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DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO

Measurement and Analytics for Internal Communications Professionals

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Contents

Introduction

Why Measurement Matters

In the end, everything we do as communicators has to ladder to business objectives. That objective might be to make the world a better place, to generate revenue, to increase retention, or to make employees happier and healthier. But whatever it is that your organization is striving for, as internal communicators we need to prove that we are activating towards those results.

For many internal communications professionals, this can be a daunting task. But more and more, executive leaders are asking to see the data behind every decision and campaign. We need to respond, we need to learn how, we need to make the time.

It is our hope that this guide, in partnership with Brilliant Ink, helps make it easier for you to get started with measurement and, ultimately, create better, data-driven programs for your employees and organizations.

Doug Pierce, GM & Chief Client Officer, theEMPLOYEEapp

Demonstrating IC's Impact, Again and Again

The COVID-19 pandemic has given new meaning to the importance of internal communications that inform, engage, and inspire. But how do you know if your communications are achieving that? With limited time and resources, how do you understand where to direct your efforts based on what's working and what's not? How do you tap into your people to learn what they need to do their best work? How do you take the data you have from various communications channels or survey data and translate it into action? At Brilliant Ink, we believe that intentional and ongoing measurement is the cornerstone of effective internal communications. We're excited to share some of our best practices and thinking to help you and your team elevate the great work we know you're doing.

Ann Melinger, CEO, Brilliant Ink

Setting Objectives

Measurement is key to the success of internal communications teams. Data is all around us – even if it doesn't always seem obvious. And since we have access to more data than ever, data-driven decisions are even more important. In this section, we will focus on one of the most foundational elements of measurement: **setting objectives.**

Defining Your Objectives

We're all familiar with setting objectives and strategy, but doing it well is a science. And with internal comms teams being small and constantly inundated with planned and unplanned communications, we don't always make the time we should for this critical work.

But objectives are *everything.* And tying your measurement back to objectives is how you understand and gauge progress. We recommend prioritizing three sets of objectives:

1. Understanding our **organization's** business objectives.
2. Understanding other **stakeholders'** / departments' objectives for the programs and initiatives you will help them communicate.
3. Determining **your own** objectives for internal communications as a whole and at the campaign level.

Define your objectives using the SMART Goal framework

We recommend using the SMART goal framework to ensure you're setting objectives that will drive measurable outcomes right from the start:

Specific: The goal is very clearly defined

Measurable: You can accurately track your progress towards the achievement of the goal

Attainable: The goal is not overly ambitious, but a stretch that is feasible to accomplish

Relevant: The goal relates to the project and to the business goals you are striving to achieve

Time-Bound: You have rooted your goal in a time-frame rather than leaving it open-ended

Objectives Example: Open Enrollment

Setting SMART goals is best illustrated with an example. We'll use Open Enrollment because it is something nearly all US-based organizations communicate and it requires cross-departmental collaboration.

PRO TIP: We recommend starting any campaign with a stakeholder meeting where all involved parties meet to discuss time-frames, the information/content that will be communicated, and everyone's goals for the campaign. In this meeting, you should define the action you want employees to take based on the campaign (i.e. what do you want them to know, feel, or do?). This is key as it will shape the campaign's approach in order to achieve the team's goals.

EXAMPLE: Open Enrollment Objective Setting

Organization Goals | Campaign Need | Campaign Goals | Internal Comms Goals | Tactics | Measurement

You work for an organization whose primary goals for the year are to:

- Increase revenue
- Decrease employee turnover
- Increase employee engagement scores as measured by an annual engagement survey

Organization Goals | **Campaign Need** | Campaign Goals | Internal Comms Goals | Tactics | Measurement

It's open enrollment season, so you meet with your human resources team in advance to understand their goals for the campaign along with key dates. From this meeting, you learn that HR hopes to achieve the following with this year's OE campaign:

- Decrease the number of one-off questions they receive through their HR hotline related to open enrollment. Last year the team received over 200 calls, they want to cut that down by 40%.
- Increase employee participation in open enrollment by 15%.

Organization Goals | Campaign Need | **Campaign Goals** | Internal Comms Goals | Tactics | Measurement

Luckily, these goals are all already SMART:

- Both goals are **specific** because they each lay out the exact number that they are aiming for.
- Both goals are **measurable** because HR can count the number of emails that come to the benefits hotline address and they closely track the number of employees who enroll each year through the HR information system they use.

Objectives Example: Open Enrollment

- Both goals are presumably **attainable**. Ideally, they have rooted these percentages in analytics. Perhaps they were able to increase employee participation by 10% the year before and believe they can continue the momentum this year. Perhaps they received 400 emails the year before and are hoping to cut back further. If you're setting goals without a known baseline, your goal might not be attainable. So if this is everyone's first year setting a specific goal, make an educated guess and create the benchmark.
- Both goals are **relevant** to open enrollment and the organization's goal to reduce turnover because a strong benefits package (and awareness of those benefits) can be a great way to retain talent.
- And last, these goals are **time-bound**. You have until enrollment closes to reach these objectives.

Organization Goals | Campaign Need | Campaign Goals | **Internal Comms Goals** | Tactics | Measurement

What do you, the internal comms team, do next? You need to set your own goals for how you will help HR reach these goals. And then you need to set the strategy that goes along with the goals.

Your goals might look something like this:

- We want to increase overall participation in OE.
- We want to reduce the volume of questions we receive.
- We noticed that our frontline workers account for most of the employees that don't enroll and who have the most questions. We need to improve content targeting and reach them where they are.
- We want to Increase open rates on open enrollment content by 30% by posting about benefits on the mobile app (where 50% of our audience is).

Organization Goals | Campaign Need | Campaign Goals | Internal Comms Goals | **Tactics** | Measurement

- Determine what questions your people have ahead of time by sending out a pre-open enrollment survey to all employees. Aim for a 35 - 40% survey completion rate to get ahead of these questions and help employees enroll on time.
- Create new material to answer the top questions asked last year: one comprehensive written FAQ sheet and four short videos covering each of the topics that came up most last year: HSA, FSA, 401k, medical plan costs.
- We need to get the information on our new channel—a mobile app—so our people have access to all the information and the benefits portal where they will enroll.

Organization Goals | Campaign Need | Campaign Goals | Internal Comms Goals | Tactics | **Measurement**

There are likely more tactics and goals you would set, but this should give you a good idea of the process. But the key is to MEASURE. Measure progress throughout the campaign and not just at the end; this will help you be more agile and pivot your strategy if it isn't yielding results. And then do a full retrospective when you're done to determine what worked, what didn't, and your final results.

Collecting Data

Once you've set your goals, you can begin running your campaigns and enacting your content strategy. This is where the important work of collecting data begins. We recommend measuring over the life of a campaign or initiative, and not just at the end, because this helps you course-correct along the way. We recommend a retrospective meeting at the conclusion of the campaign to look at data in its entirety to really understand what worked and where to improve the next time.

Survey Basics 101

Employee voices need to be heard—whether they are office workers, frontline, or deskless. 2020 was a year of incomparable change, crisis, and a long overdue social awakening. Organizations realize now more than ever how important it is to listen to their people and prioritize the needs and wellbeing of their most valuable resource—their people.

And while the events of 2020 caught us all off guard, they sparked an unprecedented opportunity for change and growth. These events highlighted and emphasized *existing* challenges in the workplace and how we communicate—and how critical it is to always listen to your employees and act on their feedback.

What's the best way to know how employees feel? **Ask them**. How can your manager better support you? How are you feeling? What do you need help with? Do you have the tools and resources you need?

Surveys are the best way to collect anonymous, direct feedback from your employees about how they are feeling and how you can best support them. Anonymous surveys give your employees a safe space to share **honest feedback**. And when you act on that feedback, it reminds them that their opinions and perspectives are valued and sharing them can actually create change.

