Communication Audit

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HRMN 302 7380 Organizational Communication (2185)
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Facilitator

EXPERIENCE:

Change Management	12 years
Performance Management	15 years
Leadership Development	5 years
Employee Relations	18 years
Coaching	8 years

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Introduction

PURPOSE:
A communication audit was performed within Grace Christian Academy of Maryland (GCA), via an electronic survey, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the academy's internal and external communications.

OVERVIEW:
The results of the electronic survey revealed how GCA's stockholders felt about how information was received, sent, and transmitted within and without the academy.

Upon conducting an analysis of the survey results, a challenge within the academy's communication structure was identified and recommendations were formulated to address this challenge.

Background

Grace Christian Academy of Maryland (GCA) is a college preparatory academy located in Waldorf, Maryland that has been in operation for over 30 years. The academy offers students a Christian – based curriculum designed around three domains that serve as keys to preparing students for a successful life in the 21st century (Grace Christian Academy, n.d.):

Grace Christian Academy (n.d.) Students learning photograph

Academics

Professional Growth Skills

Maturity of Character

Faculty & Staff Demographics

Administrative Staff
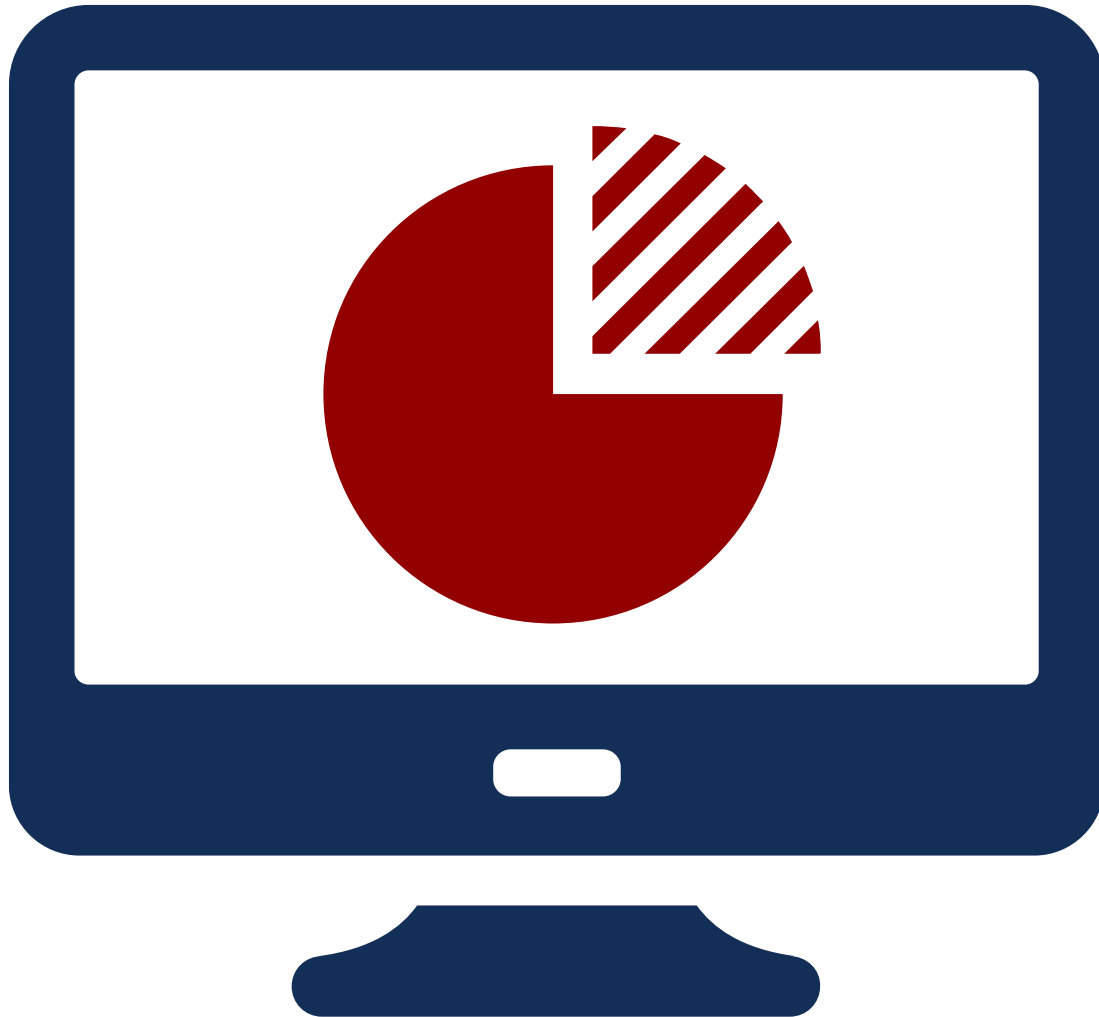
9 Members

Support Staff

6 Members

Full-time Teaching Staff

36 Members

Part-time Teaching Staff

2 Members

Freepiker (n.d.) Academic staff clipart

Survey Administration

SURVEY POPULATION:
The electronic survey was administered online via SurveyMonkey on July 17 to **8** of GCA's on-site staff members including:

- 2 administrative staff members
- 2 support staff members
- 2 full-time teachers
- 2 part-time teachers

While an equal number of employees were surveyed from each department of the academy, the GCA employees who participated in the survey also represented various age groups, ethnicities, and genders.
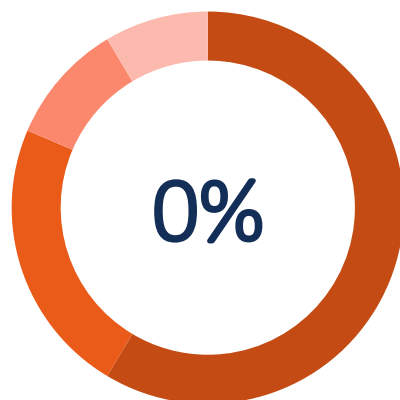
Survey Response Rate

July 17

12.5%
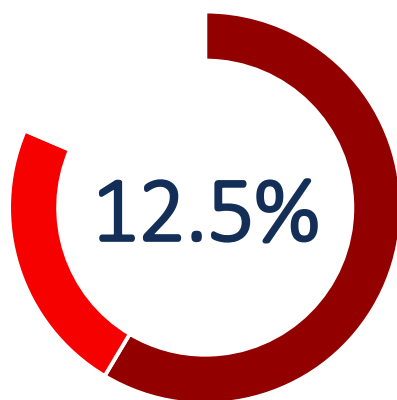
1 participant responded on July 17; this is the same day that the survey was distributed.

24 Hours

0%

0 participants responded on July 18; this is within 24 hours of the survey being distributed.
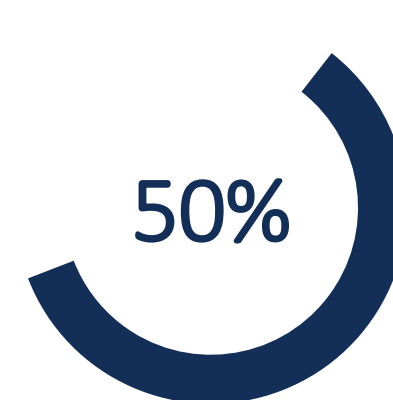
48 Hours

37.5%
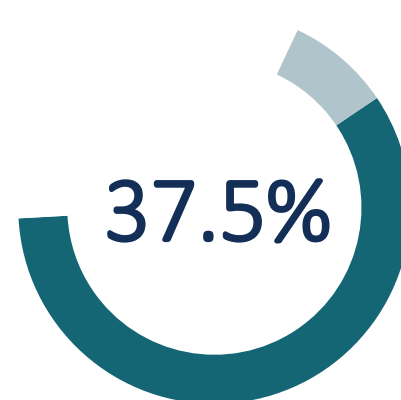
3 participants responded on July 19; this is within 48 hours of the survey being distributed.

72 Hours

50%

4 participants responded on July 20; this is within 72 hours of the survey being distributed.

Survey Analysis

S — Strengths

- Effective communication concerning general job tasks.
- Open-communication platform for requesting information related to completing job tasks.

W — Weaknesses

- Low communication concerning job requirements.
- No platform for communicating job-related challenges.
- No platform for providing feedback on managerial performance.

O — Opportunities

- Provide an effective employee feedback process.
- Create a platform for addressing employee complaints and challenges.
- Provide platform for communicating role-related expectations and benchmarks.

T — Threats

- Risk of failing to obtain valuable feedback from employees.
- Risk of attrition due to inadequately addressing employee issues.
- Risk of not adequately training employees and meeting job-related objectives.

Communication Challenge

Low average scores for questions #9, #10, #11, #13, and #14 indicated that GCA had a communication issue in the area of Sending Information to Others. In particular, the following had the lowest average scores respectively:

- Communicating job-related complaints
- Reporting on job requirements
- Evaluating the performance of direct supervisors
- Reporting job-related challenges
- Asking for the clarification of job-related instructions

Overall, GCA needs to take advantage of the opportunities to address this challenge as a means of improving internal and external communications and creating a competitive edge for the academy.

