

 UK EDITION

2025 Employee Communication Impact Study

Change, crisis, and leadership: How employees in the UK perceive internal corporate communication

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The effectiveness of change communication and the clarity of leadership communication are closely connected to employees' overall **job satisfaction**. In addition, the perceived quality of internal communication has a significant **impact on employee turnover**. This study highlights strengths and weaknesses in sensitive areas such as change, crisis, and leadership communication. In particular, **structural deficits** can be observed for non-desk employees in many organizations in the UK.

1.

Summary and key findings

A volatile economic environment, ongoing restructuring, workforce reductions, and a polarized society – companies and their employees are **facing times of uncertainty**.

In this climate of volatility, **trust becomes essential** for organizational survival and success. Effective internal communication is now the foundation upon which that trust is built.

Unfortunately, many companies in the UK are falling short. While employees may express satisfaction with certain aspects of their employment, such as coworker relationships and time off, our data exposes a deep-seated communication problem: only **5% of non-desk employees in the UK are “very satisfied”** with an additional 16% who report being “rather satisfied” with internal communication, and a significant **49% rate communication quality as “only fair” or “poor.”**

This erosion of trust, fueled by poor communication, poses **a serious threat to organizational stability and employee engagement**. This is especially true for employees who don’t work at a desk or with a computer — the very people who are often the last to receive important updates.

The 2025 International Employee Communication Impact Study examines how employees in Australia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States perceive internal communication in times of change, crisis, and uncertainty. **This report focuses on the results from the UK.** The full international report is available at the following link: staffba.se/impact-study-25



Here are the key takeaways from the responses from employees in the UK:

1. Non-desk employees are underserved

- ✓ Only **21% of non-desk employees** in the UK are very (5%) or rather satisfied (16%) with the quality of internal communication. And 49% rate the communication quality as “only fair” or “poor.”
- ✓ In contrast, **49% of desk-based employees** are very (11%) or rather satisfied (39%) with the quality of internal communication.

2. Poor communication drives turnover

- ✓ **60% of employees** who are considering leaving their jobs cite poor internal communication as a contributing factor.

3. Regional differences in channel adoption

- ✓ **Intranet adoption rates** (as main source of information) among desk-based employees (organizations with more than 1000 employees) vary significantly across regions: Germany 61%, Australia 50%, Switzerland 46%, **UK 45%**, US 39%, Austria 38%.

- ✓ **SMS adoption for crisis comms** also varies significantly, with 17% in Australia, 15% in the US, 13% in Austria, **9% in the UK** and Switzerland, and only 3% in Germany.

4. Trust starts with the immediate supervisor

- ✓ The immediate supervisor is the **most-trusted source of information** for employees overall.
- ✓ However, those who use an **employee app** trust it even more, making it their top-rated channel for trustworthy communication.

5. Connection between clear comms and job satisfaction

- ✓ When employees report that leadership communication about vision and strategy is very clear, 92% say they are very or somewhat happy in their roles. That's **almost four times higher** than among those who state communication is not clear at all (25%).
- ✓ The communication skills of managers and immediate supervisors are rated positively across all regions surveyed — but with some regional differences.

6. Digital channels for crisis comms: effective but not widely used

- ✓ 46% feel very or somewhat **supported by their organization during a crisis**. This number is lower for non-desk workers (31%) and higher for those who receive crisis comms via workplace collaboration tools (70%), SMS (65%), company newsletters (65%), their immediate supervisor (61%), employee app (57%), or intranet (54%).
- ✓ Nevertheless, a lot of organizations still don't use modern communication tools for crisis communication.

7. Feedback disparity of desk and non-desk

- ✓ **45% of desk-based employees in the UK** feel that their feedback is considered (somewhat) during change processes — but **only 33% of non-desk employees** feel that way.
- ✓ 39% of non-desk employees in the UK say their **feedback is never considered**. Including the 27% who say their feedback is only occasionally considered, the data

shows that **two-thirds (67%) of non-desk employees do not feel heard**.

8. Loneliness at work is a communication issue

- ✓ **15% of employees in the UK feel lonely at work** either always (3%) or often (12%) — with another 29% who say they sometimes feel lonely.
- ✓ There is a **connection between the quality of internal communication and loneliness** at the workplace: when communication is rated “excellent,” 49% say they “never” feel lonely — compared to only 17% among those who rate communication as “only fair” or “poor.”
- ✓ Companies can do more to connect their workforce: 31% of employees feel their workplace does “not really” or “not at all” foster **meaningful connections**.

For internal communication teams, the findings in this report are both a wake-up call and an opportunity. There's work to be done — but also a clear path forward.

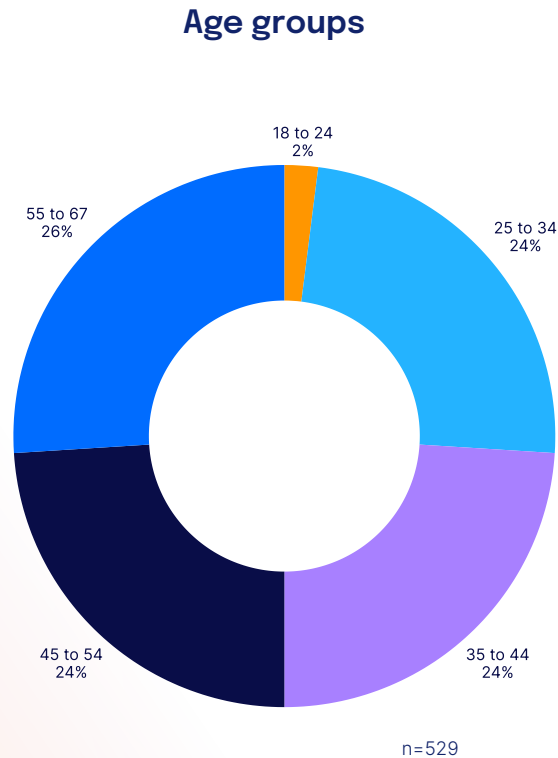
2.

