

Cuyahoga Community College Internal Communications Committee Charter

Background

Both AQIP, our accreditation body, and the College's Strategic Plan have made improving internal communications at Tri-C a top priority.

Internal communications is defined as "the function responsible for effective communication among participants within an organization." In other words, the way employees communicate within Tri-C.

Tri-C has taken the initial steps toward improving internal communications. It hired an Internal Communications Manager, who spent a year conducting an audit of the College's current system. The audit included one-on-one interviews with top leadership, as well as each campus president and their top leaders. Employee focus groups were also conducted on all campuses, which were made up of a cross section of all employees. Finally, an all-employee survey was created based on the focus group findings. Based on the results of that survey and the interviews, a plan was created for improving Internal Communications at Tri-C.

Tri-C used an outside firm with expertise in internal communications at major corporations and institutions. It worked with the Internal Communications Manager in a three phase process.

- Phase 1: Research and Discovery
- Phase 2: Create a Plan
- Phase 3: Implementation of Plan

The implementation will be a multi-year and on-going project. A major component of the implementation plan is the creation of an Internal Communications Committee, which is charged with implementing the plan.

As a result, the College is committed to building a culture in which internal communications can become embedded into all College activities. This change in culture is intended to promote a structured approach to identifying and managing the College's employee communications through an intentional internal communications infrastructure. The fundamental goal will be to ensure that important decisions within the College will be communicated to all employees, and that employees will be able to communicate back to the administration, creating a culture of two way communication.

The Internal Communications Committee

Central to improving the internal communications framework at the College is the creation of an Internal Communications Committee (“ICC Committee”).

Mission

The ICC will serve in an advisory role to the Executive Vice Presidents. ICC members will collaborate to identify existing employee communications vehicles within the College and create new ones. The ICC will develop recommendations for improving those vehicles and create official guidelines on how those vehicles should be used. Essentially, its goal is to help Tri-C:

- Create a clear and coordinated infrastructure
- Develop policies and practice guidelines—including stronger oversight and approval—for orderly, college-wide communications
- Rationalize existing communications media

Membership

The ICC is a standing committee and its membership is appointed by the President. Members will be appointed because of their leadership roles within the College and their unique familiarity with their respective areas.

Membership will encompass College-wide representation including, but not limited to, academic, administrative, auxiliary, finance, facilities development and operations, legal, IT, campus police, workforce and economic development, and business continuity. The Vice President of Marketing and Communications will serve as Chair.

The ICC has no executive powers or supervisory functions. Rather, it will function in a review and recommendation role to the President and EVPs.

Duties and Responsibilities

Initially, in year one, the ICC shall undertake the following initiatives:

- Define an internal communications infrastructure
- Create an employee feedback mechanism
- Create guidelines for the Hi Viz system
- Create a College-wide e-mail structure and policy
- Create guidelines to standardize print and electronic newsletters
- Increase internal meeting efficiency

Meetings

The Committee will meet monthly or more frequently if deemed necessary. Non-Committee members may be invited to join ad-hoc subcommittees and meetings as necessary.