### ● **Do: Leverage a digital platform**

Moving your communication strategy to a digital communication platform makes it so much easier for organizations to share updates, corral SOPs, and provide opportunities for feedback and community-building all from the same place. A digital platform also makes it easy to harvest adoption, engagement, and knowledge retention metrics to monitor the effectiveness of your communications (and see early warning signs of disengagement!).

### ▲ **Don't: Bottleneck info at the floor manager**

Another traditional communication channel for organizations is sending crucial info for the location managers to share with their teams verbally. Not only does that create a lot of opportunity for broken telephone, but it also puts a lot of pressure on overworked managers, who are already wearing many hats.

- ▲ **Don't: Assume posters and bulletin boards reach everyone**  
“We shared that safety update on the bulletin board!” Oh, we’ve heard that before. But passive communication channels make a lot of assumptions about employee behaviour and language. Plus, it leaves zero opportunity to gather workforce insights through metrics.
- ▲ **Don't: Stick a computer in the break room**  
You’ve gone the traditional route with an intranet site or an LMS – but now your employees can only access company info when they’re at work, or when they’re on break at the one company computer shared by their whole team. Does that seem efficient?
- **Do: Go mobile**  
Long gone are the days when organizations banish personal devices to employee lockers. A BYOD program is the best way to stay connected to every member of your team. Sharing real-time updates and announcements to their phones ensures they’re getting it instantly and encourages more interaction and engagement.



## BYOD, defined

*BYOD refers to “bring your own device” policies, which allow employees to use their personal mobile devices at work. Over 70% of organizations are now implementing BYOD policies – and in retail that number jumps to 89%. Here’s why:*

Mobile devices have entered the frontline workforce and they’re here to stay. Why? In the retail, hospitality, and foodservice industries, the frontline workforce is comprised of millennials and Gen Z, who are on their smartphone more often than not:

 **150**  
The number of times millennials check their phones every day

**94%**  
of adult aged 18 to 29 have a smartphone

With employees bringing their personal devices to work, previous communications tools just aren’t stacking up:

NOT MEASURABLE



BULLETIN BOARDS

NOT CONSISTENT



TEAM HUDDLERS

UNENGAGING



MANUALS

Deskless workers **want** to use their phones as a tool for work.

**67%**

of employees use their mobile devices at work, regardless of their organization’s BYOD policy.

**60%**

of employees believe that mobile technology can increase productivity.

**70%**

of employees will voluntarily download a workplace app then given the choice.

It is clear that mobile is no long a nice-to-have; **it’s a necessity.**

## Step 4: Deciding what to communicate

*From company updates to new merchandising protocols, there are many types of information that you can share with your employees.*

At Nudge, we call these “campaigns,” and we recommend that organizations focus on one or two campaigns at any given time – that ensures that you’re keeping the conversation focused and also makes it easier to track success metrics (more on that later).

Our recommended campaigns fall into four ROI objectives: retention, revenue, safety, and productivity.

Let’s explore each of these further.

## Retention



The campaigns in this objective are focused on giving your workers the voice, community, and sense of purpose that will keep them loyal and engaged.

### Adoption

We've included this campaign here, but really it's the first you should run, hands-down. Here, the goal is to ensure that the majority of your workforce adopts your communication tools. The benefit is that your employees are reachable for all ongoing and future communication campaigns.

*Campaign idea:* Make adoption an event. As you unveil your new communication platform or tool, be sure to share the features that your employees will be really excited about (hint: it's a lot easier to sell your team on a tool if it's mobile-based).

### Brand connection

The goal of this campaign is to ensure your workforce has a clear connection to your brand's core purpose and values. The benefit is driving higher engagement rates, which leads to better retention and productivity.

*Campaign idea:* Go multimedia with a video or images that really show-not-tell your brand values.

## Productivity



These campaigns are focused on boosting productivity and streamlining execution.

### Feedback and best practice-sharing

The goal of this campaign is to gather valuable insight and ideas from your workforce. These ideas could then be scaled across the organization to boost productivity, efficiency, or even revenue.

*Campaign idea:* Use your communication platform's forum or chat function to ask your workforce a specific question, like "How can we improve our sanitation process?" or "What words do customers respond to most when discussing our loyalty program?" Be sure you have a way to harvest the ideas properly.