Introduction and study design

The 2025 Employee Communication Impact Study by Staffbase and YouGov examines various areas of internal corporate communication and how they are perceived by employees in the UK. Employee experience and the impact of communication, change communication, crisis communication, and leadership communication are the focus topics of this study.

We collected **529 responses from employees in the UK** through online interviews conducted between February 12 and 19, 2025. The data was analyzed using descriptive methods, and observed differences were tested for statistical significance.

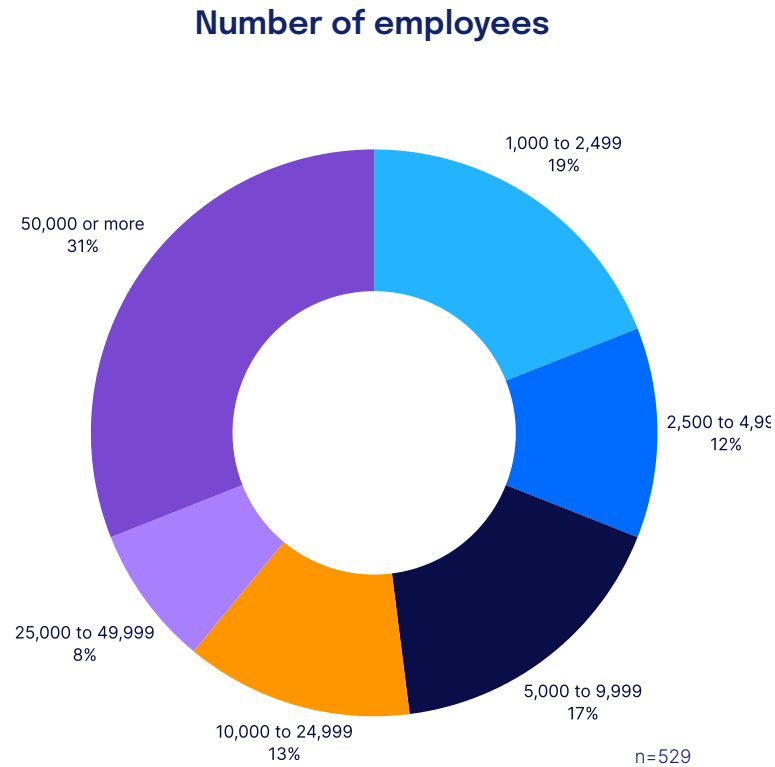
This study includes responses from employees across a wide range of industries. Of the participants, 81% work full-time and 19% part-time. The following chart provides an overview of the age distribution.



Looking at how people work, the distribution is as follows:

- 51% of respondents work exclusively or mainly at a computer (“desk-based employees”).
- 28% work mostly or entirely without a computer (“non-desk employees”).
- 20% split their work equally between computer-based and non-computer-based tasks.

The following chart shows the distribution of company sizes.



The UK survey was part of a broader study, for which a total of 3,574 responses were collected from employees in Australia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The international report, which includes aggregated and comparative data across all regions studied, is available via the following link or QR code: staffba.se/impact-study-25



3.

Employee experience and comms impact

Quality of internal communications

Good news first: A lot of employees in the UK are happy with many aspects of their jobs. Especially with the relationships with their coworkers (78%) being the number one answer by far on a list of 14 aspects. And this is true for desk-based employees as well as for non-desk workers. But one thing that really sets them apart is **internal communication**.

49% of non-desk workers rate the quality of internal communication as “only fair” or “poor.”



While 49% of desk-based employees are very or rather satisfied with the quality of internal communication, **only 21% of their non-desk colleagues** feel the same.

The picture becomes even clearer when looking at the question: “Overall, how would you rate the quality of the news and information you receive from your employer?”

First of all, the results show that many internal communicators are doing a great job. Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65%) rate internal communication as “good” (29%), “very good” (26%), or even “excellent” (10%).

At the same time, however, the findings also reveal that one-third (34%) perceive the quality of communication as only “fair” or “poor.” **Among non-desk employees, this figure rises to 49%** — compared to 27% amongst desk-based employees. Only 21% of non-desk employees rate the quality of news and information as “excellent” (7%) or “very good” (14%). Whereas 42% of their desk-based colleagues rate it as “excellent” (10%) or “very good” (32%).

Frequency of receiving news & information



How would you rate the frequency of receiving news and information from your employer? n = 529

Quality of news & information



Overall, how do you rate the quality of news and information you get from your employer? n = 529



Overall, employees in the UK appreciate the work of internal communicators and the content quality — especially desk-based employees. However, there is a clear quality gap between desk and non-desk employees. This is where internal communication must focus in the future: addressing the imbalance and placing greater emphasis on disadvantaged but central target groups.