77%

of employees want to provide feedback more than once per year

Qualtrics

How Often Should I Survey My People?

There is not a one-size-fits-all approach to surveying. This will completely depend on your employee population, company, and ability to follow through on sharing results and implementing changes.

That said, here are a few best practices:

- Regular "pulse" checks are essential and help employees to see that the lines of communication are always open.
- Start with a weekly or monthly cadence and see what participation looks like. Use that data to craft your perfect cadence going forward. **PRO TIP:** Ask your people how often they'd like to be able to give feedback.

Survey Basics 101

Types of Surveys and Their Benefits

There is a whole spectrum of types of surveys, and each has an appropriate use. We'll review a few types and their standard use:

Communication Preferences Surveys

The events of 2020 helped make our employees and leadership hyper-aware of the value of good, clear communication. As you look ahead, get in the habit of surveying your people on their general internal communications preferences throughout the year—how/when they want to receive communications, and the types of topics they want to know more or less about. Be sure to ask at least one open-ended question where your people can share candid thoughts on what's working well and what could be better. Below are a few thought starters on areas you could explore. Example questions:

Communication Channels:

- From the list below, select the top 5 channels you prefer for receiving company news and information (even if it doesn't exist at our company today). **PRO TIP: If there's a new channel that you've been eyeing, consider weaving in a question to gauge whether or not employees WANT this/would use it.**

- How often do you [read or visit] [CHANNEL NAME]? **PRO TIP: Use this question to supplement analytics from your most critical channels. If your survey tool allows it, ask a follow-up question to ask why they read or visit as often or as infrequently as they do. Use the data from this question to assess whether you're dedicating your time and resources to the right communication channels.**

Communications Topics:

- Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statement: Information on this topic is important to me. (Strongly agree/Agree/Disagree/Strongly disagree/Not sure). **PRO TIP: Provide respondents with a list of communications topics—from "Our Mission/Vision/Values" to "Customer Stories" to "New Hire Announcements" to gauge which topics/subjects your people want to hear more or less about. Don't worry if the list feels long—these questions are fast to answer!**

Leader & Manager Communications:

- Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:
  - » I have enough opportunities to hear from the Executive Leadership Team.
  - » I trust the information I receive from the Executive Leadership Team.
- How do you prefer to hear from the Executive Leadership Team? Pick your top three preferred channels (even if they don't exist today).
- If you could give your manager one piece of feedback, what would it be? (Open-ended)

Survey Basics 101

Remote Employee Surveys

For many organizations, remote work is here to stay, in some form. It's important to ensure your people feel connected to the company's culture and each other while also having what they need to do their best work. As companies ponder the future of work, look to your people for insights and feedback. Below are a few of our favorite questions for remote employee surveys; you can find additional options in this blog post from Culture Amp. Example questions:

- What do you like best and least about working remotely?
  - [Follow-up questions: What is the high point of a typical day (for example, yesterday)? What is the low point of a typical day (for example, yesterday)?]
- What is your work setup like?
  - [Follow-up questions: What equipment or process improvements would make things 10% better? What technology issues have you encountered?]
- What is your daily routine?
  - [Follow-up questions: What do you do to take breaks/ recharge? Are you able to fully disconnect at the end of the day?]

Crisis Surveys

Culture Amp's Emergency Response Survey Templates includes question sets for both pulse surveys and an extended survey, including sample questions that could be applied to any sort of crisis/emergency situation. Example questions:

- My company is supporting employees during the [SITUATION]
- We are receiving timely communications from my company about the [SITUATION]
- I have what I need (i.e., space set-up, internet connection) to work effectively from home
- We are staying connected as a team/colleagues during the [SITUATION]
- The leaders at my company are providing a sense of stability during [SITUATION]
- I believe my company is adequately prepared for its employees to work remotely
- I have the flexibility in my work schedule that enables me to look after family/dependents should I need to
- If I raised a concern about my company's response to [SITUATION] I feel it would be listened to

Survey Basics 101

Avoiding Survey Fatigue

You hear about survey fatigue *all* the time…but there's a big misconception here. Most would define survey fatigue as asking employees for feedback too often. But that's not *really* it.

Survey Fatigue is when people are repeatedly asked to share feedback and then that feedback is not acted on or even acknowledged.

Would you want to take surveys every month if it never actually resulted in anything? Nope! And neither do your people.

Always Begin With the End In Mind

Always begin any type of survey with the end in mind. Don't ask for feedback if you aren't prepared or able to act on it. This includes ensuring that your senior leaders are aware that you're going to collect and review feedback and they need to be prepared to support changes to address what was heard.

Before you ask a single question, you should take four preparatory steps:

1. **REVIEW what you already know.** What existing data or insights do you have that might help you with the research you're conducting? What do you already know about how your employees feel about this topic? Use this information to help inform your survey questions and multiple-choice answer options. PRO TIP: You can even add a bit of extra context to your survey questions that acknowledge why you're asking.
2. **HYPOTHESIZE about what you might uncover.** Look at your set of questions and prepare for potential outcomes. Think through as many hypothetical outcomes to the survey as possible. What's the best case scenario? The worst case? The most likely? And then make a plan. PRO TIP: This would be a great time to plant the seeds with executive leaders for any potential post-research asks. Proactively clear as much red tape as possible so that you can act on feedback and implement new solutions quickly!
3. **Pledge to REPORT BACK the survey results.** Remember that the biggest cause of survey fatigue is when feedback isn't acknowledged or acted on. Be sure to share the findings of the survey with your people. PRO TIP: The best way to hold yourself accountable is to include this in your project plan and share your timeline when you invite people to take the survey.
4. **Get ORGANIZED.** Just like any other campaign or communication, you need to clearly define what needs to be accomplished and who will be responsible for each task. Who is sending out the survey and reminder messages? Who will analyze the data? Build all of this into your project plan to keep everyone on track. PRO TIP: Use a tool like Smartsheet or Excel to track all of the moving pieces. Consider setting up a weekly 15-minute meeting with everyone involved in the survey to track progress and keep people accountable.

Survey Question Deep Dive

There are a ton of resources out there when it comes to drafting survey questions. We've rounded up sample questions for various types of surveys/scenarios to help you get started.

Luckily, Brilliant Ink can help you with all things survey-related! Get Started

Before Asking Any Questions, Explain Why They're Here

When you share your survey with your people, make it clear in your survey outreach communications and survey introduction why you're conducting the survey. Why are you asking for feedback? What are you hoping to learn? What will you do with the data?

Most Common Types of Survey Questions

1. Multiple Choice

What it is: These are a type of close-ended (or semi-close-ended) questions. Most survey question types stem from this format. Multiple choice questions present survey participants with a predefined list of answer choices from which they can select one option.

EXAMPLE: How did you find this whitepaper?

A. Browsing brilliantink.com
B. Browsing theEMPLOYEEapp.com
C. Google Search
D. Social Media
E. Someone sent it to me
F. Other (Please Specify):

PRO TIP: When applicable, include a write-in option in case a participant's expected choice isn't available.

When to use it:

- To gauge or determine general sentiment / information about a topic.
- To collect demographic information such as job role, location, title, etc.

Survey Question Deep Dive

2. Likert Scale

What it is: This is a specific type of multiple choice question that uses a set scale for survey participants to express how much they agree or disagree with a particular statement.

EXAMPLE: I am really finding this whitepaper valuable so far.

A. **Strongly Agree**
B. **Agree**
C. **Neither Agree Nor Disagree**
D. **Disagree**
E. **Strongly Disagree**

PRO TIP: Keep the format consistent for all Likert Scale questions in your survey. For instance, display them either vertically or horizontally, but don't mix and match. You might also consider changing "neither agree nor disagree" to "not sure" if the results from prior surveys skewed heavily neutral.

When to use it: This should be used to gauge degrees of sentiments on a topic, rather than a firm yes/no.

