

Communication plan

 **[INSERT NAME OF INITIATIVE HERE]**

**VERSION 1.0**

**DATE:**

**PREPARED FOR:**

**DEPARTMENT:**

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# Background

## 1.1 Enterprise change management branch

Enterprise change management branch (ECMB) Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship offers organizations support in fleshing out their change management strategy by way of tools and assistance with information gathering as well as step-by-step advice and guidance.

## 1.2 [INSERT INITIATIVE NAME]

Insert information on your modernization initiative:

* Initiative scope
* Vision
* Key principals of the initiative
* Key components of your change management strategy
* Type of change and size
* Timeline

# Objectives

## 2.1 COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

Communication is a critical and essential component of change management. Beyond those communication activities that support the integrated initiative and the vision (described herein), each change initiative under the modernization project may require its own communication plan to support the change at the project level.

Overarching objectives:

1. Ensuring timely and consistent communication in support of [name of initiative] change management and initiative integration activities.
2. Increase employees’ understanding of [name of initiative], the many planned changes to the initiative, the need for change and what it means to them.
3. Promote a common understanding of the change process through cross sector and cross functional activities and broad-based information sharing.
4. Sustaining a dialogue with employees to help them internalize and adopt the changes associated with [name of initiative].
5. Support the culture change and sustain the changes through reinforcement.

## PROSCI METHODOLOGY AND ADKAR (include if applicable)

Prosci is an independent research organization that has developed a comprehensive change management methodology based on best practices identified through their research. As one of the leaders in the field, their methodology is being used across multiple organizations.

Based on Prosci’s research, the foundation for organizational change is successful change at the individual level by building the elements of the ADKAR change model (Figure 1) in each individual. ADKAR stands for:

* **Awareness**–provides the “why” the change is happening
* **Desire**–environment that provides the motivation and willingness for the change
* **Knowledge**–is the information and learning needed to apply the change
* **Ability**–removes the capability obstacles that could prevent the change
* **Reinforcement**–sustains the change past the implementation phase



**Figure 1. Prosci® ADKAR® Model**

The ADKAR model is to be integrated into various tools that will be used by the team along with managers and employees, to manage change. The ADKAR model allows [name of your organization] to shape change management and communication activities to support employees while facilitating [name of your initiative] implementation objectives.

Successful communication with staff will be based on the ADKAR model to build the five elements of ADKAR needed for a successful change. When ADKAR is present in change management activities, the desired change happens.

# Target audiences

Use the results from your [stakeholder impact assessment](https://gcdocs2.ci.gc.ca/otcs/cs.exe/Overview/412985743) to identify your target audiences. Examples of target audiences include employees, managers, supervisors, senior management, etc.

[Include your text here]

# Key messages

[Insert key messages here]

Guidance for developing key messages:

* Develop messages addressing the current initiative situation and the rational for change.
* Develop messages about the change (vision, scope, timeframe, alignment with the organizational mandate and business, impacted stakeholders, the basic of what is changing, how it will change, and when it will change).
* Develop messages about how the new initiative will impact employees (day-to-day changes, WIIFM, behaviours, feedback, expectations).
* Develop updates and progress report messages.
* Customize each key message to each audience and to the timeframe of the initiative implementation.

See **Annexe A** for examples of key messages.

See **Annexe B** for guidelines to customize key messages to target audiences.

See **Annexe C** for a guide to help develop key messages based on the three levels of change (vision, initiative objectives and tactical).

# Products, vehicles and activities

* Communication products, vehicles and activities should include information and messaging for each audience based on the timing of the initiative implementation
* Specific objective of the communication including whether it is meant to communicate the vision and/or support initiative delivery at the initiative objective level or at the tactical level. You can complete an ADKAR assessment for each targeted audience to guide you in the development of the communication products and activities.
* Assessment of potential risk level of the product/activity and its impact on the sender, the message and the vehicle
* Sender including the different role the sender may have in helping manage change
* Target audience including their change readiness and the relative impact of the changes on them
* Be mindful and inclusive in the design of communications products and activities
* Timing or sequence of the product/activity in relation to initiative implementation and other related change management activities

See **Annexe D** for examples of communication activities.