### Task execution check-ins

When organizations don't have standardized task lists and SOPs properly communicated, processes can vary, which leads to inefficiencies and even safety issues. This campaign reiterates your standard processes to ensure everyone is on the same page.

*Campaign idea:* Send out knowledge quizzes to identify gaps or inconsistencies across your workforce.

## Revenue



These campaigns are all about driving sales and revenue through knowledge and CX.

### Product knowledge

The goal of this type of campaign is to educate your teams on core products and services or to highlight new or featured offerings. This is a great way to boost revenue by arming your workforce with the intel they need to engage with customers or guests.

*Campaign idea:* A friendly sales competition is a great way to keep your associates focused on their goals. Choose a target product or upsell item, and encourage your teams to think creatively about hitting their sales target – then compare stats across locations and regions.

### Customer experience

The goal of this campaign is to give your employees the information and protocols they need to treat your guests or customers like royalty. The benefit of this campaign is, of course, a more loyal customer base, which leads to higher revenue.

*Campaign idea:* Identify a core component of your CX (like acknowledging loyalty members or helping guests navigate your digital experience), and then track improvement over time, again comparing locations and regions for a little friendly competition. If your communication platform has a task execution feature, tracking this campaign will be even easier.

## Safety



This campaign is geared toward workplace safety and uncovering information gaps before they become larger issues.

### Workplace safety checks

Like the task execution check-ins, this campaign is all about ensuring your entire workforce is using the same safety and security protocols. The goal is to identify gaps and mitigate safety issues before they become a liability.

*Campaign idea:* Share workplace safety explainer videos or briefs, and then follow up with a quiz to quickly assess information retention and worrisome gaps.

### Employee wellness

Employee health is a safety concern, too – and deskless employees are often less in-the-know about their company’s programs and initiatives. The goal of this campaign is to boost awareness of initiatives like wellness and support programs and to share other company news to keep employees feeling in the loop. The benefit is your employees will be tapping into the best programs to stay healthy and happy.

*Campaign idea:* Try an AMA with senior leadership to go through programs and answer questions from your workforce. This is particularly impactful during uncertain times, where your workers might be anxious or concerned about their future.

■ **Want to put these campaigns into practice?** Check out our [sample four-month communications calendar](#) at the end of this guide.

# Monitoring your strategy

*The final step in setting up your communication strategy is to monitor its effectiveness over time. Workforce analytics is the process of tracking and analyzing key employee metrics to make fact-based, data-driven decisions to improve performance, engagement, and more.*



**Tracking workforce analytics allows organizations to tap into workforce insights** – i.e., the stories your data tells. How engaged is your workforce? How reachable are your teams? How confident are your employees in executing current or future programs and strategies? These aren't questions to answer with your gut. These are questions that can – and should – be answered with data.

And on that note, here's an overview of workforce metrics every organization should track:

### **Adoption and Reachability**

This is a crucial metric for any communication strategy. It answers the question, "Who can I reach?" Ideally, the answer would be 100% of your workforce. At Nudge, we consider employees reachable if they've used our app in the past 90 days, but this metric might differ depending on your platform or communication tool.

### **Open or Read Rates**

Again, this will depend on your communication tools and channels, but ideally you have a metric to track how your workforce is consuming content. What percentage of your staff opened your latest announcement? How many read to the end? How many clicked the CTA at the bottom? How often are SOPs accessed and read? These numbers, where available, will help you see whether your content is actually being read by your employees.

### **Feedback Metrics**

We've already touched on the importance of a channel for two-way feedback. Metrics are a great way to get an at-a-glance understanding of whether you're fostering a culture of feedback across the organization. These might be participation metrics or even word clouds highlighting what key sentiments are coming from your teams.

### Execution Metrics

Depending on your industry and organization, you might be leveraging standardized task lists within your internal communication strategy to reiterate standard protocols and processes. Metrics on your most frequently assigned tasks and their completion rates will indicate the consistency of your execution.

