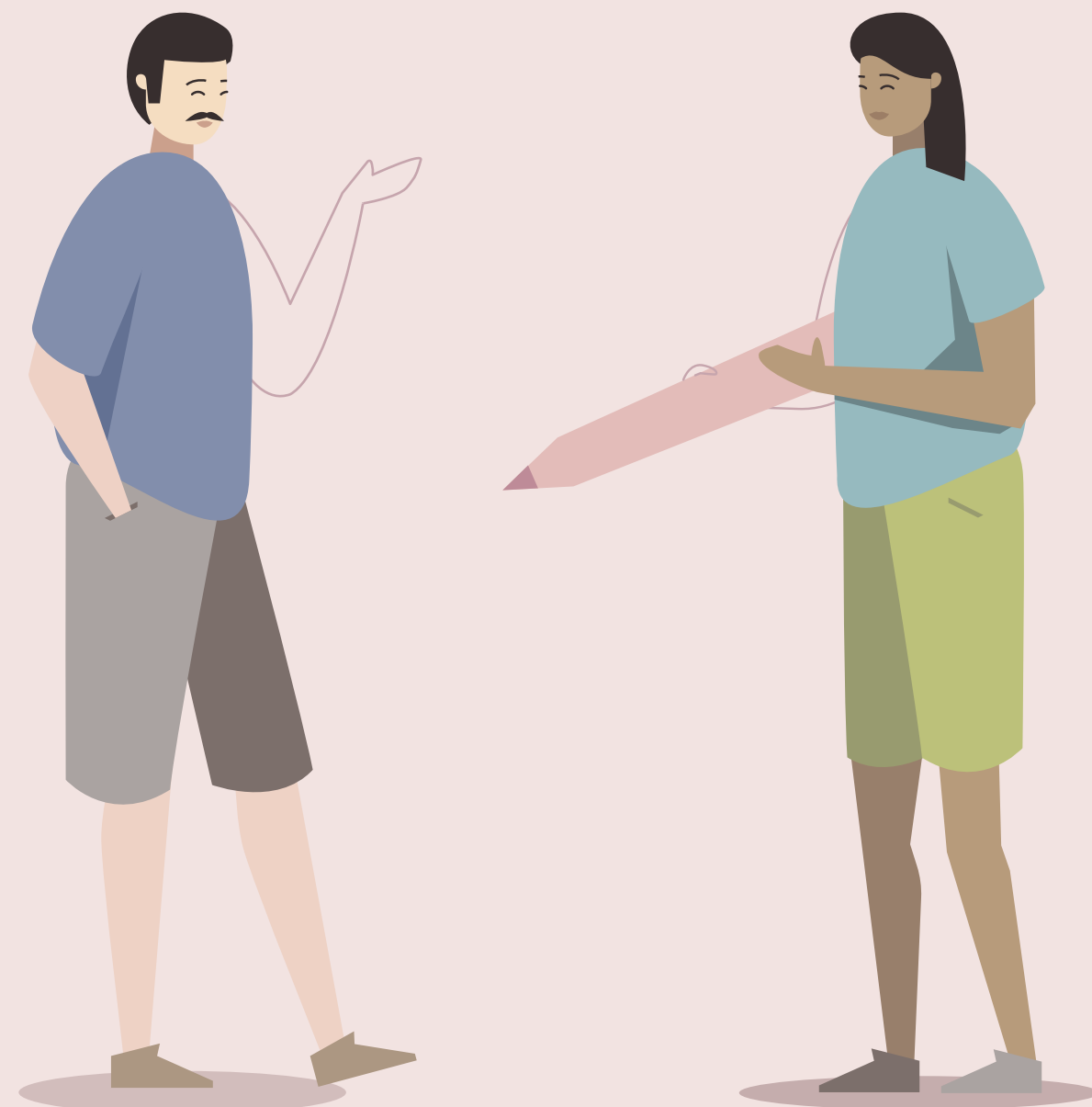# Pulsely

# Pulsely Implementation Guides

## Guide 5: Build a Communications Plan

The foundation of an inclusive organization is a culture of trust and transparency. And, depending on your company culture, it doesn't hurt to have a little fun as well. Our communications guide will incorporate all the information that employees need to understand how Pulsely impacts them personally, as well as how this project supports your business performance. Bottom line, we want to maximize employee participation and survey response rates so you have the most accurate assessment of inclusion in your organization.

## Communications Overview

When it comes to prioritizing time to complete a survey, employees will only do so if they believe it is critical to the organization or to them, personally. Additionally, a diversity and inclusion survey asks questions that could be considered sensitive and will require trust between the employee and the organization. Your data insights from Pulsely will only be as good as the quality of data that you collect. Your communications about the Pulsely Project deserve special attention because they are critical for increasing employee motivation and response rate.

This communications plan covers the communications that you will need to support your project through all four phases: Survey Preparation, Survey Deployment, Uncover Insights, and Take Action. We provide both the philosophy of communications and templates for draft messages.

We know from experience that the organization only takes this seriously if they believe leaders consider it a priority. For that reason, the project should be launched with an announcement from the highest level of leadership possible. The attached plan describes the purposes of these leadership communications in case you are have challenges in gaining the participation level among leaders that you need.

