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2015 Internal Communication Survey Results FINAL.09.29.15

University Relations

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2015 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION SURVEY RESULTS

October 2015
BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Background
The University believes that communicating information to the WVU family is important. The leadership wants to ensure that its employees are receiving information that matters to them in a format that is convenient for them.

Research Objectives
Market research was conducted to achieve the following objectives:
- Assess current delivery methods and identify ways the University can improve information sharing
- Ensure that we're delivering all of WVU's news in the best ways possible

Methodology
All WVU employees — excluding sporadic employees (visiting researchers, etc.) — student workers, Parkersburg employees and those employed at HSC received a 10-minute online survey. The latter were excluded because HSC conducted its own internal communications survey in the spring.

In order to ensure the University received input from employees with limited or no access to email, flyers were posted in the dining halls. The flyers notified employees that hard copies of the survey were available for them to fill out. Facility managers were also asked to distribute those flyers to their employees.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overall Communication
WVU employees feel that the University tries to maintain open communication with them and does a good job keeping them informed. However, they also believe there is somewhat of a disconnect between the information the administration leadership has and what it chooses to share with employees.

Employees’ biggest complaint is that they receive information that does not pertain to them. Instead, they have a strong desire to learn about that which relates to their day-to-day work activities, as well as strategic initiatives in the University that may impact them.

Information Sources
Employees rely on a variety of formal and informal sources to learn what’s happening in the University; chief among them are Mountaineer E-news, email communication and word of mouth. The method in which E-news is currently distributed — through a link disseminated in a daily email in the morning — is well-liked. Despite the fact that a number of employees say they receive information that is not relevant to them, they do acknowledge that E-news (their number-one source of information) is somewhat relevant/fairly useful to them. In fact, most read it daily.

Suggestions for improvement to E-news include disseminating information that is more relevant to employees, promoting University events in a more timely manner and organizing it into segments.

Potential New Communication Vehicle
There is little interest in employees being able to watch 5-minute, monthly videos that would explore issues such as grants, etc., in-depth.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Employees were asked to rate the effectiveness of University communication on 13 topics. Those topics they feel most well-informed about relate to issues not likely to impact their daily work life. They receive little information regarding strategic or procedural issues, something they desire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most well-informed about …</th>
<th>Least informed about …</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Campus events</td>
<td>• Divisional campuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Faculty/staff news and achievements</td>
<td>• New staff announcements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Student success</td>
<td>• Finances, budgets and strategic investments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Alumni news and achievement</td>
<td>• State and national higher education legislation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Initiatives related to student success</td>
<td>• Board of Governors meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Faculty/staff/student presentations and published research</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Employees were vocal when asked to list any topics, concerns and/or issues about which they would like to hear more. Verbatim statements are located in the appendix (see pages 25+).
DETAILED FINDINGS
Most respondents are administrative staff (39%), followed by faculty (26%), other University employees (20%) and secretarial or support staff (14%).

1. Choose the category that best applies to you.
Just over one-third (35%) of the employees who responded to the survey have been employed at WVU for fewer than five years. Nearly four in ten (39%) have worked at the University between five and twenty years, and nearly three in ten (27%) have been at WVU for at least twenty years.
Nearly half (46%) believe the University does an excellent (10%) or very good (36%) job keeping them well-informed. Nearly four in ten believe the University does a good job. Less than two in ten (16%) don’t feel adequately informed.
4. Overall, how good of a job do you feel the University does in keeping you updated and well-informed?

The perception of how well the University keeps them informed does not vary by segment. Most employees in each segment said the University does a “good” or “very good” job.
5. What are some drawbacks associated with the current forms of communication at WVU?

The majority of complaints regarding communication at WVU involve employees receiving information that is not always relevant to them, though there are others as well. Verbatim statements from employees are included on the next two pages of this report.

![Bar chart showing drawbacks to communication]

- Repetitive information
- No central information hub
- Too much information
- Not always timely
- Not segregated
- Not organized in terms of importance
“Some things are redundantly repeated by Deans and Department Chairs. What we don't receive is opportunities to participate in planning, so that such things as the current traffic tie ups created by closing the Evansdale campus might be ameliorated and much gasoline saved by not sitting in traffic for hours.”

“I am new and still figuring out where the communications are coming from and where I should be looking for information. So far the Mountaineer E-news seems to offer good information. We don't get the Daily Athenaeum in our building, so I only see it when I venture out.”

“Some of the most important information is not getting to faculty because it is not always positive.”

“News is not always relevant AND important info expected to trickle down from the Dean’s office fails to make it to the faculty.”