3. Select your Top X Choices

What it is: This is a type of multiple choice, close-ended question where you present a predefined list of answer choices from which the participant can select multiple options.

EXAMPLE: What are your biggest concerns about analytics?

A. **I don't know where to start.**
B. **I'm not good at math.**
C. **I'm not sure what to do with the data.**
D. **I don't have analytics tools.**
E. **I don't have enough time to collect data.**

PRO TIP: Always limit the maximum number of choices a participant can select. We think 3 - 5 options is a good rule of thumb—depending on the total number of choices. Use your survey tool to stop people from checking more than 3 options, but if they've made 1 or 2 selections, don't force them to arbitrarily select a third to meet the parameters of the question.

When to use it:

- To gauge the most important items.
- In lieu of ranking questions, which can be time-consuming and unnecessarily challenging.

Survey Question Deep Dive

4. Open-Ended

What it is: This is a non-multiple choice question where survey respondents can answer a prompt in their own words.

EXAMPLE: What else would be useful in mastering internal communications measurement? Write in:

____

____

____

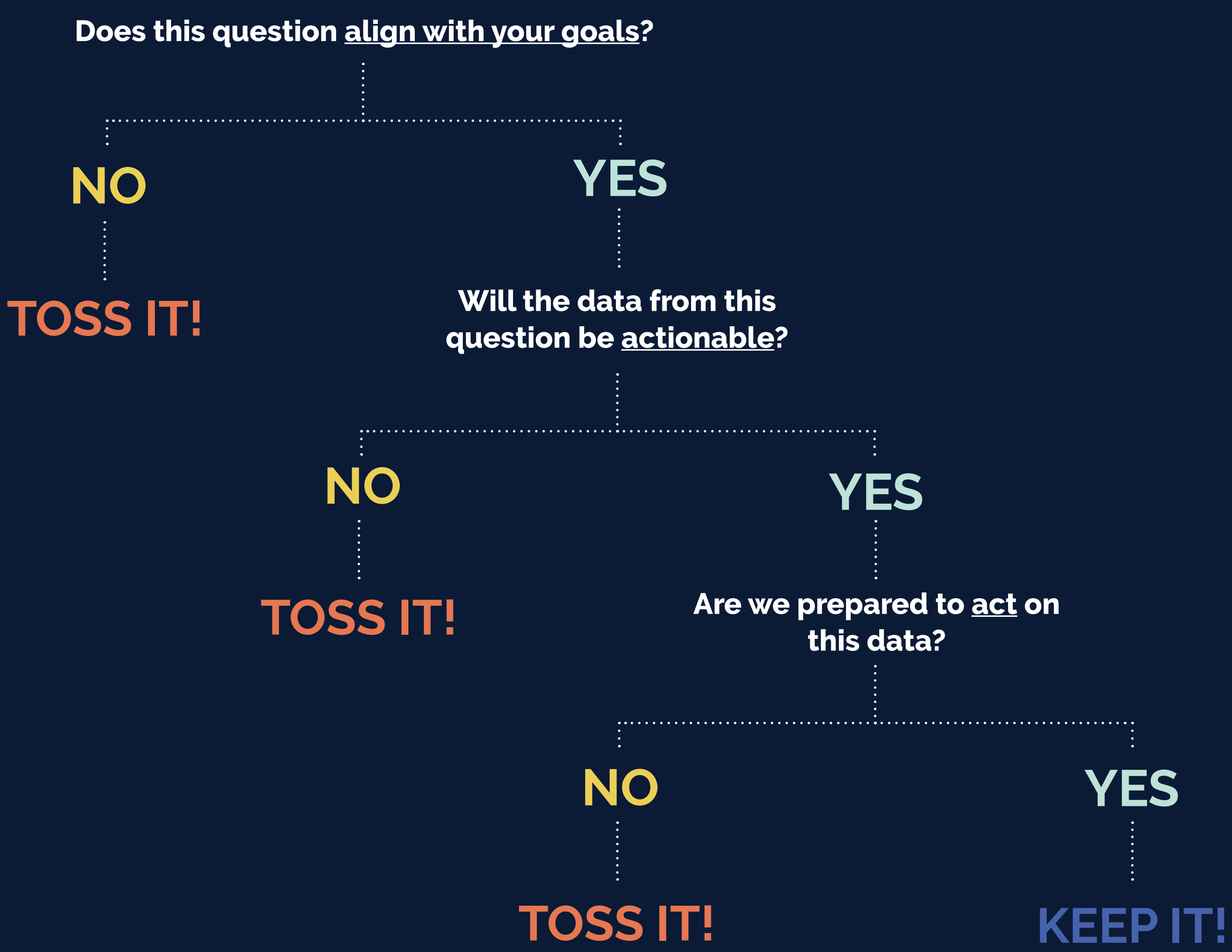
PRO TIP: Use these sparingly as they take a lot of time for participants to fill out and for you to sift through during your analysis. If you use these after a multiple choice question to get more information about why they selected a certain option, always make it optional so they don't abandon your survey.

When to use it:

- When you need to get more feedback beyond a yes/no or your predefined choices.
- When you want to collect additional context about why a multiple choice question was answered a certain way.

Evaluating Survey Questions

Like any kind of measurement, it all comes back to objectives. You need to ensure that all your questions—and the survey itself—aligns with your goals. But it's also key to make sure you test the **validity** of the questions and assess if it's the right time to be asking them.



Mobile App Data

At theEMPLOYEEapp, we are a master at all things mobile app data. And with mobile apps, you open the door into so many more data points than typical channels provide—folder opens, time spent on the platform, whether a user accessed via mobile or the web, time spent on content, likes, comments, social shares, banner clicks! The list goes on. And that can get overwhelming.

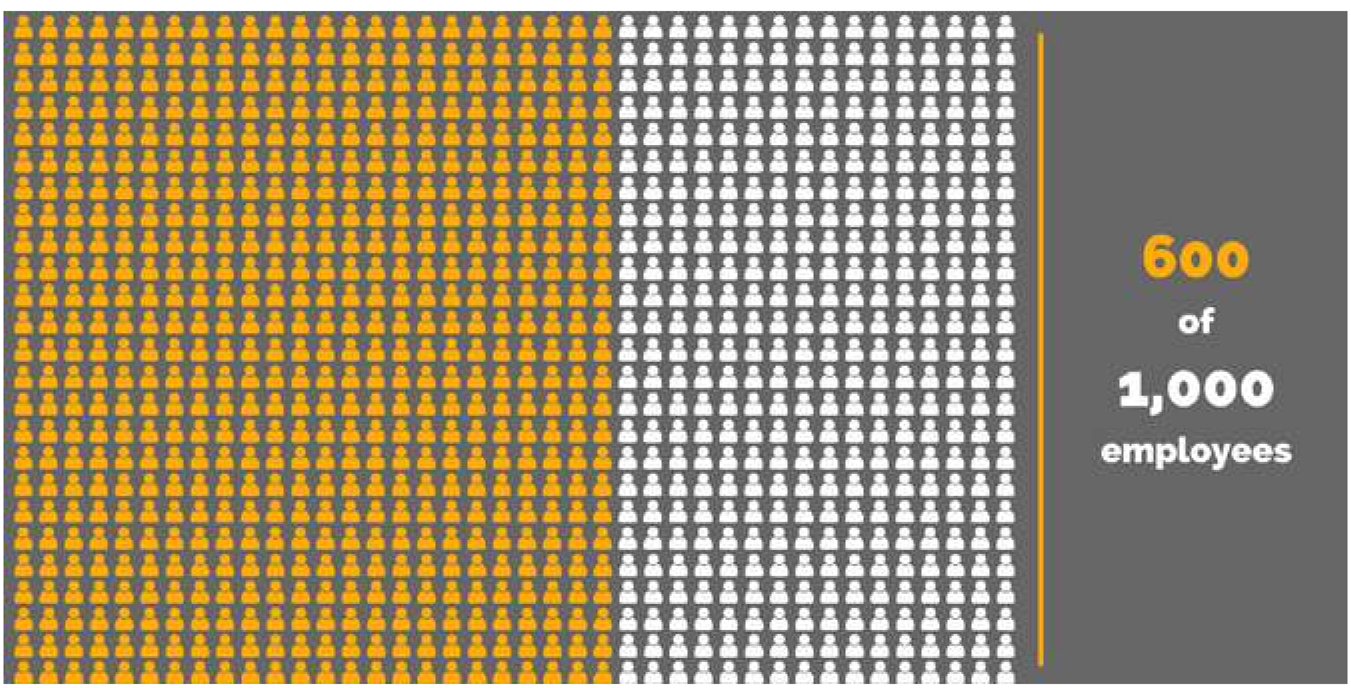
Not to sound like a broken record, but remember to **ground yourself in your objectives**. All data points could be useful, but it's important to hone in on what data points actually measure what you are tracking. When sharing your results, you want to follow this same guidance. Your COO likely won't want to see every data point under the sun; they want to see the most important data trends that point back to achieving business objectives. And if you didn't hit the objective, you want to share data that backs your shift in strategy so that you can get closer to achieving those goals.