Recommendations

Design and implement a 360-degree appraisal feedback process.

- Employees can evaluate themselves and receive feedback from their peers and supervisors; this type of feedback is linked to high levels of employee satisfaction and productivity (Bigham, Hively, & Toole, 2014, p. 213).
- Managers can receive feedback from their subordinates; this will create opportunities for leadership improvements and cultivates a culture of effective communication and value (Bigham, Hively, & Toole, 2014, p. 213).
- System can measure job-specific learning outcomes and provide a single score at the end of each learning process by which employees could measure their mastery of role-related skills (Tee & Ahmed, 2014, p. 580).
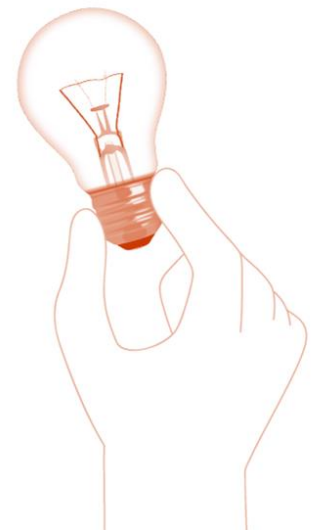
Recommendations

Implement a well-designed Professional Development Support Program.

- Program will help enhance both employee-and-employee and employee-and-manager communication.
- Program will provide support for work-related challenges and will be significantly aligned with the employee's specific needs (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 1999, p. 257).

Implement employee complaint procedures.

- Will provide employees with a constructive vehicle by which to communicate their complaints (Lornudd, Tafvelin, von Thiele Schwarz, & Bergman, 2015, p. 548).
- Will enhance employee-manager communication by providing and open-door environment in times of conflict and crisis (Lornudd, Tafvelin, von Thiele Schwarz, & Bergman, 2015, p. 551).
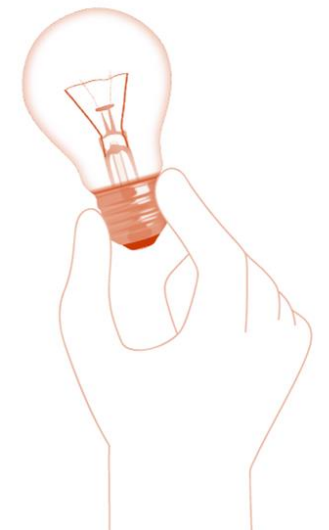
Conclusion

This communication audit was designed to assess the effectiveness of GCA's current internal and external communications. By soliciting the opinions of eight of GCA's stakeholders – they represented a variety of demographics within the school's staff – a key communication gap was discovered and analyzed. As a result, strategies for addressing both the internal and external components of the challenge have been offered. And by taking the time to work through implementing a 360-degree appraisal feedback process, a Professional Development Support Program, and employee complaint procedures, and by keeping employees updated throughout the process, GCA will be well on its way to adopting a comprehensive strategic communication plan that will help to guide all the communication efforts for the school in the future.

References

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Appendix: Survey Chart

Questions	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8	Average
1	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	**2.625**
2	3	3	3	3	4	4	2	3	**3.125**
3	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	**2.875**
4	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	**2.5**
5	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	**2.75**
6	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	**1.25**
7	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	**1.625**

Questions	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8	Average
8	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	3	**3.375**
9	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	**1.625**
10	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	2	**2.375**
11	1	1	2	1	2	2	1	1	**1.375**
12	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	**3.125**
13	2	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	**1.75**
14	2	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	**2**

Questions	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8	Average
15	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	5	5	N/A	**4.67**
16	4	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	**4.5**
17	3	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	**3.375**
18	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	**4.25**
19	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	**4**
20	4	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	**3.625**
21	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	**4.125**
22	3	3	3	4	3	4	4	4	**3.5**
23	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	2	**2.5**

Questions	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8	Average
24	N/A	N/A	4	N/A	N/A	4	4	N/A	**4**
25	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	3	**3.25**
26	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	**4**
27	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	3	**3.75**
28	3	3	3	4	3	4	3	3	**3.25**
29	2	2	3	2	2	3	3	3	**2.5**

Questions	Person 1	Person 2	Person 3	Person 4	Person 5	Person 6	Person 7	Person 8	Average
30	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	**3.375**
31	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	**3.25**
32	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	**4.25**
33	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	**2.5**
34	2	2	1	2	2	1	1	1	**1.5**
35	5	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	**4.5**
36	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	3	**2.375**
37	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	**1**

KEY
Receiving Information from Others (1-7)
Sending Information to Others (8-14)
Sources of Information (15-23)
Timeliness (24-29)
Channels of Information (30-37)