“College and University procedures are not always communicated clearly. The recent change in funding has been quite confusing.”

“There is no central hub to go to search for information “

“Information might not be clear as to what it is: Example ‘New HR system will be more efficient’ does not convey that hiring will go from paper to online system.”

“Would like a place that is devoted to employee-related news, similar to an intranet. Sometimes news featured within E-News can get lost in my email inbox, and sometimes it’s difficult to sort through WVUToday stories to find what is relevant for employees / an internal audience.”

“Departmental information is lacking. Most of the time, I learn more from E-news about my own department than I do directly from my own department. If there are changes in specific departments that impact our daily work with students, these should be communicated directly and effectively through the chain up through and including our support staff.”

“E-News is slowly becoming quite lengthy. There is a lot of repetitive information to scroll through between the new notices.”

“The links sent through E-news do not work and sometimes copying and pasting the link does not work either.”

“I feel there are other aspects available by the University that doesn't get broadcast to everyone. Shows put on by students, not-as-popular sporting events, wellness events.”

5. What are some drawbacks associated with the current forms of communication at WVU?
“Job/IT information, such as policies, procedures and best practices, are either not documented or not shared in a formal way.”

“(Lack of) transparency.”

“Knowing exactly who to ask questions with in Morgantown. Example, WVU Football Posters and small schedules for the ball games; Surplus In Morgantown to pick-up items, etc.; WVU Incentive items. We love our WVU.”

“Non-Internet staff are kept in the dark.”

“Too many sources of critical information. Not streamlined enough. Some comes from ITS, some from Dean, some from President/Provost's office, some from Registrar, some from E-news, some from MIX.”

“I will get E-news for one month and then I stop receiving it. This has happened 10-plus times. Therefore, I quit trying to have the issue fixed.”

“We have no communication in FM, the only communication we have is what is decided from above us and we find out through other dept.”

“Applicability of news is unclear, particularly as it relates to services and benefits. WVU affiliate employees receive and benefit from news at WVU; this should continue. However, there has been unintended confusion and conflict when individuals attempt to participate in activities that are restricted (i.e., flu shots, training); and, when an open opportunity is missed (i.e., Pirates game trip). As inclusion increases at WVU, awareness of boundaries, if they exist, would be helpful.”

“I don't always have access to computer.”

5. What are some drawbacks associated with the current forms of communication at WVU?
All but 10% of employees get their news from Mountaineer E-news. Email communications (71%) is also a very popular way for employees to learn about campus news(updates/information, as well as talking with co-workers or supervisors (69%). They are also the sources relied on most often.

### Information Sources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountaineer E-news</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email communications</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of mouth from co-workers or supervisor</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department meetings</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WVU website</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-person meetings</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WVUToday Website</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional or online media (non-social media)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-campus postings/bulletin boards</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inside View (WVU Healthcare/Health...)</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect (WVU Healthcare)</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. How do you currently receive campus news(updates/information? (Check all that apply.) 7. Which of these sources do you rely on most often?
About two-thirds (66%) read Mountaineer E-news daily. About one-fourth (26%) acknowledge they read it periodically. Less than one in ten (8%) rarely or never read E-news. Just two in ten (20%) believe E-news is highly relevant/extremely useful. However, half (50%) believe E-news is somewhat relevant/fairly useful. Two in ten are indifferent about it.
About half the employees in each of the segments acknowledge that E-news is somewhat relevant and fairly useful.

9. How relevant or useful is Mountaineer E-news to you?
8. If you receive Mountaineer E-news, how often do you typically read it?

Administrative and Secretarial/Support read E-news daily — more frequently than Faculty or Other employees read it.
The overwhelming majority of employees access E-news via their computer; however, some also access it with their phone.
When asked their preference, the vast majority of employees (85%) chose early morning and (75%) daily distribution. All but 5% liked receiving an email with an embedded message or link to information.

**Preferred Time of Day/Frequency**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of Day</th>
<th>Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early morning</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-day</td>
<td>39%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily issue</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly issue</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning Preference**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Method</th>
<th>Preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Through an email with an embedded message or link to the information (e.g., WVUToday, Mountaineer E-news, etc.)</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to the University website on my own</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Please indicate which of the following you prefer regarding Mountaineer E-News:
12. How would you prefer to learn about University news/updates/information?
The idea of employees having the opportunity to watch a brief, monthly video discussing a specific topic in-depth has limited appeal across the segments.

