

## Planner: Communicate a change to your team

How you explain and talk about a company change is the first critical step toward helping your team understand and embrace the new way. Use this guide to formulate an effective message.

Date:	Company change:
<b>How will the change affect my team?</b>	
<p><b>1. What is the organization’s message about this change:</b></p> <p><i>Example: As part of our new globalization strategy, we are eliminating our engineering group in Austin and opening a new technology center in Mumbai.</i></p>	
<p><b>2. What are one to three ways that this change could be challenging for my team:</b></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Transition will slow our work for several months.</i></li> <li>• <i>Losing our Austin teammates.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>3. What are one to three ways that this change could benefit my team:</b></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Increased capacity with a bigger tech team.</i></li> <li>• <i>Better weekend coverage for tech issues.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>4. Given what I know about my team members, how do I expect them to react to this news?</b></p> <p><i>Example: They will be sad about the Austin office.</i></p>	
<b>How will I communicate the change?</b>	
<p><b>5. I will start the meeting by being as clear, direct, and detailed as I can be, saying:</b></p> <p><i>Example: I called this meeting to share some big news. We are opening a new tech center in Mumbai and closing the Austin office. Unfortunately, this means the Austin team will be let go at the end of the month. Let me share what I know and don’t know so far, then I’d like to hear your questions.</i></p>	
<p><b>6. I plan to use this language to explain why the change is happening:</b></p> <p><i>Example: This is a global expansion that will increase our tech capacity.</i></p>	

<p><b>7. Using my answers to Nos. 2 and 3, I plan to use this language to explain what this news means for our team:</b></p>	
<p><b>8. The truths I want to acknowledge (without bad-mouthing anyone) are:</b></p> <p><i>Example: I'm not going to lie, the transition will be tough — and we'll miss our Austin teammates.</i></p>	
<p><b>9. Questions I will ask to encourage the team's honest feedback:</b></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What initial reactions do you have?</i></li> <li>• <i>What other ways do you think this change will affect our team?</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>10. Phrases I can use if I'm asked a question I can't answer:</b></p> <p><i>Example: Thanks for bringing that up. I'll need time to look into it and will share what I learn with the whole team as soon as I know more.</i></p>	
<p><b>11. I will close the meeting by sharing next steps and how I will continue to communicate:</b></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>HR will be sending an email detailing the transition plan this afternoon.</i></li> <li>• <i>I will be following up with each of you 1-on-1.</i></li> <li>• <i>I will share new details I learn in our chat channel.</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>How I will follow up after I communicate the change?</b></p>	
<p><b>12. Questions I plan to ask team members in follow-up 1-on-1 meetings:</b></p> <p><i>Examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How are you feeling about Tuesday's news?</i></li> <li>• <i>Have you been through something like this before? What were some of the things you learned during that process?</i></li> <li>• <i>What can I do to make things easier?</i></li> </ul>	
<p><b>13. Messages I want to continue to reinforce with my direct reports:</b></p> <p><i>Example: It will take time for the new tech team to learn our processes. What can we do to help make the transition smoother for all?</i></p>	