Channel usage, preference, and trust

The number-one answer from employees in the UK (and also globally) to the question “Where do you get most of your news and information about your company or employer?” is “Email or memo from management” (55%), followed by “My immediate supervisor” (40%), “company intranet” (37%), and “coworkers” (36%).

If we look only at the group of respondents who work with a computer and thus potentially have access to the intranet, significant differences emerge between the individual countries. The following figures show intranet usage among desk-based employees:



United Kingdom: 45 %



Germany: 61 %



United States: 39 %



Australia: 50 %



Switzerland: 46 %



Austria: 38 %

The immediate supervisor is the most-trusted source of information for employees overall. But if they use an employee app, this channel has the highest trust score.

Base: Desk-based employees in companies with more than 1000 employees: n D = 548; n AU = 252; n UK = 271; n US = 532; n AT = 48; n CH = 26 (note: low number of cases for CH)

Other digital internal communication channels rank further down the list: company newsletters at 26%, employee apps at 20%, and digital info screens at 6%.

When asked about their preferred sources of information, employees give a ranking similar to the channels they actually use. More revealing, however, are the trust levels.

The immediate supervisor is the most trusted source of information for employees in the UK: 55% of respondents trust them “a great deal.” The company intranet (47%), email and memos from management (44%), company newsletters (43%), employee apps (41%), and workplace collaboration tools (39%) also score high on trust.*

Among those who use an employee app as one of their main information sources, it’s also the most-trusted channel. It ranks number one with 51%, followed by supervisors (50%) and email or memos from management (43%).

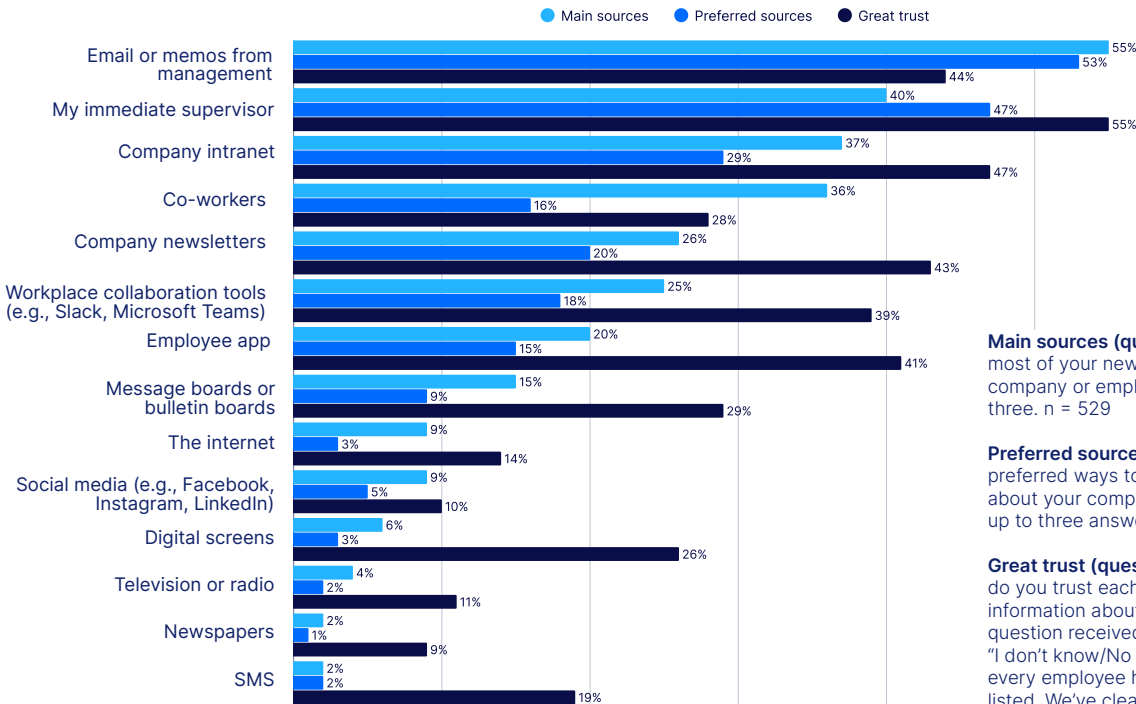
In contrast, external sources are trusted far less when it comes to employer-related information. TV or radio (11%), social media (10%), and newspapers (9%) all receive low trust scores — and 30% of employees say they don’t trust newspapers at all.



Trust is built where communication is close, consistent, and digitally accessible — via direct managers, the intranet, email, or the employee app. Companies that strategically strengthen these channels and adapt them to the needs of their audiences can establish credible sources of information and improve internal alignment.

**Note: All numbers without “I don’t know” responses. More context on upcoming page.*

Channel usage, preference, and trust



Main sources (question 1): Where do you get most of your news and information about your company or employer? Please select the top three. n = 529

Preferred sources (question 2): What are your preferred ways to receive news and information about your company and your job? Please select up to three answers. n = 529

Great trust (question 3): Overall, how much do you trust each of the following sources of information about your employer? (Note: This question received numerous responses stating “I don’t know/No answer” because not every employee has access to all of the sources listed. We’ve cleaned up the data and eliminated these responses to get to a better comparison between communication channels. The displayed percentages show the response “A great deal.”) n = 293–517

The impact of good (and poor) comms

We asked employees who are actively thinking about changing jobs: “To what extent do the following factors contribute to your likelihood of leaving your current job?”