### Knowledge Rates

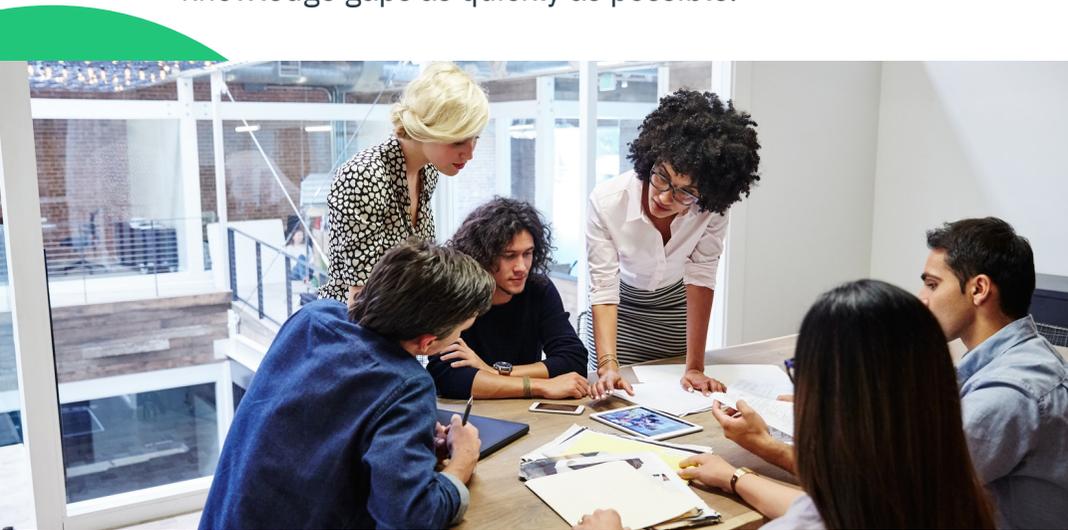
Generated through knowledge testing and quizzes, knowledge rates will show whether the information that has been shared has been properly retained. This will ensure you're identifying knowledge gaps as quickly as possible.

### Engagement Metrics

The final step in measuring success in your teams is to see whether all the above metrics have done their job in fostering engaged, empowered teams. Engagement can be measured in a variety of ways. It can be an aggregate metric based on how your employees engage with your communication and feedback channels, or it can be based on dedicated surveys and pulse checks.

Reviewing these metrics provides a comprehensive overview of your workforce's engagement, confidence, and satisfaction – all of which lead to better business outcomes. These metrics can also be used to identify warning signs, like disengagement, that can be addressed before they lead to productivity issues or turnover. This is where a digital employee communication platform becomes especially useful. Built-in analytics make it easy to measure all the crucial workforce metrics you should be tracking.

- Keep these metrics top-of-mind with **metrics one-pager**, located at the end of the guide.



# Learn from the greats

*The best way to create a next-level communication strategy? Go to top-performing organizations for tips and tricks! Think of this like your Pinterest board for deskless employee communication.*



**How a Canadian toy retailer empowered thousands of associates to share ideas and best practices throughout the pandemic.**



**How an ice cream franchise created an employee community across fractured franchises.**



**How a healthcare clinic seamlessly brought back its furloughed staff, while carrying out a full cultural rebrand.**



**How a sports retailer used real-time updates and feedback channels to boost in-store conversions by 8%.**



**How a hotel chain streamlined communication to franchise employees to boost loyalty program recognition and enrollment.**



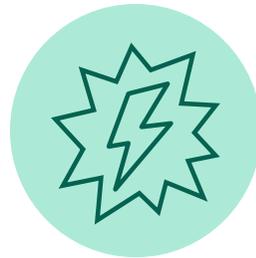
**How a lifestyle retailer fostered a culture of peer recognition to boost employee appreciation and build community.**

# How Nudge makes employee communication easy

*An effective deskless employee communication strategy is all about sending the right information at the right time. That's where Nudge comes in. Nudge is a digital communications platform that enables organizations to improve workforce productivity and reach organizational goals through better communications, faster feedback, and actionable workforce insights.*



**Centralized communication**



**Gamified, bitesized content**



**Engaging feedback channels**



**Insightful user analytics**

## Loved by our customers and their employees

“I believe it’s the best investment we have ever made, and this industry recognition reinforces that belief.”

- David Hogland, President  
Eurest Services

“Great reads on everything that is going on within the company. Very helpful and to-the-point easy access. I find that very refreshing.”

