GoldinKollar

Course handbook

Eight lessons, eight tools, one page: the whole Internal Communication Course to keep on your desk.

From the free Internal Communication Course by GoldinKollar · goldinkollar.com

Internal communication's job is behaviour, not messages

The scene

The team sent three hundred messages last year, and the CEO asked one question: what changed? Counting measures activity, not results. The job is for people to do something differently because the business needs it.

Behaviour brief

Start from what people need to do differently, before any plan, channel or campaign.

1. Ask what the business wants to achieve this year: one or two priorities, in management's own words.
2. Name who needs to do something differently for that to happen: specific people, not all employees.
3. Write the behaviour you will see if you succeed: an act you can see and count, not a feeling.

THE RULE

Communication that does not change behaviour is activity.

The exercise: One line: who needs to do what differently, and why.

Before you move on

- [ ] The priority is in management's own words, not ours.
- [ ] Each line names specific people, not "all employees".
- [ ] Each behaviour can be seen and counted.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

Business priority this year: Grow sales from the clients we already have

Branch managers share the monthly target with their teams in the first week of the month, the business is pushing for growth, and a team that knows the target early can plan for it

Sales reps log every client visit in the system the same day, managers can then coach on real visits, not on memory

Source: Gallagher · Employee Communications Report 2026 · more than 1,300 professionals in 40 countries
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

Your audience is not ”all employees”

The scene

The engineer in the office, the driver in the field and the new manager got the same words, and each understood something different. People differ in how a message reaches them and in what they are asked to do with it.

Audience map

Split your audience by how a message reaches them and what you ask of them, not by the org chart.

1. Reach: are they at a desk with email, or in the field with only a supervisor?
2. The ask: do they need to know, to understand and agree, or to do something new with their own hands?
3. Choose three to five segments. Each one gets its own message and channel.

THE RULE
“All employees” is not an audience.

The exercise: Three segments under the behaviour from lesson 1.

Before you move on

- [ ] Three to five segments: more and you get lost, fewer and you are back to “all employees”.
- [ ] Each segment is defined by reach and by what is asked of it, not by department.
- [ ] You can describe each segment in one line.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

Segment 1: Branch managers · At a desk, with email · Do something new

Segment 2: Sales reps on the road · In the field, supervisor only · Do something new

Segment 3: Head-office sales support · At a desk, with email · Know

Source: GoldinKollar method: a rule we use, not the result of a study
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

The message is one sentence, before any design

The scene

A new policy went out in a four-page email, and a week later nobody knows what is asked of them. People decide from the first line whether a message is for them; if that line is background, the rest goes unread.

Message house

Fix the message in one sentence before any design, then give each segment its own reason to care.

1. The roof: one sentence. If the employee remembers one thing only, what is it?
2. The pillars: three points at most, each one holding up the roof.
3. The foundation: the answer to “what’s in it for me?”, in the employee’s own words.
4. For each segment: the same roof, a different foundation.

THE RULE

What cannot be said in a sentence will not be understood in four pages.

The exercise: The umbrella sentence, and under it the answer to "what is in it for me?" for each segment.

Before you move on

- [ ] The roof can be said in one breath. If you need a breath in the middle, it is two sentences: pick one.
- [ ] No more than three pillars, and each one holds up the roof.
- [ ] Each foundation says what changes in that person’s day.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

The roof: Every team knows its monthly target in the first week.

Pillar 1: The target arrives on day one, on one page.

Pillar 2: Managers walk their team through it in ten minutes.

Pillar 3: Visits are logged the same day, so everyone sees progress.

Branch managers: You stop chasing numbers at the end of the month.

Sales reps on the road: You know early what counts, and your visits are seen.

Source: GoldinKollar method: a rule we use, not the result of a study
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

A channel for each message, not a message for each channel

The scene

Email, a newsletter, screens, WhatsApp, an intranet, and now leadership wants a podcast. Nobody asked whether the channels work. Every extra channel adds to the noise, and each one has a job: one informs, another persuades.

Channel plan

Choose each channel for the job the message has to do, and close a channel before you add one.

1. Name the job: do people need to know, to understand and be convinced, or to take part in the decision?
2. The bigger the job, the closer the channel: email or a screen to know, a manager with the team to be convinced, a small workshop to take part.
3. Before you add a channel, close one. A channel nobody opens takes credibility from the rest.

THE RULE

Every message has a channel. Not every channel has a message.

The exercise: A main and a supporting channel for each segment, and one channel to close.

Before you move on

- [ ] The bigger the job, the closer the channel.
- [ ] No message goes out on every channel at once.
- [ ] One channel is named to close before any new one is added.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

Branch managers: Be convinced · Regional director with the branch managers, face to face · A one-page brief by email

Sales reps on the road: Be convinced · Branch manager with the team, in the Sunday meeting · A short message from the supervisor

Head-office sales support: Know · Email · A post on the intranet

One channel we will close this year: The monthly PDF newsletter

Source: Gallagher · Employee Communications Report 2026 · 83% of professionals see information overload growing
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

The manager is not a postman but your most important channel

The scene

Half the managers forwarded the message, the other half forgot, and the team heard it as a rumour. Five pages of talking points go unread; what worries a manager is being asked in front of the team and not knowing the answer.

Manager kit

Give managers a small kit, so they talk with their team instead of forwarding an email.

1. The message in three sentences: the roof, and what will change for this manager's own team.
2. A question that opens a conversation instead of a speech: what might make this hard for us?
3. If they are asked and do not know: "I'll come back to you." They send the question on, and you answer within two days at most.

THE RULE

The manager is not a postman, but your most important channel.