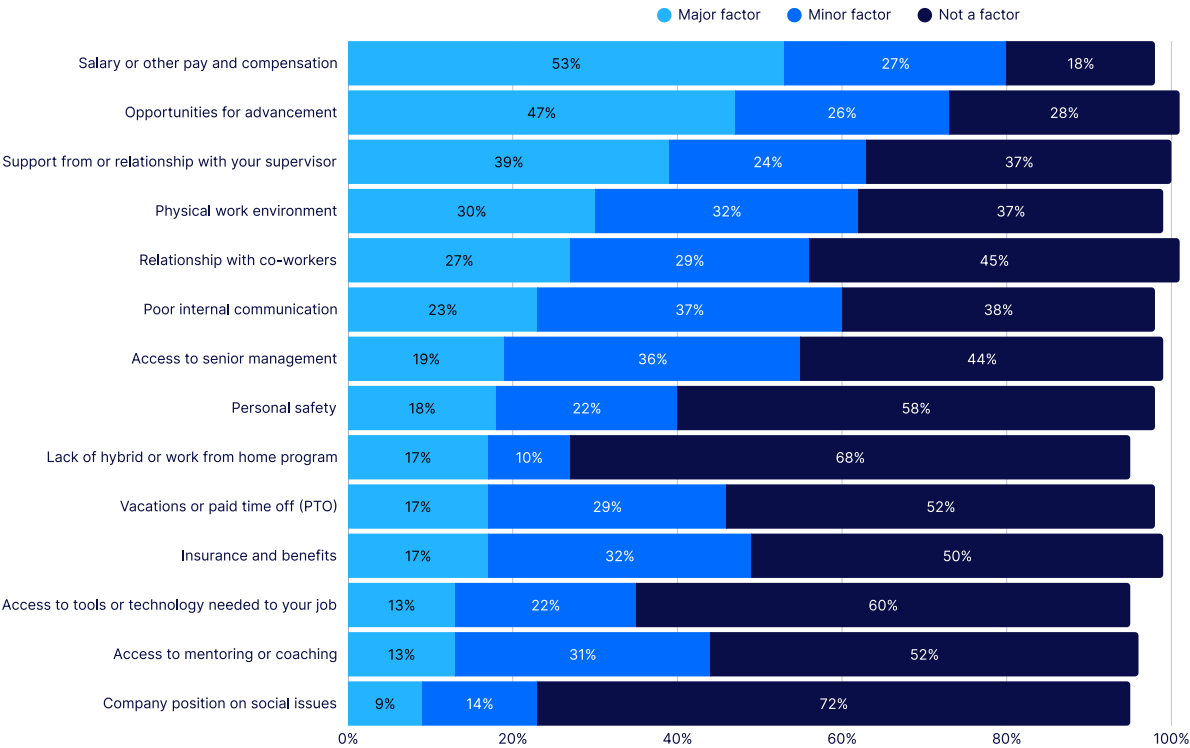
Salary is the top reason for turnover: 53% consider it a major factor, and another 27% say it’s a minor one. “Opportunities for advancement” (47% + 26%) and “Support from or relationship with your supervisor” (39% + 24%) follow — but “Poor internal communication” also stands out. For the latter, the figures are as follows:

- Major factor: 23%
- Minor factor: 37%
- Not a factor: 38%

It’s worth noting that poor communication is a much more common driver of employee turnover than factors like insurance and benefits, paid time off, personal safety concerns, or the company’s stance on social issues.

Poor internal communication is one of the biggest drivers of turnover.

Impact on decision of leaving the current job



To what extent do the following factors contribute to your likelihood of leaving your current job? (responses for “Don’t know/No answer” not shown in chart)
n = 98, i.e., respondents who somewhat or very unlikely wish to stay at their current jobs in the next 12 months

The connection between communication and employee retention also becomes obvious when comparing employees' stated likelihood of staying with their company against their assessment of communication quality:

- Among employees who rate internal communication as “excellent,” 90% say they are “very likely” (75%) or “somewhat likely” (16%) to stay with their employer.
- Among those who rate communication as “poor,” only 28% say they are “very likely” (16%) or “somewhat likely” (11%) to stay.

Internal communication does not only influence employee turnover. The majority of employees say it has at least some or a strong influence on:

- “Understanding my company’s vision and mission” (67%)
- “Feeling motivated to do my best work” (62%)
- “My overall productivity at work” (55%)



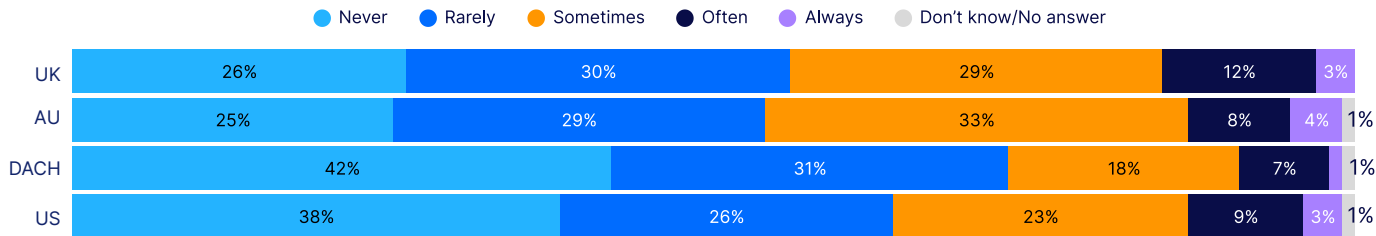
Communication quality is closely linked to other central aspects of the employee experience, such as productivity, motivation, and understanding the company’s vision and mission. Employees who rate internal communication quality as excellent are significantly less likely to plan a job change. The impact of good — or poor — communication is key to the overall success of the organization.