- Patricia C., User



**Apple Store**



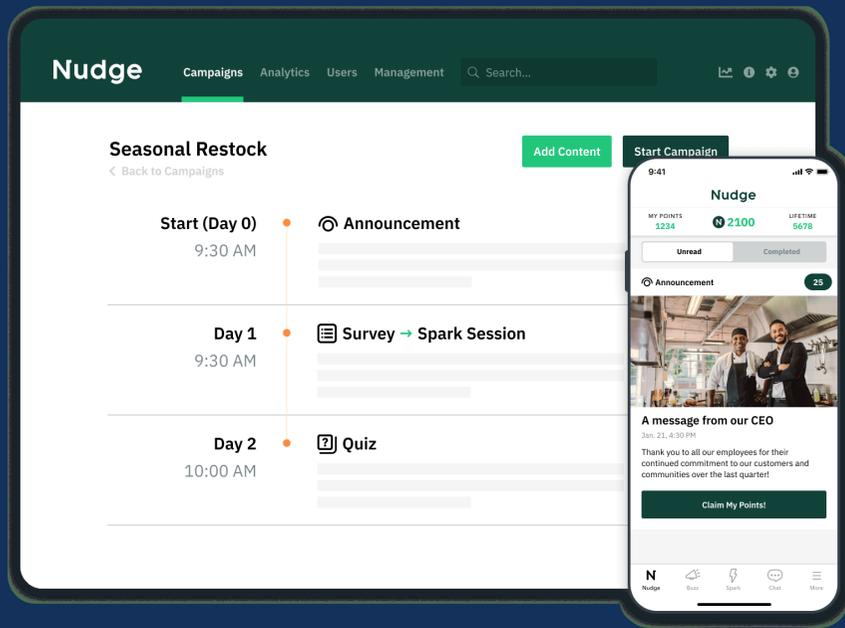
4.6 Stars  
+6.3k Reviews



**Google Play**



4.6 Stars  
+8.3k Reviews



**Get the communication  
platform your workforce  
wants to use.**

*Want to see how Nudge can help your organization?  
[Book a demo](#) today or get in touch at [hello@nudge.co](mailto:hello@nudge.co)*

# Printables and templates

*Use these worksheets, printables, and templates to take your communication strategy to the next level.*



WORKSHEET

# Internal Communication Audit

*This worksheet will help you gather the intel needed to review your communication strategy and identify gaps and issues. Want an editable version? [Reach out for a demo](#) and we'll send it to you!*

### Audit team

Who will run your audit? If you don't have an internal communications team, we recommend stakeholders from operations, HR, marketing, and your frontline.

Name	Department	Role/Responsibility
<i>E.g., Sarah Marshall</i>	<i>E.g., Marketing</i>	<i>E.g., Communication Tools Review</i>

### Audit goals

Your goals should be focused on identifying specific ways that you can improve how information is shared within your organization. For questions to help develop your goals, refer to the Ultimate Guide to Deskless Employee Communication.

<b>GOAL 1</b>	<i>E.g., Assess whether our communications are driving profits and revenue</i>
<b>GOAL 2</b>	
<b>GOAL 3</b>	



### Collected info and insights

Use this section to compile your audit findings.

Metrics	
<i>E.g. Email open rates</i>	

Communication tools review				
Tool	Owner		How often it's used	Effectiveness
<i>E.g., LMS</i>	<i>HR</i>		<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>Only really used by managers</i>

Anecdotal Insights	
Source	Feedback
<i>E.g., Joe Dopper, frontline associate</i>	<i>Associates aren't learning about promotions until they've already been promoted online for several days</i>



### Analyzing your intel

Once you've collected your insights, the next step is to compile your findings into key insights and draw conclusions based on your original goals. From there, you can develop recommendations.

<b>Key Findings</b>	
<i>E.g., Both associates and managers don't regularly access current communication tools</i>	

<b>Goal Review</b>	
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
<i>Eg. Assess whether our communications are driving profits and revenue</i>	<i>Associates aren't being given the info at the right time to properly mobilize on promotions</i>

<b>Recommendations</b>	
<i>E.g., Centralize all communications to one digital platform that associates can access on phones</i>	



## COMPARISON CHART

# Deskless employee communication tools

Use this chart to compare the communication tools and technology options to consider when building a strategy. Want an editable version? [Reach out for a demo](#) and we'll send it to you!