We'll review a few categories of mobile app data and explain how you can move from just measuring engagement to measuring activation.

Adoption Rate

Whenever you launch a new tool, one metric really dominates the conversation: adoption rate. Simply, how many people are using my tool compared to those who have access to do so? Don't get us wrong, this is an important metric, but we often miss the mark a bit when analyzing what it means.

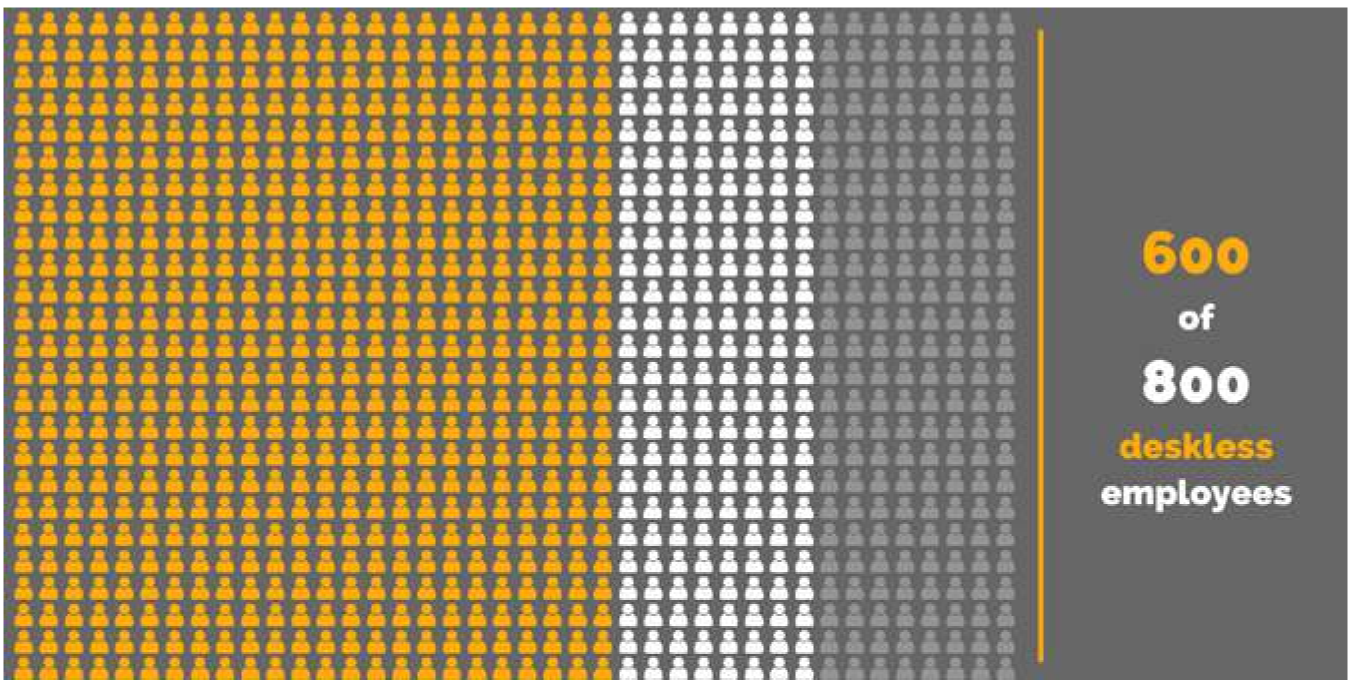
Say you have 1,000 employees at your organization, and 600 employees have logged on to use your new app. That's a 60% adoption rate.



Mobile App Data

Some people stop there and get frustrated because they don't think that's very good (even though it really is!). They can't understand why the other 400 people won't use the tool.

But what if you shifted the way you looked at that? Imagine that 200 of your employees are deskbound. This means they work on computers all day, have a corporate email, and even a collaboration tool like Slack. They are informed and don't necessarily need a mobile app to be connected and informed. But 800 of your employees work out in the field, don't have computers, most don't have email addresses, and they really haven't had a communication tool before the app. And therefore, these deskless workers are the population who you really want to be using the app.



If you look closer at the number of people who have adopted the tool, what if all 600 people who have adopted the tool were deskless workers? 600 out of 800 deskless workers is a 75% adoption rate. Already, that adoption rate is better and it shows you that you are reaching the population who really needs the tool. So, if you introduced an app specifically to reach your deskless workers, *that's* the metric and audience you need to focus on when pulling your adoption data.

Mobile App Data

Engagement: Likes, Comments, Shares

Engagement metrics are all the rage, but what are you really doing with all that *like*, *comment*, and *share* data? What are you measuring other than what you think might account to “engagement”? What larger goal does that relate to—culture, your employee engagement score, eNPS?

Say you get an average of 15 likes per post, what does that really tell you? Unlike social media platforms with algorithms that show your content to more people based on the number of engagements, likes and comments are simply vanity metrics if we don’t understand them or dig a little deeper.

It might be more valuable to look into:

- Who is liking your content? Who comments most often? How are those individuals performing?
- Is there a region of the country where more employees are actively engaging? Do they have a very active manager leading by example? And is the most active region also the most productive? The safest? The one with the lowest attrition rate?
- Is it specific roles? Titles? Tenures?
- Can you tap into these people as super users to become content publishers? To inform you on what they like and don’t like?
- Are there trends around what gets more *likes* and *comments*? Can you use that to inform your content strategy?
- Are you comparing *likes* and *comments* to *clicks* and *opens*—are they correlated?

Employee Listening: Search

The biggest problem with click-based metrics is that it only shows you performance of content that already exists. It doesn’t tell you *why* that video campaign tanked. It doesn’t show you what they would have clicked on instead. It doesn’t tell you what’s *missing* from your content strategy.

But things like search data can help you infer some of these things. With theEMPLOYEEapp, you can see top search results. Sometimes this can really validate your content strategy—what if you quickly created a COVID-19 FAQ doc in March 2020 and then that was the top search result? Amazing. Go you! But what if “layoffs” was also a top search entry? What if you hadn’t prepared anything about that yet? Now you have data to take to leadership—”Listen, 150 people searched for information on this. We don’t have anything on this topic. We need to be more transparent.”

Content Analysis

For those of you who don't have access to channels that provide analytics, we wanted to review a low-tech but highly effective way to measure: a content analysis.