[Include your text here]

# Feedback, monitoring and evaluating

Feedback will be tracked to assess the effectiveness of [name of your initiative] change management approaches as well as to monitor the implementation of the integrated initiative. Feedback processes will provide the information needed to measure change adoption, integration, effectiveness of training, change saturation, as well as provide a means to continuously assess, adapt and improve the initiative implementation. Outputs from feedback channels may also be used to inform and guide ongoing decision making. In this section, it is important to monitor and evaluate continuously if the communication activities have been valuable to create awareness and build desire of the initiative change at all levels within the organization.

* Evaluate if the communication activities have been valuable.
* Data in this category are connected to the actual activities carried out by the change management team and included in the change management strategy.

See **Annexe E** for examples of tools and metrics for feedback collection.

See **Annexe F** for feedback strategy options.

# Schedule and key milestones

[Include your initiative schedule here]

Keep in mind:

* Initiative timeline and milestones
* List of changes per sector
* Showcasing the high-level initiative timeline and the employee change impact timeline is a great visual to look at from a user/receiver perspective

# Contacts

[Include initiative change contacts here]

# Communication plan

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Timing | Strategic objectives | Activities | ADKAR | Audience | Sender | Delivery mechanism | Feedback mechanism | Status |
|  |  |  |  |  | *e.g. initiative sponsor, initiative team, managers, EXs, subject matter expert lead* |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Annexes

## ANNEXE A: EXAMPLES OF KEY MESSAGES

It is important to explain the reasons behind the initiative, the benefits to employees and the organization, the impacts on them, what is expected from them during the initiative and why this project modernization is happening now.

*Goals of intiative changes:*

* Initiative changes will assist employees in their work by offering a whole office solution
* Initiative changes will enable employees to communicate and collaborate in new way
* Technological tools such as videoconference systems will support flexible HR policies that provide employees with the opportunity to work from different locations
* (…)

*Benefits of initiative changes:*

* Initiative changes will provide a collaborative multidisciplinary design strategy that considers the interaction of people, space, technology and business processes
* Initiative changes will allow the development of more effective and efficient work environments that accommodate individual work styles and alternative work strategies
* Initiative changes will enable employees to work when, where and how they can be most effective
* (…)

*Impacts of initiative changes on employees:*

* Employees will be able to choose their workspace based on their mood, needs and work requirements, therefore providing greater flexibility
* Initiative changes will facilitate mobility and greater flexibility
* (…)

Refer to the [GCworkplace communications tool kit](https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/GCworkplace_Toolkit/Key_messages) for more content.

## ANNEXE B: CUSTOMIZING KEY MESSAGES FOR TARGET AUDIENCES

[Prosci](https://www.prosci.com/) identifies guidelines to customize key messages for different audiences:

*Customizing messages for executives:*

* Reduce content to executive summary only
* Clearly articulate the objectives and scope (they will be concerned for which parts of their organization may be impacted)
* Focus on financials and alignment with the organizational priorities
* Identify key decision points that they would be involved with or want to know about
* Present actions you need them to take or decisions they need to make

*Customizing messages for mid-level managers:*

* Present those key messages that you would expect them to communicate to their employees
* Keep managers one step ahead of their employees (avoid surprises)
* Focus on the scope of the change including their explanations of what is in scope and what is out of scope (some managers will shut-out information and filter it away from their organization if they do not see a direct connection with their processes or systems)
* Be clear on the expected action you need them to take to support the change within their group or department

*Customizing messages for employees:*

* Focus on the impact of the change on the employee
* Be clear about what you know now and what you do not know now
* Let employees know when more information will be available
* Be clear about how employees can provide feedback about the change

## ANNEXE C: COMMUNICATION MODEL



## ANNEXE D: EXAMPLES OF COMMUNICATION ACTIVITIES

* Launching a one-stop GCconnex group for all move-related information
* Equipping employees (including managers) with the tools and processes they will need to be successful in the new initiative
* Ensuring that employees know about key features of the new workspace (including their office, floor location, etc.) and how to access or sign-up for the services they need (parking, showers, bike room, lockers, building access, etc.)
* Reinforcing GCworkplace objectives and preparing employees for the move
* Engaging in remaining discussion points

*Examples of communication channels to use:*

* Face to face
* Newsletter
* Focus group
* Meeting
* Email
* Fact sheets
* FAQs
* Townhall
* Site visits
* Intranet
* Banner
* Brown bag lunches
* Electronic screens (TV, screens)
* Information fairs
* Posters
* Testimonials
* Videoconferences

