

*HOW MUCH CHECKING  
IS TOO MUCH CHECKING?*

18 February 2021

## Creative communication drives improvement

There are many ways governance can drive the improvement of quality of care for patients. Often colleagues in an organisation are at the heart of these improvements. But how can you reach them in the best way?

We have found that delivering engaging creative communication campaigns can have a real impact on the way staff think about their role in improving quality of care.

Communication and engagement with colleagues is always important, but never more so than during a crisis such as the pandemic. With so many people working from their living rooms or having to socially distance at work, being creative about communication is crucial.

What do we mean by creative? When you have understood who your audiences are and the shift in behaviour you'd like to create, go about creating a compelling narrative. Take the time to understand where you are now and where you'd like to be and what narrative can help on this journey. Keep it simple. Try approaching it in a different way – just because you are talking about quality care of patients, that doesn't mean you can't use messaging about food or entertainment to paint a compelling picture.

Alongside the narrative, your design approach needs to be strong. The Design Council studied portfolios for 63 companies that traded on the FTSE over the course of a decade. Companies that put emphasis on design performed 200% better than those that didn't. And the same theory applies to staff – compelling design leads to a better received and more influential campaign.

### Learning styles

People learn in different ways, so when developing an effective creative campaign for impact and influence it is key to consider and include all learning styles:

- **Auditory** - include materials that people can listen to or engage with, which means live presentations, videos and podcasts or soundbites
- **Visual** – include materials that people can see, which means images, videos, graphs, charts and diagrams

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- **Kinaesthetic** – include practical examples, which means real stories, ways of people being able to directly engage, tests
- **Crossovers** of the above – include reading materials and music aligned with the campaign

The key to getting the mix of learning styles right – and also one of the main challenges – is to remember that people don't have much time. Find ways to make all campaign materials easy to digest – 20-second films, easy-to-view diagrams, fronted by real people with real examples.

## Channels and approach

To deliver excellent communications across all learning styles, it's imperative that they are seen in as many places as possible to gain attention and influence staff. According to Smarp, only 13% of employees use their intranets daily, so it's time to think outside the box.

But where to look? Everywhere. We all know about the famous rule of seven – that for people to remember something, on average they need to see it seven times. So how can we make sure our colleagues see it seven times? Use the taste, snack, feast approach.

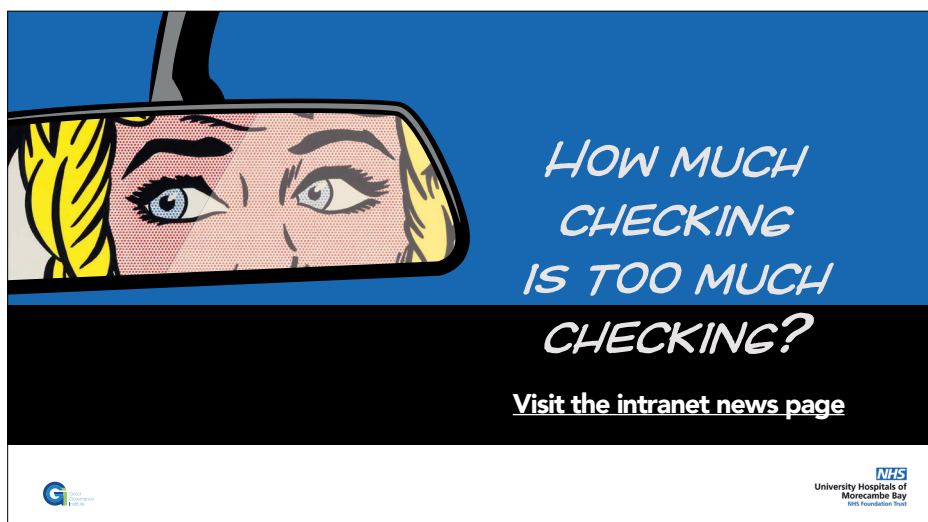
**Snack** – give people a glance of what it is you're trying to get them to think about. Use posters with just a few words directing colleagues to an intranet page, website or YouTube where the promise of more information lives. Use these posters on screens, screensavers, as banners on emails, as images on social media.

**Taste** – in staff newsletters give a couple of sentences with key headline messages, getting the message across, but without going into the detail.

**Feast** – this is where you deliver the full message. Use short films, long-form text and discussions at staff events to push home the message to shift opinion and thinking in colleagues.

## Morecambe Bay case study

GGI has been working with University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust (UHMBT) to increase colleague awareness about their role in the quality of care for patients. UHMBT were already performing well, with many incidents reported and over 80% of colleagues feeling that they hear about trust communications in a timely manner.



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So how do we go from good to great and encourage an increase of learning from incidents?

- We designed an eye-catching campaign using Roy Lichtenstein-styled imagery to draw attention – shared via screensavers, posters, as banners on their intranet, in the newsletter.
- We built a compelling narrative, with active language to engage colleagues, including the strapline ‘so, what can I do to improve patient care?’
- Then we added the detail. Staff told us they like to hear from senior leaders and peers so we developed short films led by both, telling their own stories and encouraging colleagues to think differently. These films had subtitles so they can be used on screens around the hospital and are completely accessible.
- We used all channels – staff at UHMBT like Twitter as much as the rest of us, so the patient-friendly campaign was also shared there alongside more traditional internal areas.

Importantly, all of this activity was designed to fit around and complement the excellent communications that UHMBT already delivers to its staff and patients every day.

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- Creativity is key when developing attention-grabbing campaigns for staff. Don't be afraid to think outside the box. Try something different every time.
- Develop something for all learning styles, in bite-size form, that can be accessed anywhere.
- Ask your staff what they want. Engaging with them and understanding their needs is the first step in delivering a campaign that will change minds and hearts.

If you have any questions or comments about this briefing, please call us on 07732 681120 or email [advice@good-governance.org.uk](mailto:advice@good-governance.org.uk)