A Content Analysis is simply an analysis of the content being produced, who it's intended for, and where it's posted. This is very similar to an internal communications audit. Let's explain further with an example from internal communications and measurement expert Sean Williams:

One company had a goal to better understand what content was being produced for their Intranet and what it was accomplishing. So, they conducted a content analysis where they went through all the content that was currently on the Intranet from the previous two years. And they kept count of the number of stories that applied to each geographic business unit.

This global organization had a problem that wasn't obvious before they began counting the content and organizing it in this way. They found that roughly 90% of their content was targeted for their audience in the United States.

When they combined this finding with intranet usage, it made sense that 98% of intranet traffic came from U.S. employees. Employees that were located in other countries had come to expect that the intranet didn't have any content that was relevant for them. As a result, a company located in 90 countries now had almost 80 different intranets to fill this void—imagine the cost and the lack of IT oversight, creating big weaknesses in cybersecurity.

This one insight led to the development of a new content strategy to more accurately target all employees at the organization. They consolidated their multiple intranets into one, primary intranet. And in just one year, they went from 90% of content being US-focused to roughly 40%. And they tripled the overall traffic to the intranet within two years. And there was proof that this all impacted how employees felt about their organization and how included they felt.

Presenting the Data

IC pros are storytellers. Creatives. Empaths. We are masters of communication...but KPIs and dashboards? Some of us turn the other way.

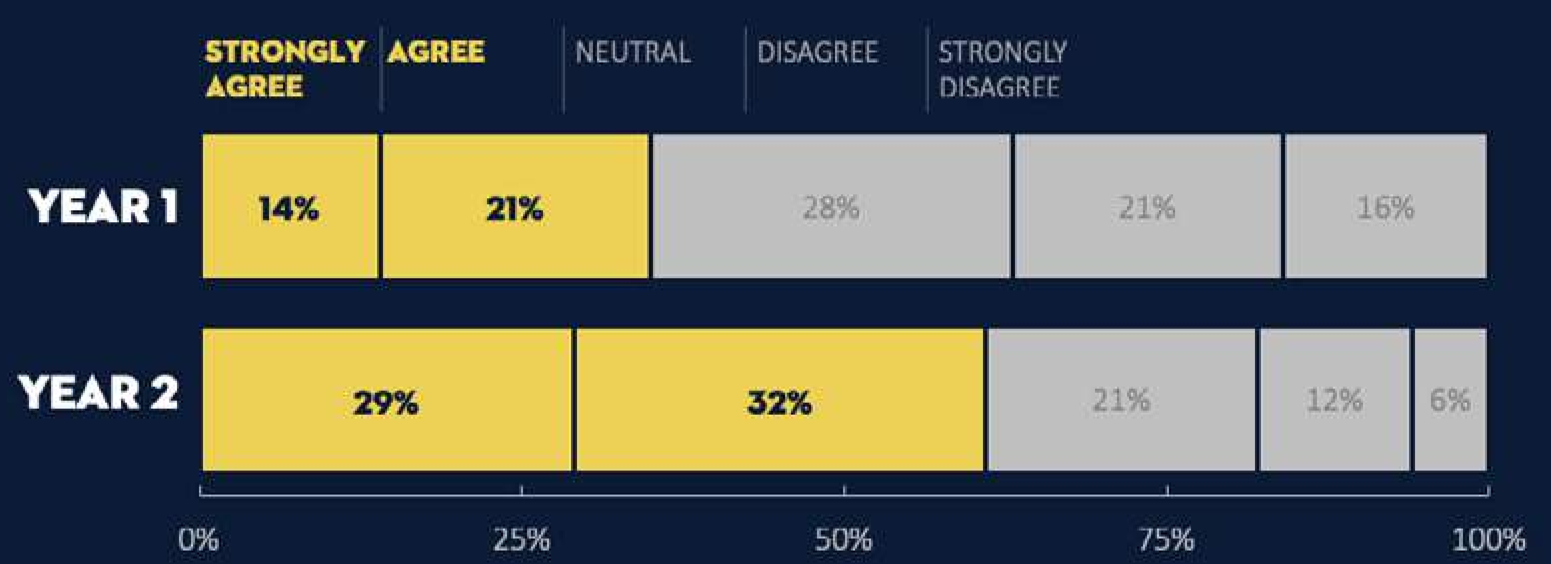
But actually, at our core we are **strategists**. And data is your friend. It is the key to unlocking better strategies and continuously improving.

Making Data Work for You

Ultimately, you want to get three things out of your data sets, whether they are survey responses or clicks/ opens from your app or intranet:

- WHAT is the data telling you?
- WHY do you think that might be the case?
- HOW should you move forward and use the data to make a change or make your case?

In this section, we'll tackle how you can become a data scientist and a pro at storytelling with your data.



When to Share Results, and With Whom

You don't want to wait until year end or a half-year review with your senior leaders to clue them in on how everything is going.

DID YOU KNOW? Nearly 20% of communications professionals don't do anything with the data they collect.

State of the Sector, 2020

The three groups that you should be reporting results to are:

- The rest of your internal comms team
- Stakeholders (i.e. any department you work with on communications)
- Executive leadership team

And for each of these groups, you may find that there is a better cadence for sharing results. We recommend a monthly all-stakeholder meeting to discuss initiatives and the communications calendar to keep everyone aligned—this is a great opportunity to also report back on how those campaigns performed. You likely want to talk about results much more frequently internally with your team—try weekly. And for executive leadership, make an effort to share results quarterly.

Example: Launching a New Values Campaign

This chart maps how much to share with each group, what each group cares about, and the ideal cadence for sharing results.

Audience	Internal Comms Team	Stakeholders (e.g. HR)	Executive Leaders
Goal of Sharing	To understand how your individual pieces of content and campaigns are performing to continue improving strategy.	To demonstrate how the campaign is going. And to help them connect the work to larger business objectives like retention.	To demonstrate the ROI of the campaign (e.g. retention improvement). To show if the values are sticking, if they are being lived by managers, if employees know the values.
Detail Level	Granular	Moderate-Level	High-Level
Cadence	At least monthly; biweekly	Monthly	Quarterly

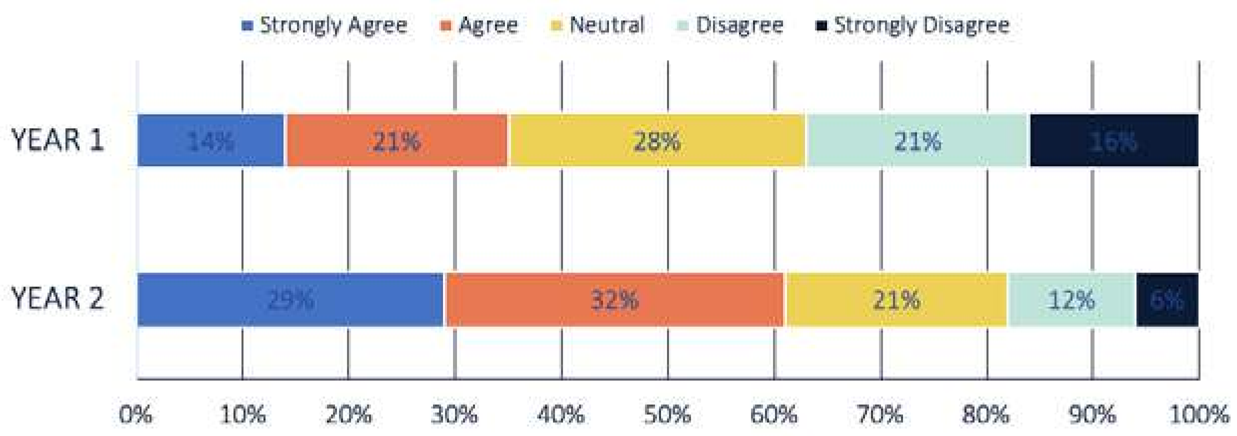
Data Visualization

Unfortunately, there is a lot of bad data visualization out there. Multi-color charts. Overwhelming axes and labels. Misleading representations. Throw away everything you think you know about how to visually represent your data and leverage the four C's instead: CLEAN, COLOR, CONTRAST, and CONTACT.