The “loneliness epidemic”

The issue of loneliness as an international phenomenon and serious health risk has increasingly come into focus for governments and health organizations in recent years.*

We wanted to find out how often employees feel lonely and whether their workplace fosters genuine social connection. The following chart shows the results for the UK in an international comparison.

Companies can do better at fostering meaningful connections at work.



How often do you feel lonely at work? UK n = 529; AU n = 518; DACH n = 1483; US n = 1044

* See, for example, the report by the WHO Commission on Social Connection: www.who.int/groups/commission-on-social-connection

In other areas of our survey, such as communication quality, non-desk workers often report greater disadvantages. Interestingly, when it comes to loneliness in the workplace, there are no major differences.

In contrast to the workplace description, internal communication appears to have a stronger influence on workplace loneliness. Below is a comparison between those who rate communication as excellent or very good and those who rate it as only fair or poor.

How often do you feel lonely at work?

High-quality comms

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always



n = 191

Low-quality comms

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Always



n = 181

Companies themselves can do significantly more to foster meaningful interpersonal connections in the workplace. While 50% of respondents say their company does a good or very good job in this area, 31% report that this is “not really” or “not at all” the case.

4.

Change communication

Level of information and awareness

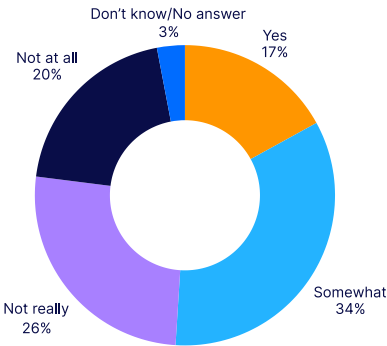
Do employees feel informed about change initiatives? Are they satisfied with the clarity of communication? And what channels do they find most effective?

Employees who feel well informed about changes are happier with their job.



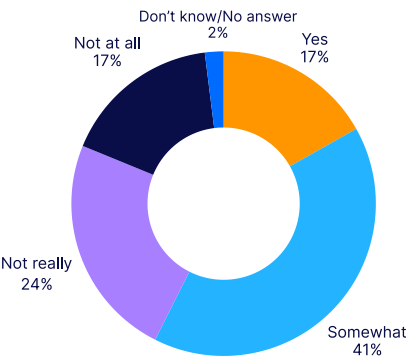
Do you feel well informed about the reasons behind recent company changes?

All employees



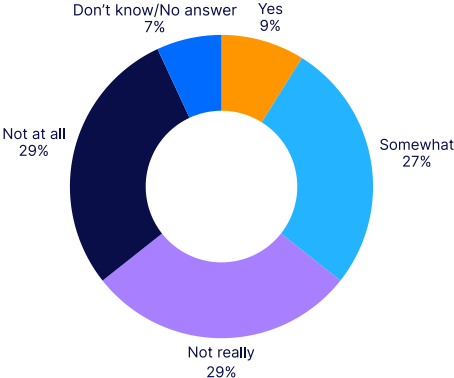
n = 529

Desk-based employees



n = 271

Non-desk employees



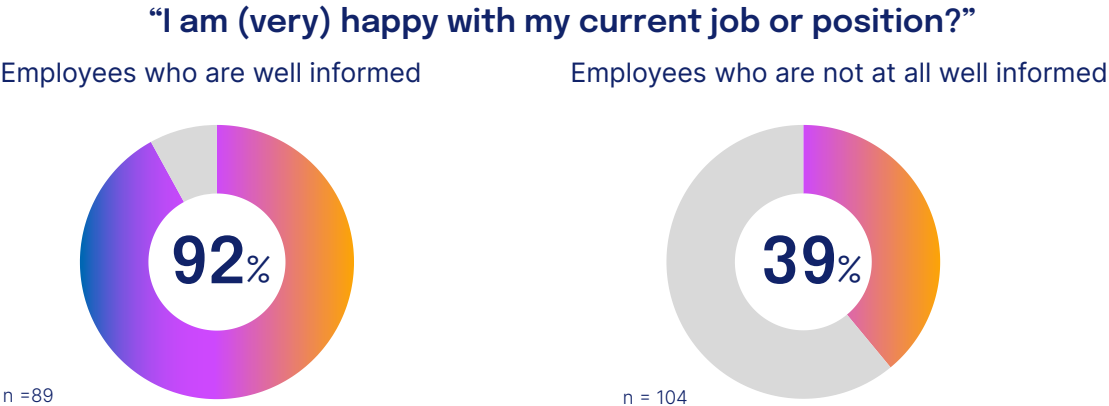
n = 150

The graphics above illustrate the dilemma of change communication: 17% of employees feel well informed and 34% “somewhat” well informed about the reasons behind recent company changes. On the other hand, 46% feel “not really” or “not at all” informed. Comparing the numbers for different workplace descriptions, we see that the numbers for non-desk employees are worse than those of desk-based employees. Most alarming: **58% of non-desk workers don’t feel well informed.**

Being well informed not only affects employees’ understanding of the change itself but also their overall job satisfaction and trust in the company. Our study shows a clear connection: 92% of those who feel well informed about changes are very or somewhat satisfied with their job — compared to only 39% of those who feel “not at all” well informed.

