

**Plan your communication – Don't leave it to chance.**



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[David Grossman's](#) article says 400 companies with 100,000 employees described an average loss of \$62.4 million pa because of inadequate communication to and between employees.

These figures feel ridiculous but are backed by other examples even in smaller organisations.

Communication is “Imparting or exchanging information by speaking, writing, or using other medium”. The problem is there are some key steps to consider before you start communicating:

Before you quickly rush off to send your next CC all email check out these tips to making your communication more effective.

**WHO** - do you want to communicate with?

**HOW** - can you best communicate your information?

**WHY** - do you want to communicate?

**WHEN** - is the best time to communicate?

**WHAT** - do you want to communicate?

**WHO** - do you want to communicate with?

Before you communicate your message, make a list of the people you need to communicate with.

This is important because our default is to CC everyone when we send an email, sometimes to make sure we don't miss anyone, sometimes to cover our back. The downside of this is that some people won't read it and some will resent it if it's clogging up their email and it's obvious they don't need to know.

The right way?

Make a list of only those who need to know.

Ask yourself how you feel when you get CC'd into the email about poor timekeeping when you're early every day? Or the hundreds of emails that you simply delete without opening.

**HOW** - can you best communicate your information?

Will you send an email, will there be meetings, a newsletter, social media?

The type and variety of communication are important. People interpret information differently so if you can deliver the same message in a few different ways you are more likely to hit your mark.

Be mindful of your communication method, don't simply default to email.

There are so many wonderful ways to communicate and remember if the message is for one person or a small group, perhaps the best way to communicate is face to face, scary I know but very effective.

**WHEN** - is the best time to communicate?

Planning your communication will prevent people from receiving too much or too little information.

Think about your options, will you send daily, weekly or monthly communication?

Is there a better time of day for your stakeholders? Do they prefer lots of communication and daily updates or variance reporting, just being told if things are going off track?

Too much too often and you risk people not engaging, too little and people may feel excluded.

**WHY** - do you want to communicate?

We need to know who and what we are communicating, and we should also consider why we are communicating any information.

**The Rotary Four-Way Test** is a great tool for checking in on your motives before you communicate.

Being clear about why you are communicating a message is as important as knowing what you will communicate if not more important.

Remember we talked earlier about the CC all email for poor timekeeping? The why of that message wasn't to talk about time keeping it was to avoid having to have an individual confrontation with the one person who is consistently late.

**WHAT** - do you want to communicate?

I have intentionally left this to last.

I often find people have something they want to communicate, and they quickly communicate it without a second thought for the other four points we have discussed.

You need to know what you are going to communicate to be able to do the first four steps, **WHO, HOW, WHEN and WHY** but don't be in such a rush.

Be mindful that if you take the time to get your strategy in place your message will get to the right people at the right time in the right way.

It will be the difference between communication and effective communication.

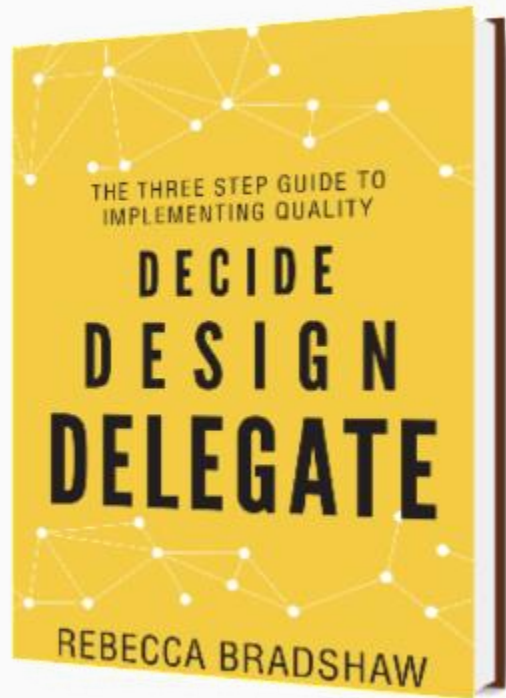
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If you would like to talk to me personally you can email me at **bek@rebeccabradshaw.com.au** or call me on 0403857054

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