1. CLEAN up your charts.

First thing's first, we need to make the **X axis way easier to read**. If you're in Excel, open the Format Axis pane and make your adjustments. Our biggest piece of advice here is to change your "Major" intervals to a max of 3 - 4 gridlines (i.e. a gridline every 25%). This makes a huge difference in decluttering your graph. We also want to minimize chart spacing to make the data easier to compare side-by-side. We recommend a gap width of anywhere between 30 - 50%.

BEFORE



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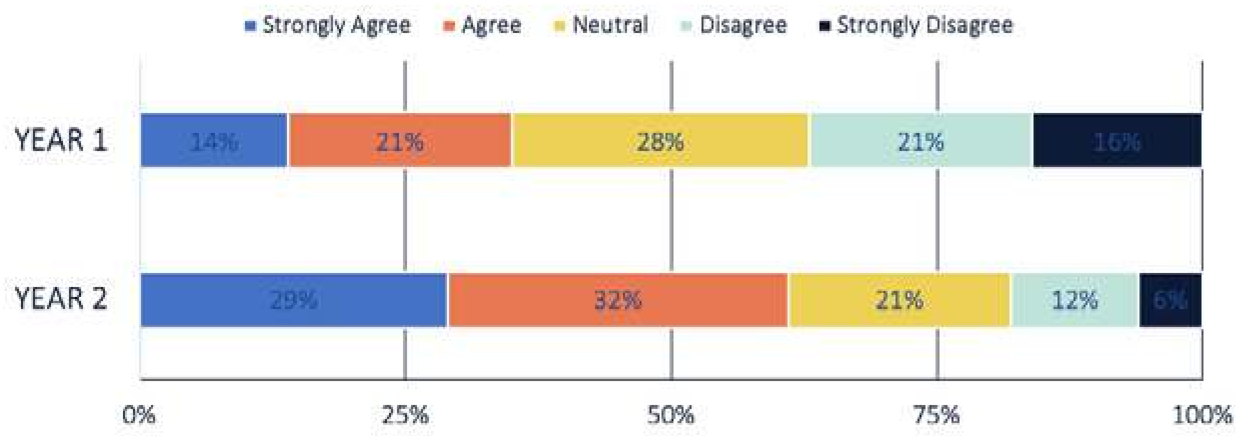
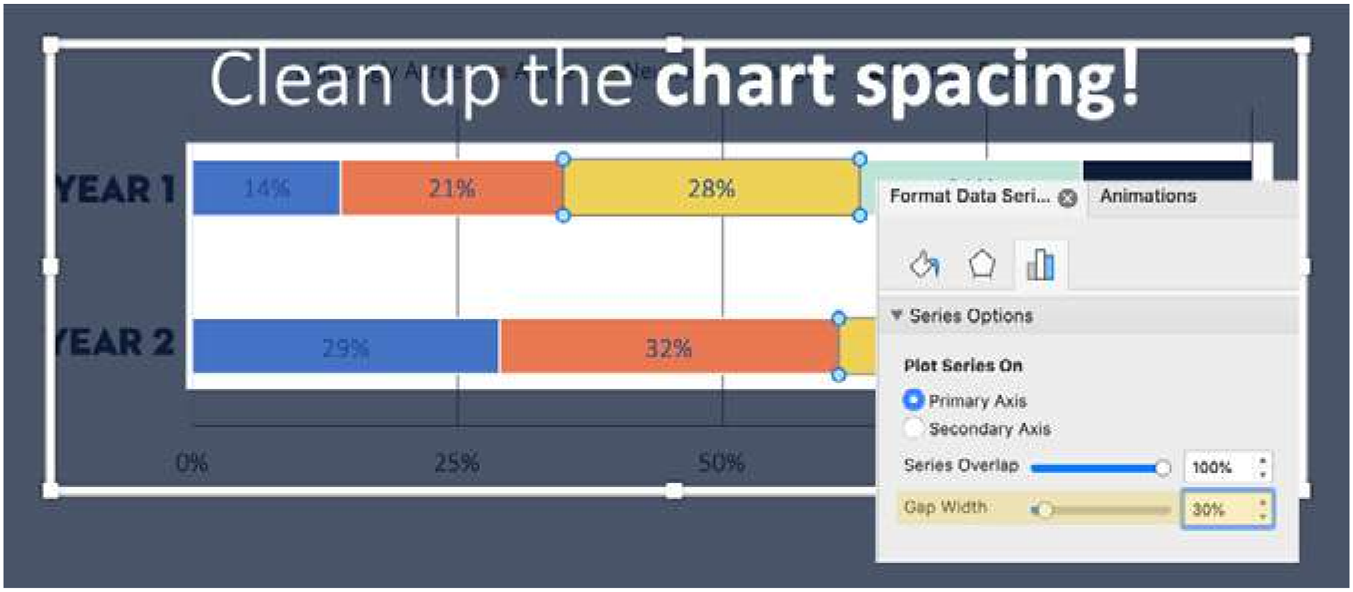


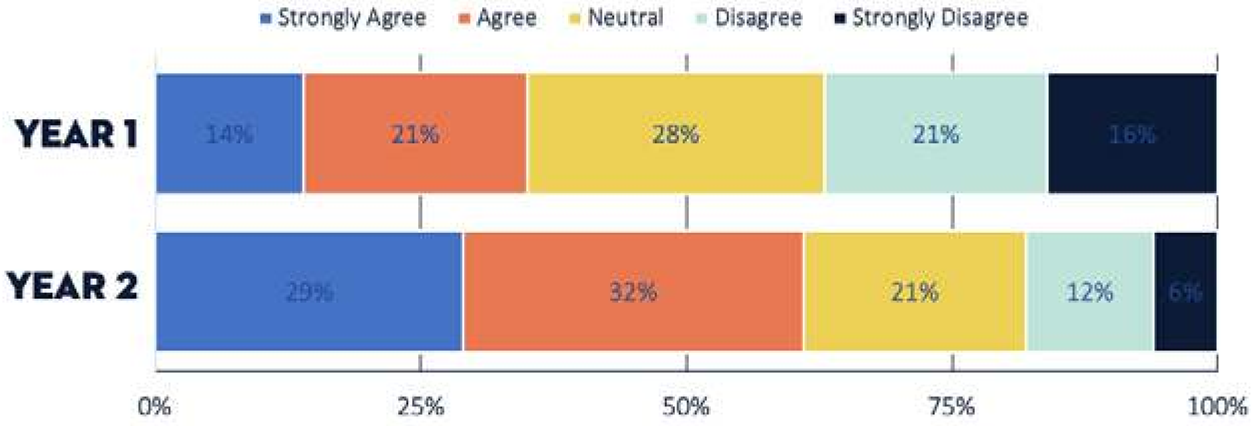
Data Visualization

Then, clean up the chart **spacing**.