We also encourage you to customize the messages to reflect your organization's communication style as well as your business priorities. Understanding the philosophy of the communications allows you to anticipate the impact of edits you may make.

# Messages

This guide (Build your Communications Plan) is divided into 4 sections according to which messages should be sent during each of the 4 project phases. In each section you can find **which** messages should be sent, **when** to send messages out, **why** are multiple messages needed and **what** should the messages say.

### Project Phase **1.1** Project Preparation

Build Communications Plan: Select messages to include in your project and define timings.
Research shows that commitment to diversity in an organization relies on perceptions of whether the CEO believes that diversity is a strategic priority. Upfront communication about this project will set the tone for the success of your DEI strategy and action plan.
Targeted messages throughout the 3-stage Pulsely Process will increase participation and ensure your results will accurately reflect the broadest representation of views from across your entire organization.

### Project Phase **1.2** Survey Preparation

Guide 5.1: Messages for Project Announcement to Organization

| Template | Message | Recommended Timing |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Email to Line Managers | One week before the all-staff |
| 2 | Email to All Staff | One week prior to the survey |
| 3 | Survey Announcement | One day prior to the survey |

## Which messages should be sent

Below (as well as in the "Comms" tab of your Project Plan sheet), you can find all of our recommended communications. Of course, once your team has reviewed the suggested communications in this document, you can choose which messages are most relevant for your project scope, leadership involvement, and organizational culture. Once you have chosen the messages to include in your communications plan you should update the project plan to reflect the number of communications and timing to fit your project.

### Project Phase **2** Data Collection

Guide 5.2: Messages for Survey Deployment

These communications are focused on the deployment of the survey and address more of the executional questions that employees might have. The overall goal is to encourage participation and maximize response rates.

| Template | Message | Recommended Timing |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | Invitation with Survey Link | Day of survey launch |
| 5 | First Reminder | One week after survey launch |
| 6 | Message from business line leader | If needed, day after Reminder message |
| 7 | Final reminder | Day before survey close |

### Project Phase **3** Uncover Insights

Guide 5.3: Messages for Sharing Results

One of Pulsely's standard survey items is: "*Our leaders convey a sense of commitment to ensuring an inclusive workplace.*"

For those employees who agreed with this statement, now is your opportunity to deliver on their vote of confidence in you. This message is a preliminary message with results' highlights to signal transparency and accountability.

| Template | Message | Recommended Timing |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | Post-Survey Thank You | One week after survey close |
| 9 | Share Highlights of Results | After leadership review; within weeks of survey completion |

### Project Phase **4** Take Action

Guide 5.4: Messages for Sharing Actions

This is the most important step and will determine whether your employees believe that the organization takes inclusion seriously or whether the survey was conducted performatively. If you share the specific action steps that will be taken to address findings, when employees can expect this to happen, and what accountability exists, you have the opportunity to accelerate change in your organizational culture.

Then, the next time you measure inclusion, whether with a Pulse survey or with another full diagnostic to identify next-level commitments, your employees will be more likely to participate and share their honest perceptions. Change will be on an exponential trajectory.

| Template | Message | Recommended Timing |
|---|---|---|
| 10 | Communicate Strategy and Accountability | After presenting the action plan to leadership team and ensuring entire senior leadership team is on board |

## When to send messages out

Each communication has a recommended timing to be sent out (also listed in the "Comms" tab of your Project Plan sheet). If you decide to make changes to the plan, don't forget to update the task list!

## Why are multiple messages needed

Well coordinated messaging is needed through the Pulsely process to increase awareness, maximize participation, and provide necessary information.

Each section explains the philosophy behind those communications and why messages are necessary from both the leadership team and the survey implementation team. Understanding the purpose of these messages is helpful for three reasons:

a) To decide how much messaging is needed to support the response rate in your company;

b) To feel equipped to explain the importance of the message and its content when you ask your senior leaders to send out communications in their name;

c) To understand the overall purpose of what is included in the drafts so you can evaluate the implications of your edits to the templates.

## What should the messages say

We provide templates for all suggested communications. Feel free to download them but remember these templates are examples that you can work from to create a communication that resonates with your people and company culture.

# Customize the tone of the messages

While some cultures are more serious by nature than others, everyone wants to have a little fun at work. And we know that people are more likely to participate in activities that are enjoyable and rewarding. Think about ways you can incorporate a little fun into your approach and then build that into your communications, as well.

Here are some ideas you can incorporate into the tone of your messages to boost participation:

### a) Customize wherever possible

- Can you tie inclusion to an existing organization value?
- How will greater inclusion impact your company mission, product, culture in a specific way? (speaking up about risks such as safety; greater innovation; reflecting customer needs; improved accuracy; better problem-solving);
- Can you link the inclusion survey to a strategic initiative or change management program?

### b) Communicate innovatively

- Start with teaser communications about Pulsely, adding to information over time and revealing survey details closer to the launch date;
- Use varied communication channels. While we are offering email templates, brainstorm other channels to share the message (intranet, town hall meetings, department meetings, newsletter/bulletins, lunch and learn sessions, Slack channel, etc) and other media such as banner ads, music, photos, etc. to make the message more engaging.

### c) Build in fun, rewards, competition.
Examples:

- Donation to a charity that increases with increasing rates of response;
- Company sponsored social gathering for business units that reach a response rate goal.