The exercise: A manager kit for one message.

Before you move on

- [ ] Three sentences, not five pages.
- [ ] The kit says what changes for this manager's own team.
- [ ] Every question that comes back is answered within two days.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

1. The roof: Every team knows its monthly target in the first week.
2. What changes for this team: From this month, you get your branch target on day one, on one page.
3. What happens next: Walk your team through it in ten minutes before Thursday.

A question that opens the conversation: What might make this hard for us?

Where managers send a question they cannot answer: The managers' group, or a named person in the communication team

We answer within: Two working days

Source: Gallup · State of the Global Workplace 2026 · only 22% of managers are engaged
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

The calendar is the result of the strategy, not its start

The scene

Three big campaigns in March and an empty June. Campaigns compete for the same attention, and when three land together people ignore all three. A calendar built first fills up with anything.

Year rhythm

Build the year from your plan, not from an empty calendar: three chapters, and one big campaign a month at most.

1. The year is a story in three chapters. Each chapter serves a behaviour from tool 1, and has a start and an end.
2. One big campaign a month at most. A quiet month is not failure.
3. Protect the seasons: Ramadan, year end and results week carry no big launch.

THE RULE
The calendar is the result of the strategy, not the strategy.

The exercise: Twelve slots in three chapters, with protected seasons.

Before you move on

- [ ] Every chapter serves a behaviour from tool 1.
- [ ] No month carries more than one big campaign.
- [ ] Ramadan, year end and results week carry no big launch.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

Chapter 1: Know your target · Managers share the target in week one · January to April

Chapter 2: Every visit counts · Reps log every visit the same day · May to August

Chapter 3: Keep it going · Both, with the results shown back to teams · September to November

January: Launch: know your target

March: Ramadan

April: Results week

Source: GoldinKollar method: a rule we use, not the result of a study
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

Communicating change before the rumour arrives

The scene

A restructuring was decided behind closed doors, the announcement planned for two weeks later, and the rumour arrived the next morning. A gap fills with rumour, and a late announcement fights a story people already believe.

Change communication plan

Walk a change through four stages, so the announcement arrives before the rumour.

1. Alignment: managers know before their teams, each with a kit.
2. Launch: say what will not change before what will. People need firm ground first.
3. Cascade: every manager sits with the team the same day, not a week later.
4. Embed: follow up after one, two and three months. The announcement is one day; the change takes months.

THE RULE

Rumour fills the gap. So leave no gap.

The exercise: One upcoming change: who, when and what at each stage.

Before you move on

- [ ] Managers know before their teams.
- [ ] What will not change is said before what will.
- [ ] Every manager meets the team the same day.
- [ ] Follow-up is planned after one, two and three months.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

The change: From 1 July, branch targets are set monthly, not quarterly.

What will not change: Your manager, your clients and your base pay stay as they are.

1. Alignment: Regional directors with branch managers · Two days before the launch · Each manager gets the kit and asks their own questions first

2. Launch: The sales director · Sunday, 9:00 · What will not change, then what will, in one page

3. Cascade: Every branch manager with the team · The same day · A ten-minute conversation that opens with a question

4. Embed: The communication team · After one, two and three months · Two questions to twenty reps: is the target shared in week one?

Source: Gallagher · Employee Communications Report 2026 · 61% of companies have no formal approach to communicating change
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

Measuring internal communication, from open to action

The scene

A 60% open rate, and the CEO asks: and then what? Opens, clicks and views all sit on the first rung of the ladder. What was opened was not necessarily read, and what was read was not necessarily remembered.

Measurement ladder

Measure what people did, not what you sent: one indicator for each behaviour, on the highest rung you can reach.

1. Reached: the message was opened, or said in the briefing.
2. Understood: the employee can say it in their own words.
3. Believed: they see why it matters to them.
4. Acted: the behaviour from tool 1 happened.
5. Measure the highest rung you can reach, even with a small sample: two questions to twenty employees are truer than an open rate for a thousand.

THE RULE

Opened does not mean read. Read does not mean acted on.

The exercise: One indicator for each behaviour, and your page is complete.

Before you move on

- [ ] Each behaviour has one indicator.
- [ ] The indicator sits on the highest rung you can reach.
- [ ] If a behaviour has no indicator, the behaviour is not clear enough yet.

Worked example The example is made up, to show a filled template. Replace it with your own.

Branch managers share the monthly target with their teams in the first week of the month: Acted · Share of branches that held the target conversation in week one · Two questions to twenty reps, every month

Sales reps log every client visit in the system the same day: Acted · Share of visits logged the same day · From the system, every week

Source: GoldinKollar method: a rule we use, not the result of a study. The 60% open rate in the lesson is an illustration.
Watch the lesson: goldinkollar.com/videos/internal-communication-course/

Internal communication plan

One page: who needs to do what, who we talk to, what we say, where, through whom, when, and how we will know.

1. Behaviour brief Start from what people need to do differently, before any plan, channel or campaign.	
2. Audience map Split your audience by how a message reaches them and what you ask of them, not by the org chart.	
3. Message house Fix the message in one sentence before any design, then give each segment its own reason to care.	
4. Channel plan Choose each channel for the job the message has to do, and close a channel before you add one.	
5. Manager kit Give managers a small kit, so they talk with their team instead of forwarding an email.	
6. Year rhythm Build the year from your plan, not from an empty calendar: three chapters, and one big campaign a month at most.	
7. Change communication plan Walk a change through four stages, so the announcement arrives before the rumour.	
8. Measurement ladder Measure what people did, not what you sent: one indicator for each behaviour, on the highest rung you can reach.	

Take it to your manager.