BEFORE



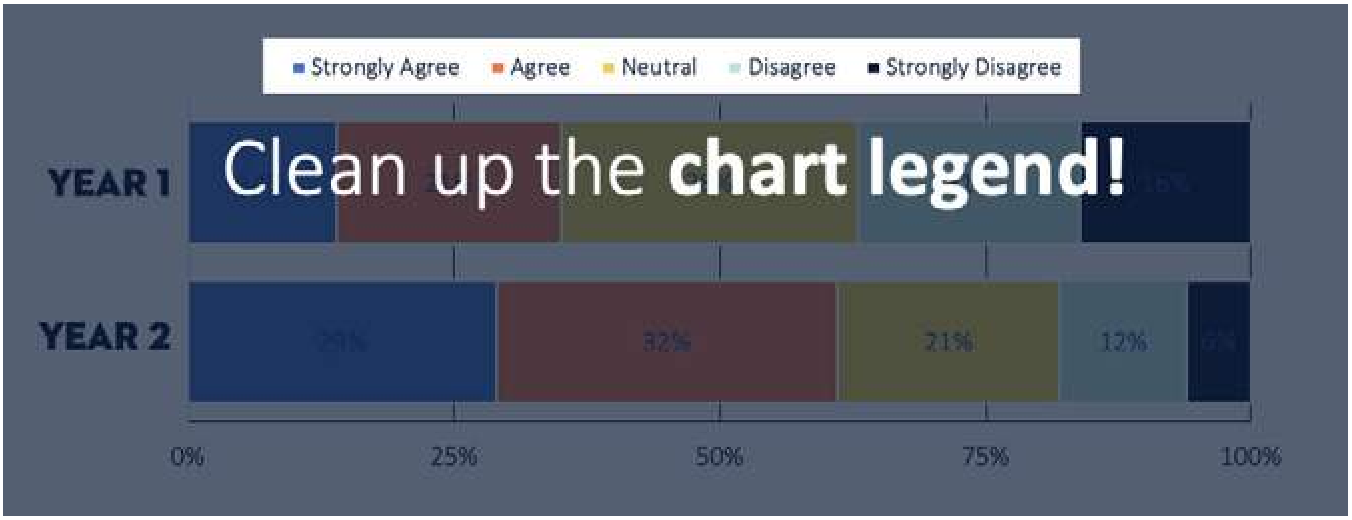
AFTER



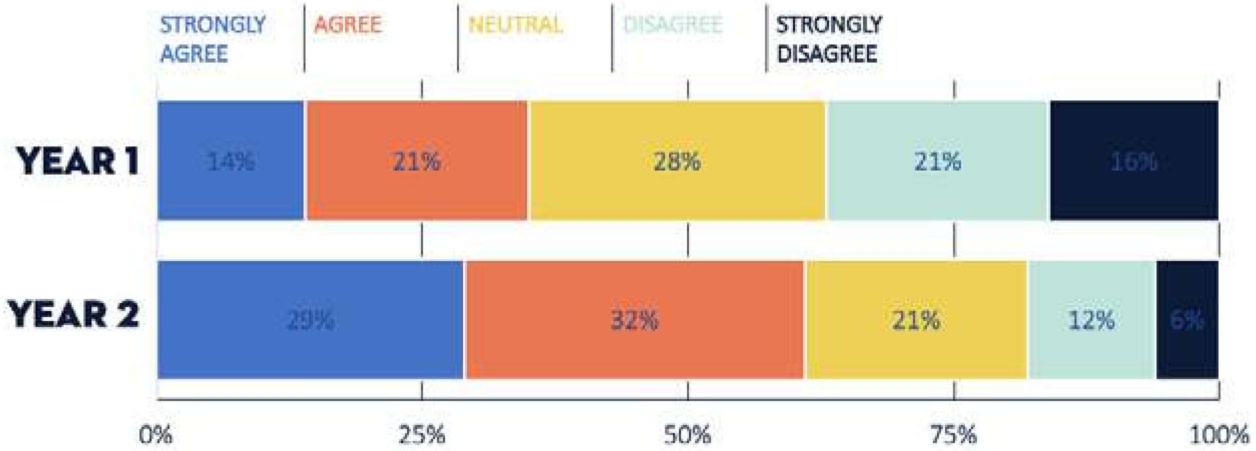
Data Visualization

Then clean up those labels and legends. **PRO TIP:** Cover up the Y and X axis labels that come in Excel or Google Sheets or whatever you're using and replace them with format-friendly tables and text boxes. PowerPoint makes this really easy! And you can do the same with your legend, streamlining it by replacing it with a simple, clean table.

BEFORE



AFTER

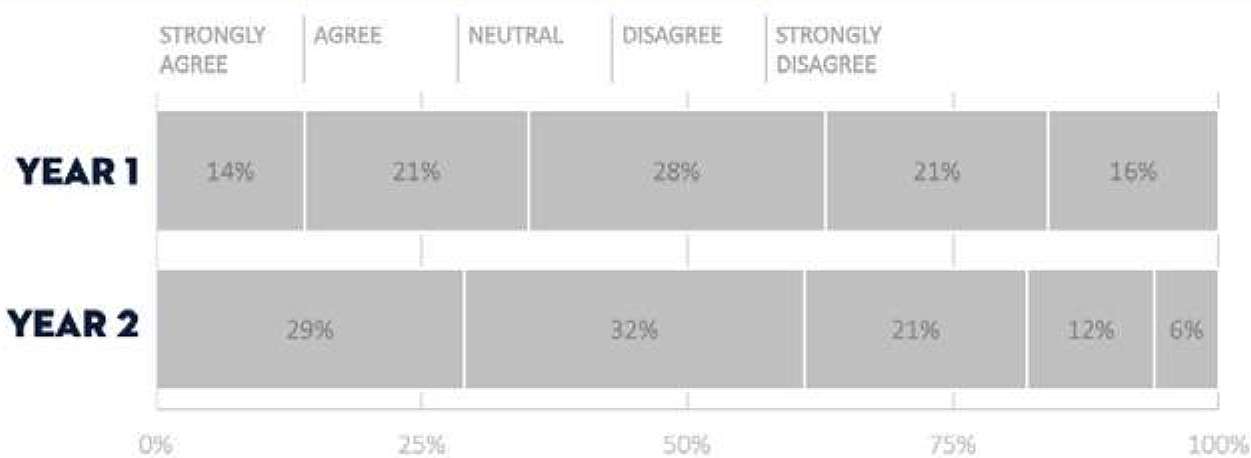


Data Visualization

2. Use COLOR.

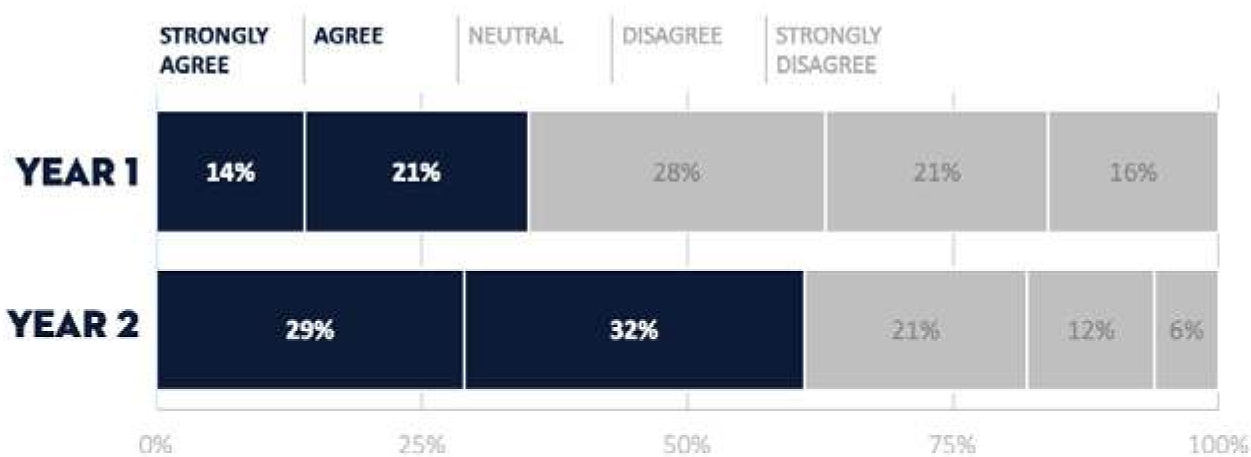
Using more color does not automatically lead to a better data visualization. You want to use color very intentionally to help highlight the key trend or takeaway in the chart—this makes it 10x easier for your audience to understand the data and the point you're specifically calling out.