This connection also extends to internal communication channels: the better informed employees feel, the higher their trust in managers, the intranet, the employee app, and other internal channels. E.g., only 28% of those who feel “not at all” well informed trust their immediate supervisor “a great deal,” compared to 83% of those who feel well informed.

One possible explanation for why employees may not feel well informed is a lack of clarity in communication: one in three (33%) report being “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied” with the clarity of change communication — among non-desk workers it is even 42%.



Most effective channels for change communication

More than one in four employees (29%) say they almost always or often feel left out of important change-related information. With a set of strong internal channels in place, companies could reduce the risk of disengagement across their workforce.

So, which channels do employees find most effective for change-related communication in their company?

The results closely mirror those for trust in information sources. Once again, **email or memos from management, immediate supervisors, and the company intranet** make up the top three channels.

It's important to remember that not every company offers all of the internal communication channels on the list — except for management, supervisors, and coworkers. So let's take a closer look.

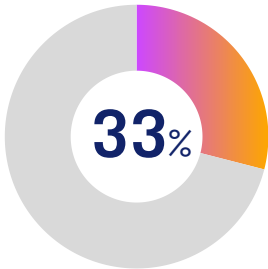
Email from management, supervisors, and the intranet are the top 3 channels for change comms.

Take **employee apps**, for example: 52% of those who name an employee app as one of their main sources of information also say that this is the most effective channel for change communication ranking it number one followed by the immediate supervisor at 45%.

The **intranet** performs even better: 57% of employees who use it as a main source consider it among the most effective channel for change communication — ranking it number two right behind **email or memos from management at 62%**.

As the undisputed leader we have email or memos from management ranked number 1 at 71% among those who use this channel as one of their main sources of information.

 Organizations that choose the right channels for change communication can effectively close information gaps. In particular, the intranet, employee apps, and email or memos from management show their full potential when actively used.



“I find it (very) difficult to find detailed information about changes affecting my work?”

Employee feedback

Many companies include phrases like “We value the opinions of our employees” or “The voice of our staff matters” in their corporate values.

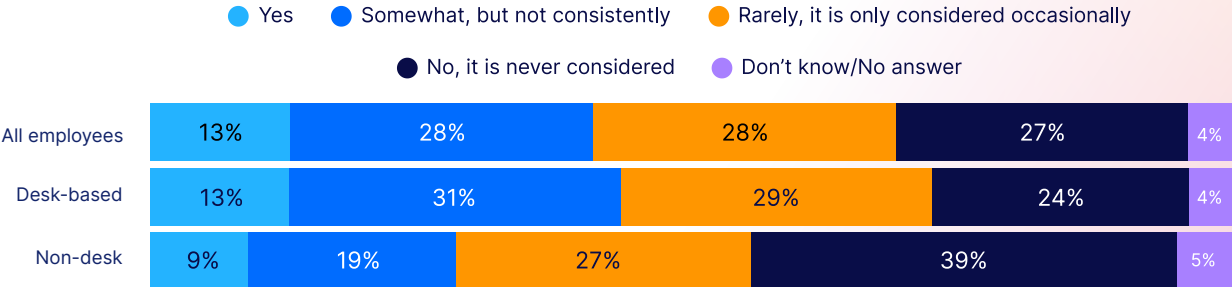
But how do employees actually feel about that? We asked: “Do you feel employee feedback is considered during change management processes?”

The majority of employees (55%) in the UK say “rarely” (28%) or “no, it is never considered” (27%). This is the worst result in comparison to all other countries in this study.

Feedback? The majority of employees say it goes unheard.

What stands out is the workplace comparison:

Consideration of employee feedback



Do you feel employee feedback is considered during change management processes? n “all employees” = 529; n “desk-based” = 271; n “non-desk” = 150

These results reveal a gap between desk and non-desk employees when it comes to feedback. Let’s take the responses to “No, it is never considered” as an example: while the figure for desk-based employees already stands at 24%, it is alarmingly higher for non-desk workers at 39%. Including the 27% who say their feedback is only occasionally considered, the data shows that **two-thirds (67%) of non-desk employees do not feel heard**.

 During times of change, companies rely on the support of their workforce. However, the results show that the majority of employees in the UK believe their feedback is rarely or never considered.

5.

Crisis communication

Quality of crisis communication

Whether it's a natural disaster, economic instability, a cyberattack, or an operational disruption — crises can have many causes. For leaders, employees, and communication teams, they always represent a significant challenge.

Still, the responses we see lean much more positive than negative. Nearly half (48%) rate their company's crisis communication as "excellent" or "good," while only 17% classify it as "poor" or "very poor," and 24% take a neutral stance.

Across industries, there are some differences worth highlighting.

Health care and social assistance (n = 71) stands out positively with 65% positive responses (17% above average). Educational services is slightly (+2%; n = 70) above average at 50%. On the other hand, the positive responses for **retail trade** are 8% below average with only 40% (n = 77). In **logistics, transportation, and warehousing** (n = 70) we see alarming results with only 31% positive responses (17% below average) and 30% negative responses rating crisis comms "poor" (16%) or "very poor" (14%).

Overall, crisis communication ratings lean more positive.