Type of tool	Use	Pros	Cons
Email	Used for sharing updates and announcements and has a wide reach for HQ to pass along information.	Easy-to-use communication tool that everyone has already adopted.	Organizations don't always have updated email databases for their full frontline and deskless workforce.
Intranet	Meant to provide employees across the organization with information in different content formats; typically accessible on all devices (primarily used through desktop).	Centralized hub for information and communications.	Frontline and deskless workers aren't often able to access an intranet site during work hours, when they need the info the most; also, traditionally mostly one-way communication.
Internal Newsletter	Digital or print newsletter sharing company news, wins, updates on a weekly, monthly, or quarterly basis.	A traditional communication channel that is familiar to most workforces and doesn't require a lot of technology.	Organizations aren't able to share info in real time; also, it can be difficult to disseminate the newsletter to every employee.
Social Communities	A social network platform paired with secure hosting and data encryption for internal use.	Most employees are already engaged on social media, so you're reaching them where they already are; also, it's great for employee community building and upward feedback.	Not all employees are on social media regularly; also, a BYOD policy is required to ensure employees are accessing information in real time.
Signage/posters	Bulletin board signage and posters placed in high-traffic areas.	It's a low-tech option that is simple and easy to implement.	Effectiveness is limited by language and proximity barriers; also, you're not able to leverage workforce analytics to track the effectiveness of your communication strategy.
Employee surveys	Annual surveys or pulse checks sent to employees by email or through an intranet site.	Surveys foster upward feedback, which harvests great ideas and ensures workers feel heard.	Surveys sent in traditional formats have become white noise to employees, with most not even filling them out and others not giving meaningful answers.
Instant messaging	Platform for one-on-one and group chat and sometimes also video conferencing.	Allows for quick ad-hoc communication and connections across organizations.	IM platforms aren't well-suited to frontline and deskless workers who aren't at a computer all day.
LMS/Training tool	Used for the delivery of e-learning courses, training programs, and/or development programs; typically distributed through longer-form modules and are highly compliance driven.	Ongoing development is a great way to keep employees engaged and loyal.	Focused solely on training and development; lacks the functionality of a full communication platform.
Digital communication platform	Interactive platform with communication, social features, chat functionality, survey and quiz features, and forums.	Engaging, gamified, all-in-one platform to keep workers engaged with the brand on a daily basis; a smartphone app ensures workers can access information in real time.	An app-based platform requires organizations to adopt a BYOD policy to allow devices at work.

SAMPLE CALENDAR

# 4 months of employee communications

Here's an example of your first four months of employee communication campaigns. For ideas for each campaign, refer back to your Ultimate Guide to Deskless Employee Communication. Want an editable version of this calendar? [Reach out for a demo](#) and we'll send it to you!

	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Retention</b> 	<b>Productivity</b> 	<b>Revenue</b> 	<b>Safety</b> 
<b>Campaign Focus 1</b>	<b>Adoption</b> Campaign focused on increasing enrollment and participation in your organization's communication tool.	<b>Feedback and idea-sharing</b> Campaign focused on identifying best practices that could be scaled.	<b>Product Knowledge</b> Campaign focused on accelerating knowledge on products/services.	<b>Workplace safety</b> Campaign focused on reviewing safety and security protocols.
<b>Campaign Focus 2</b>	<b>Brand connection</b> Campaign focused on educating on your brand's core purpose and values.	<b>Task execution</b> Campaign focused on educating employees on standardized protocols and tasks.	<b>Customer Experience</b> Campaign focused on improving customer, guest, and patient experiences.	<b>Employee wellness</b> Campaign focused on educating employees on company health and wellness initiatives.
<b>Metrics Insights Gathered</b>	Adoption/reachability Engagement metrics	Feedback rates Execution metrics	Knowledge rates Sales/promotions success rate	Knowledge rates Accident rates Engagement metrics

## CHECKLIST

# 6 Workforce metrics every organization should be tracking



## Adoption and Reachability

What it tells you: How much of your workforce you can reach



## Open or Read Rates

What it tells you: How much of your workforce is reading your content



## Feedback Metrics

What it tells you: Whether you've fostered an upward and downward feedback culture



## Execution Metrics

What it tells you: How effective and efficient your workforce is



## Knowledge Rates

What it tells you: How in-the-know your workforce is on current promotions and products



## Engagement Metrics

What it tells you: Whether you've been successful in fostering engaged, loyal employees