Start by graying out the entire chart.



3. Use CONTRAST.

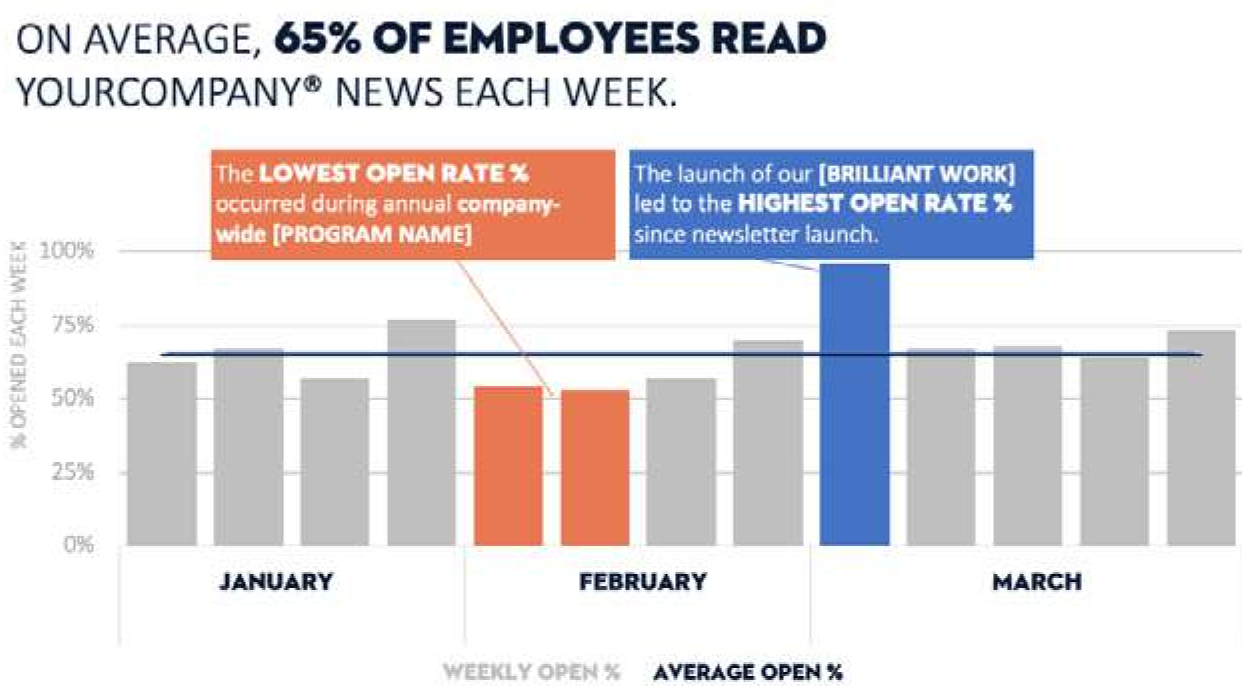
Once you are dealing with a blank canvas, bring your main point(s) into the foreground with a contrasting color. Using a dark color against a light gray will automatically draw the eye to what is dark bold.



Data Visualization

4. Add CONTEXT.

We *really* want to make sure our audience understands the key takeaways in our data. So tell them. Add the main point or finding in a text box to your chart. Write a really descriptive title, bolding out the key stat. Leave no room for misinterpretation. For example:



Data Visualization Resources

Some of our favorite tools for creating our visualizations are:

- PowerPoint (Keynote or Google Slides also work)
- Canva
- Adobe Spark

Need a hand thinking through which type of chart to use for your data visualization? Storytelling with Data has you covered.

Telling the Story

Once you've collected your data and have chosen the right graph to depict your key learning or trend, it's time to put it all together and share your data story.

Data and numbers can feel daunting. But this is where you shine as a communicator, by keeping messages crisp and concise. You don't want to overwhelm your audience with *every* data point and number when you share your results. Your expertise as a communications pro sets you up for success when sharing your results.

Here are four things to remember when telling the story:

1. **Consider your audience.** Remember that you'll want to give high level detail to executive leaders, moderate detail to stakeholders (e.g. HR team), and more detail to your internal comms team (see page 23). And just like writing and targeting communications, you'll want to match the tone, level of detail, and content to the audience.

2. **Remember the objectives.** Your HR team cares about their specific campaign or communications. They care about their department's goals. But your senior leaders likely want to know if you are reaching your business objectives or not. And they want to see that you know *why*.

3. **Including a solid executive level summary of your data is often understated.** Luckily, you *are* a kick-ass writer. It's not about showing your leadership a bunch of graphs, they want the takeaway and to know that your action plan is based on analysis.

4. **Ask or Tell.** For your presentation, remembering to communicate the objectives and goals is critical, but don't lose sight of your desired outcome. Are you presenting an ask or a tell? For instance, is the data guiding you to ask for additional support or resources to improve the results of an initiative? Or is it telling the outcome of a campaign or effort led by your team? Clarity at the beginning of the presentation will help frame the discussion.

ABOUT BRILLIANT INK

Brilliant Ink is the foremost expert on Employee Experiences – assessing them, designing them, measuring them and working with the best companies in the world to create them. We believe every employee deserves a meaningful experience at work, where they feel seen, heard, valued, and affirmed.

Our work is dedicated to helping companies generate meaningful business results and improved engagement by communicating with employees in a way that inspires them to engage, connect and take action.

Our team has backgrounds as varied as recruiting, HR, training, data analytics, graphic design, project management, and internal communications. We'll partner with you to examine and improve experiences throughout the entire employee lifecycle, from hire to retire.

Invest in the most critical moments of your employee lifecycle, and you'll improve the employee experience, engagement, performance and on-the-job bliss. We love when everyone wins!

LET'S STAY IN TOUCH!

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BRILLIANT INK

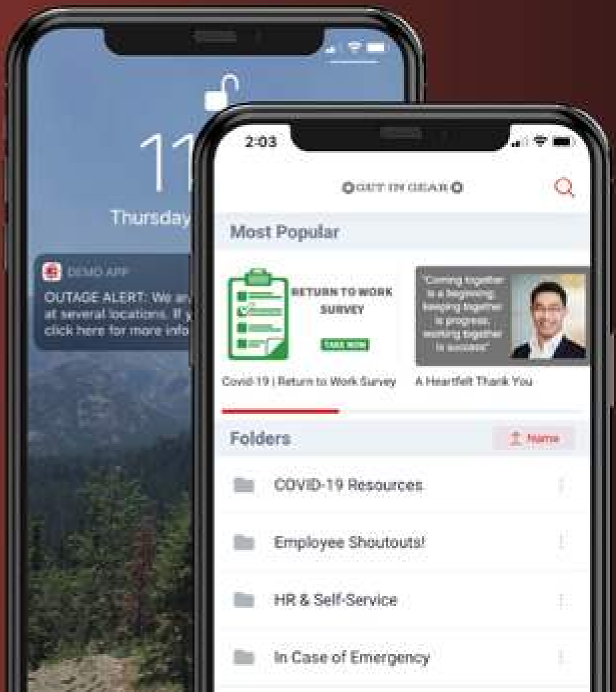
About theEMPLOYEEapp

theEMPLOYEEapp was created by communications and HR professionals to address the challenges organizations face communicating with a dispersed and deskless workforce. theEMPLOYEEapp is an internal communication and engagement solution that allows workers to have fast and easy access to the information, documents, and resources they need to succeed in their work.

Our app allows you to target information to your employees when and where they need it on their smartphone, tablet, or computer, and empower leaders and frontline managers to engage and activate employees across the organization. Unlike most traditional communications channels, theEMPLOYEEapp creates a customized, branded experience for employees, encouraging your workforce to join together in a single, centralized channel.

Our Mission is to enable the effortless flow of meaningful information for organizations driven by frontline workers.

Request a Demo



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