## ANNEXE E: COLLECTING AND MONITORING FEEDBACK

*Tools to collect feedback:*

* Tracker
* Surveys
* Spot survey for events
* Observation
* Interaction with recipients
* Monitoring feedback through various channels and networks (see Annexe F)
* [ADKAR Change-o-Meter Questionnaire](https://gcdocs2.ci.gc.ca/otcs/cs.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=429658142)
* [ADKAR Change-o-Meter Results Table](https://gcdocs2.ci.gc.ca/otcs/cs.exe?func=ll&objaction=overview&objid=428636412)

*Metrics:*

* Tracking of change management activities conducted according to plan
* Training participation and attendance numbers
* Communication deliveries
* Communication effectiveness
* Performance improvements
* Progress and adherence to plan
* Business and change readiness
* Initiative KPI measurements
* Adherence to timeline
* Speed of execution
* Number of clicks on a web page
* Number of visits to a modernized space

##

## ANNEXE F: FEEDBACK STRATEGY OPTIONS

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mechanism | Lead | Description | Advantages |
| Surveys & user polls*(Qualtrics, survey monkey, etc.)* | Initiative lead, middle management | Employee opinions matter! Use surveys and user polls to obtain the overall pulse of the change. Although user feedback is important – don’t overdo it. Be mindful of how many surveys and polls are sent throughout the modernization initiative. Obviously, this will vary dependent on the size and length of the initiative.***Keep in mind:*** *you will need to vet the questions and test the tool selected prior to sending it off.* | * A quick and easy way to get feedback
* Reaches a large number of employees
* Can be anonymous (optional)
 |
| Suggestion & comment box | Initiative lead, initiative team | An open discussion or private e-mail option on the intranet or GCconnex page. This option is beneficial post-implementation where the feedback goes directly to the process owner for continuous improvement.***Keep in mind:*** *this option requires an individual or team who will monitor the feedback.* | * Live URL available 24/7
* Can be anonymous (optional)
* May leave open indefinitely for ongoing input
 |
| 1:1 meetings | Middle management & supervisors | Utilize 1:1 meetings to understand how the change is being received. Direct managers and supervisors are the best resources for this as they should already have trust and strong relationships with their employees.***Keep in mind:*** *this option requires safety, trust and transparency amongst managers/supervisors and their employees.* | * A comfortable setting that can enable vulnerability
* Gathers individual, in-depth feedback
 |
| Team meetings | Middle managers | Allows employees to surface feedback on the change in their current team environment.***Keep in mind:*** *a strong facilitator will be required.* | * Creates transparency
* Raises group issues
 |
| Focus groups (5-12 participants) | Integrated initiative team | Allows the initiative team to solicit specific feedback from key contributors on specific topics.***Keep in mind:*** *a strong facilitator and real-time transparency of information captured will be required.* | * A shared experience
* Participants react together and build off each other’s comments
* Option to curate audience based on topics
 |
| Townhalls | Initiative sponsor or champion | Use to summarize findings, celebrate successes and address opportunities related to the change across all key audiences. Great way to share the key objectives & vision of the initiative and how they are being met.***Keep in mind:*** *a strong facilitator and prepared agenda are required.* | * Reaches a large number of employees
* Creates transparency between senior management and employees
* Solicits community input
 |

***Source:*** *This chart has been adapted from the* [*Self-Service Feedback options in the Change Management Toolkit (page 38-39) by Berkeley, University of California*](https://hr.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/change_management_toolkit.pdf)*.*

## ANNEXE G: BUILDING ADKAR IN A COMMUNICATION PLAN

Recall from the Strategize phase how individuals experience change is a process, and that you must ensure that the essential building blocks of change are present, using ADKAR. A good communication plan will mainly foster the development of the following three building blocks:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Awareness | * Include communications both about the need for the initiative change and the expected impact on employees
* Senior management should deliver the business awareness messages while managers should deliver the individual awareness messages
* Use a variety of methods and multiple deliveries to be sure that the employees are receiving the messages that you want them to be receiving
 |
| Desire | * Build thorough communication that convey the importance of the initiative change for the business as well as the positive and negative consequences for employees and the expected improvements and benefits that employees can expect (WIIFM)
* Effective content and delivery mechanisms will create buy-in from impacted employees
* Desire can be impacted if the communications are poorly developed
 |
| Reinforcement | * Communication following the implementation of a change initiative is important to build support for the new initiative and show success of the initiative (you can refer to the CM Playbook Measure Phase)
 |