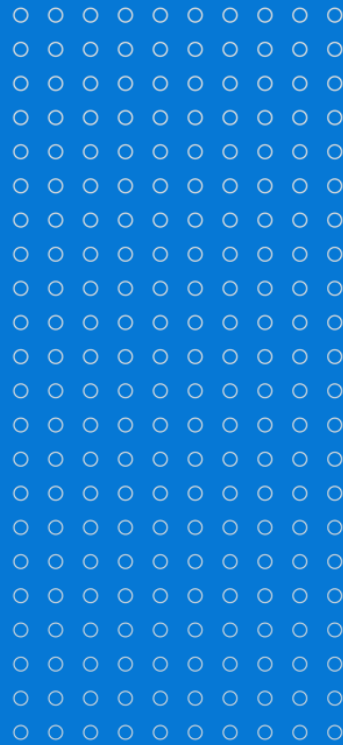


COVID-19 Communications

Walking the Messaging Tight Rope

January 25, 2021



Crafting the right message can be tricky at the best of times—add a global pandemic and new vaccine to the mix and the process can be downright terrifying. Today, many organizations must decide whether to roll out a vaccination awareness campaign for their employees, a decision few have ever had to make. To help you craft the right message and tone for your organization, we have come up with the following guidelines. Depending on the needs of your organization and company culture, you may use one or a combination of these approaches.

Approach: Mandatory / Hard

Objective: Communicate clear action employees are required to take

What to consider:

- Cite credible, primary sources of information, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Use statistics and other facts and figures
- Do not cite news organizations or other secondary sources of information
- Use words such as “must,” “required” and “necessary”
- Use exclamation points, bold fonts, underlining or all caps to communicate a sense of urgency—but do so judiciously
- Have a clear call to action and repeat it often and across all communications

Example: “Before returning to the office, you **must** provide proof of vaccination to HR.”

Approach: Highly Encouraging

Objective: This might be combined with any messages, but offers a gentler approach

What to consider:

- Place less emphasis on facts/figures
- When using statistics, try to pull from your own population (e.g., “XX% of you have already received the vaccine!”)
- Emphasize employee testimonials and personal case studies
- Consider using words such as “care,” “concern,” “community” and “family”
- Consider injecting (no pun intended) some humor. Note: If you decide to use humor, do so sparingly and in a way that does not detract from the seriousness of the situation.

Example: “Give immunity a shot! Take care of ourself and your loved ones by getting vaccinated.”

Approach: Neutral / Impartial

Objective: Give the facts and let employee make their own decisions

What to consider:

- Cite credible, primary sources of information, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- Use statistics and other facts and figures
- Do not cite news organizations or other secondary sources of information
- Avoid words such as “must,” “mandatory,” “need,” or “necessary”
- Avoid exclamation points, bold fonts, all caps or other forms of punctuation that communicate a sense of urgency

Example: *“Currently, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has provided emergency authorization to three different COVID-19 vaccines. All but one of the COVID-19 vaccines that are currently in Phase 3 clinical trials in the U.S. use two shots.”*

If you need additional advice creating a successful communications strategy, HUB can help. The Communication & Design (C&D) team crafts award-winning communications that make employees stand up and take notice. Our multi-channel approach ensures that your employees receive the right message, at the right time, in the right way. For more information on HUB C&D visit www.hubinternational.com