The best crisis comms channels

Our data suggests that the use of modern communication solutions and very active local managers lead to better ratings of crisis communication. The following channels all received a share of “excellent” or “very good” evaluations that are higher than the average crisis comms rating of 48%:

- Workplace collaboration tools: 66% (n = 92)
- Company newsletters: 65% (n = 62)
- Digital screens: 63% (n = 16; low number)
- Intranet: 62% (n = 127)
- Immediate supervisor: 62% (n = 218)
- SMS: 58% (n = 48)
- Email or memos from management: 57% (n = 262)
- Employee app: 55% (n = 65)

The first and most important step is: Tell your employees where to find updates during a crisis.

Overall crisis comms rating “excellent” or “good”



On the one hand, the channels mentioned are rated very positively by employees; on the other hand, the actual usage figures of the digital channels tell a different story: only 24% of respondents receive crisis updates via the company intranet, 17% via workplace collaboration tools like Microsoft Team, and 12% via an employee app or company newsletters.

Here's how each channel ranks:

- Email or memos from management: 50%
- My immediate supervisor: 41%
- Company intranet: 24%
- Co-workers: 18%
- Workplace collaboration tools (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams): 17%
- Employee app: 12%
- Company newsletters: 12%
- The internet: 11%
- Message boards or bulletin boards: 9%
- SMS: 9%
- Social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn): 7%
- Television or radio: 6%
- Newspapers: 4%
- Digital screens: 3%
- Don't know/No answer: 11%

SMS adoption stands out: while 9% of employees in the UK receive **crisis communications via SMS**, usage in some other countries is higher. In Australia 17% of respondents said they use SMS, followed by the US at 15% and Austria at 13%. Switzerland stands at 9% just like the UK. Germany has the lowest adoption rate at only 3%.

GenZ and Millennials also rely more on **social media** during a crisis. Among those aged 18 to 34 and 35 to 44, 11% report using social media for updates — which is notably higher than the numbers for those aged 45 to 54 (1%) and 55 to 67 (4%).

We also asked participants about the **frequency of crisis updates**, where **gaps** exist, and whether they **feel supported** during a crisis.

- Frequency is rated quite well: 50% say “Just the right frequency.”
- 38% have sometimes, frequently, or always experienced communication gaps during past crises.
- 46% feel very or somewhat supported by their organization during a crisis. This number is lower for non-desk workers (31%) and higher for, e.g., those who receive crisis comms via workplace collaboration tools (70%), SMS (65%), company newsletters (65%), their immediate supervisor (61%), employee app (57%), or intranet (54%).

11% of all participants **couldn't answer or didn't know how they typically receive updates** during a crisis. Only 17% in this group feel very or somewhat supported by their organization during a crisis. This tells us two things:

1. Implementing a multi-channel approach will improve employees' crisis comms experience.
2. Organizations need to improve how they inform staff about where to find crisis updates.

6.

Leadership communication

Communication skills

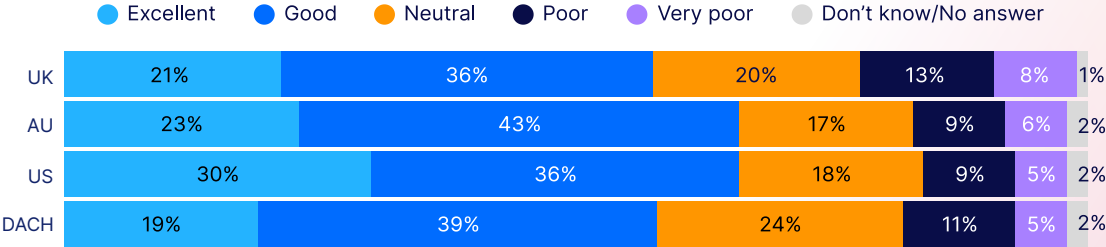
Previous sections highlighted that immediate supervisors and management updates are key means of communication. But what about the quality? We asked:

“How would you rate your manager’s communication skills overall?” and “How well does your manager keep your team informed about updates from leadership?”



Non-desk employees feel less well informed by their managers.

How would you rate your manager's communication skills overall?



UK n = 529; AU n = 518; US n = 1044 ; DACH n = 1483

As the chart above shows, managers and immediate supervisors are rated positively across all regions surveyed. Managers in the United States receive the highest score, with 30% of respondents rating their skills as “excellent.” In the UK, 21% rate their manager’s communication skills as “excellent” with another 36% rating them “good.”

This trend continues in the second question above: in the UK, 53% of employees feel “well” or “very well” informed by their managers about news from senior leadership. But we also notice a workplace gap here: Non-desk employees in the UK feel significantly less well informed by their managers (34% “Well” or “Very well”) than their desk-based colleagues (62%). On the other hand, 39% of non-desk workers feel “poorly” (26%) or “not at all” (13%) well informed.

Clarity about vision and strategy

Every organization wants their employees to understand the bigger picture — the company’s vision and strategy. But communicating that effectively remains one of the biggest challenges of internal communicators and leadership teams. Clear messaging is essential to making that vision resonate.

We’ve asked 529 employees in the UK: “How clear is leadership communication about organizational vision and strategy?”

There is a strong connection between clear communication and overall job satisfaction.

