

case study

Financial Services

Internal Communication Review

In support of a programme of growth, organisational change and development for a national financial services organisation, Athene Communications conducted a communication review to support the development and implementation of a new communication strategy.

Athene's approach

After agreeing objectives and deliverables with the communications director, Athene planned and implemented a full internal review to establish the effectiveness of existing communication activity, gauge understanding of the organisation's vision, mission and values, and identify any cultural and operational barriers to communication.

The review included one-to-one discussions with senior managers, focus groups with front-line employees and a 'desk-top' review of existing communication vehicles.

Results

The review identified a number of areas that needed addressing, for example:

- Information was too complex, too reliant on figures and pitched at too high a level.
- The 'bigger' picture was missing.
- Too much 'what?' and not enough 'why?'.
- Lack of customer focus.
- Ineffective feedback mechanisms.
- Lack of management visibility and approachability.

The audit report prepared by Athene included a series of recommendations covering short, medium and long term priorities, methods for communicating the results of the review and suggestions on evaluation techniques.

Athene has subsequently assisted with the development and implementation of the following recommendations:

- Revamp of all communication materials to reduce complexity and focus on core business messages.
- Launch of a customer focus programme centred around case studies and lifestyle photographs of real customers. Initiatives included posters, plasma screens, features on intranet and in the company magazine.
- Launch of new team briefing processes and materials with clear feedback mechanisms and guest speaker slots to raise management visibility.
- Launch of a cross-business 'Communications Champion' network with departmental representatives identifying news and issues within their sections, acting as a sounding board for communication of corporate issues and producing departmental team briefing materials.
- Launch of new 'balanced business scorecard' supported by clear explanations of purpose and at-a-glance information on business progress against targets.
- Templates and content for new plasma screens.
- Personal communication from the Chief Executive.

Athene has also supported the organisation's change programme through the development of Q&As, presentation materials, plasma screens, intranet pages and employee feedback processes.