Clarity of leadership communication

- Very clear, the vision and strategy are easy to understand
- Somewhat clear, there are minor ambiguities
- Neutral, neither clear nor unclear
- Somewhat unclear, the vision and strategy are difficult to follow
- Very unclear, the vision and strategy are not communicated effectively
- Don't know/No answer



How clear is leadership communication about organizational vision and strategy? n = 529

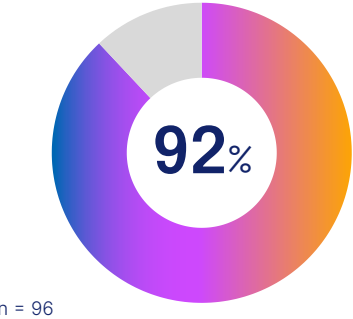
Even if we see a good number of positive responses in the chart above, there are connections to other areas of this study that deserve our attention.

First, we see a strong connection between clear leadership communication and overall job satisfaction: Among employees who say leadership communication about the organization’s vision and strategy is “very clear,” 92% report being very or somewhat happy in their jobs. That’s significantly higher than the overall average of 65% — and dramatically higher than the 25% of employees who say communication is “very unclear” and still report being happy at work.

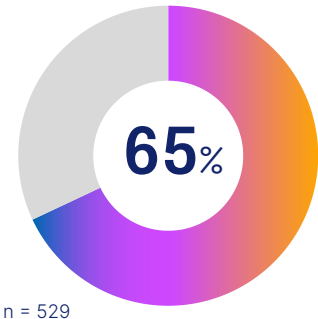
Let that sink in: When employees report that leadership communication is very clear, they’re **almost four times as happy** in their roles compared to the ones who state that communication is not clear at all.

“I am very or somewhat happy with my current job or position.”

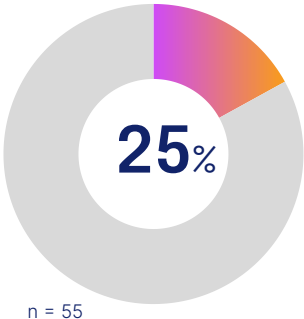
Leadership comms very clear



Overall average



Leadership comms very unclear



Second, clarity seems to be a strong indicator for the overall quality of internal communications: 84% of those who say “the vision and strategy are easy to understand” rate the overall quality of internal communication as “excellent” or “very good.” In contrast, not a single one of those who feel the vision and strategy are not communicated effectively give such high ratings — on the contrary, 89% in this group rate the quality “only fair” or “poor.”

Considering the central role of senior leadership in conveying corporate values, vision, and strategy, it’s all the more concerning that **21% of non-desk employees in the UK say they never receive communication from senior leadership.** An additional 8% report that they receive information only “annually” and an additional 14% don’t know how often they are informed by senior leadership.

On the contrary, employees who receive communication from senior leadership weekly or more are a lot happier (78%) with their job or position than those who never receive any communication from senior leadership (37%). Yes, there is a risk of information overload, and communicators should always be mindful of the frequency of internal communication. But the survey results make it clear: it’s better for senior leaders to communicate regularly than to stay silent.

When it comes to the themes and messages of leadership communication, companies should be especially mindful of employee concerns. One in three employees responds to the question “How well do leadership communications address employee concerns?” with either “Poorly, concerns are rarely addressed” or “Not at all, concerns are ignored.”

7.

Conclusion

Takeaways for comms professionals and leaders

by Tom York, Senior Director, Head of UKI and South Africa, Staffbase



The UK faces a trust crisis that's driving turnover.

Poor internal communication is cited by 60% of employees considering leaving. But the UK stands out for a more specific challenge: among all markets studied, UK employees report the lowest rates of feedback consideration during change. This isn't about employee satisfaction scores. It's about whether UK organizations can retain talent in a market where trust is already under pressure.

The UK-specific challenges:

A two-tier communication system: Non-desk employees are systematically excluded from information flow, creating operational and retention challenges.

The feedback challenge: UK organizations post the lowest feedback consideration rates of any market studied. Organizations that fail to close feedback loops risk accelerated disengagement and turnover.

Clarity drives retention: Leadership communication about vision and strategy creates a four-fold difference in employee happiness, driven entirely by how clearly leaders communicate.

Trusted managers need better support: Immediate supervisors are the most trusted information source, yet non-desk workers consistently feel less informed by their managers about senior leadership updates. Frontline managers need consistent information cascades and tools to fulfil their role effectively.

Digital channel underutilisation: Modern tools receive high ratings in crises yet remain significantly underused, and UK intranet adoption lags peer markets — all representing untapped potential for scalable, consistent communication.

Strategic priorities for UK leaders:

Address the non-desk communication gap: Invest in mobile-first platforms like employee apps. Develop content tailored to frontline schedules and access patterns. This directly impacts retention in often-overlooked employee segments.

Make feedback mechanisms meaningful: If soliciting input during change, demonstrate how it influences decisions. Otherwise, consultation exercises without follow-through erode trust faster than no consultation at all.

Equip managers as communication champions: Provide regular information cascades, talking points, and training so managers (the most trusted information source) can effectively inform their teams, particularly non-desk workers who receive leadership communication less frequently.

Optimize digital infrastructure: Audit crisis communication plans, invest in platforms that reach all employee segments, and leverage channels that demonstrate high effectiveness but low current utilisation.

Prioritize leadership communication clarity: Clear, consistent communication about organizational direction and change rationale is among the highest-impact investments available. Employees need context and connection, particularly during periods of uncertainty.

The path forward

UK organizations that strategically address the non-desk communication gap, close feedback loops, and leverage underutilized digital channels will build the trust and resilience necessary for talent retention and operational effectiveness in an increasingly competitive market. The evidence is clear. The opportunity exists. Success depends on treating communication as a strategic capability rather than an operational afterthought.

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