13. How likely would you be to watch a monthly video (not to exceed 5 minutes in length) that would provide more personalized, in-depth information on a topic (e.g. a researcher talking about a new, high-level grant, etc.)?
Most completely (28%) or somewhat agree (43%) that the University is intent on keeping the lines of communication open. Fewer completely (12%) or somewhat agree (40%) that the administration does a good job communicating with University employees.
There is consensus among the segments regarding both statements. About 70% agree that the University tries to keep the lines of communication open. However, just about half agree that the leadership does a good job communicating with the rest of the University.

14. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:
   a) The University is committed to keeping the channels of communication open.
   b) Administrative leadership communicates well within the rest of the University.
Using a rating of 0 -10, where 0 = weak communication and 10 = very high level of communication, employees indicated the University does the best job communicating information regarding campus events (mean: 6.9), faculty/staff news and accomplishments (mean: 6.5), student success (mean: 6.23), alumni news and accomplishments (mean: 5.63) and initiatives aimed at improving student success (mean: 5.16).
Employees voiced many concerns about the news.

- Needs to be more timely notification regarding events/more accessible calendar of events
- E-news can seem like advertising, PR and propaganda rather than news
- There is limited information on how the university is run
- The news announcements heavily slant toward faculty and students; little to no news re classified and administrative staff
- No updates on the conclusion of events (e.g. students thoughts on the renovation of the Evansdale campus, etc.)
- Need to discriminate between essential and promotional information
- Should better organize/segment E-news (faculty, staff, alumni, events, etc.)
- There is no communication regarding systems and procedures
- News regarding divisional campuses is rarely provided

They also feel it’s important to learn more about issues that are relevant to them on a day-to-day basis, primarily…

- HR department changes and policies/procedural changes (Updates the on the 8-5 move, changes in payroll processing, health insurance costs and raises
- Policy changes to higher education and BOG news
- Changes on campus (the final plans for new buildings, infrastructure, maintenance plans and projects, Leadership changes
- Strategic plans (university’s vision, plans for growth, plans for retention, divisional campuses, budgets, organizational restructuring, partnerships, etc.)
- Classified staff achievements (rather than entirely faculty and student achievement)
“The communication about all the good happening at WVU is great but they seem to skim over or completely ignore information relevant to staff and faculty. Several examples are the 40 hr. workweek, the issue of merit raises and evaluations. This information is ignore until it actually happens and is too late to do anything about it. I have no problems with any of these areas except the lack of communication between administration and staff. I feel 80% of the information given in E-news isn't relevant to my job and I feel the areas that will affect student, faculty and staff should be communicated on a more regular basis separate from E-news.”

“Timely information about organizational and personnel changes across the University through sources other than press releases would be very helpful. So far this year there have been many changes that have happened quickly, with little or no information given to those impacted until a day or a few days before the change is set to happen. Or, units impacted by changes only learn about the changes through university press releases, not through administrative channels or in-person meetings. It seems very dysfunctional and it makes it difficult to tell students what is happening or where to go when we don't know what's happening until the last minute. Also, when people feel like they don't know what's happening around them, they spend a great deal of time speculating and being anxious about how the changes will affect them, which in turn, negatively affects their morale and work performance.”

“Be nice if faculty and staff heard internal news before the media outlets...it is all old news before faculty hear what is happening on our campus. Media Outlets ie Dominion Post and others should not have access prior to faculty and staff. Faculty often get blind sided by questions about what was in the Dominion Post about WVU that faculty have not yet heard. Students are told more than faculty.”

“I never hear about Classified Staff achievements. The libraries recently elected an employee of the year - where's that? The library elected a new staff association executive committee - where's that? What has the Staff Council done lately? does anyone from the E-news attend the meetings? E-news seems to attend faculty senate. Will E-news clear up anything about the 3-percent pay increase that employees heard about in May - the one we will not get in October - that was erroneously reported in several news outlets?”
“Don't treat all news/PR items equally. Spend more time thinking about the proper channel for distribution for each item. Some things such as the feel-good stories are just better suited to social media, for example. Faculty achievements are perhaps best highlighted in the faculty listserv and on the faculty websites. I think the biggest problem is with E-news, and the reason most people say they don't read it, is that it's too broad and wide-ranging. I like to stay informed, but even I only scan the headlines to look for something that's potentially relevant to my job or something. There just doesn't seem to be any minimum standard, so it's easy to feel we're getting hit with a lot of "noise" that's not especially useful.”

“It would be great to have a "one-stop-shop" for employees: an intranet that has links to employee-related resources as well as announcements and news features. Right now, all this information "lives" in many different places. Sometimes, the info is included in E-news, sometimes it's buried in WVUToday stories (which are actually targeted to outside audiences). This could also reduce the need to have a "staff" link in the main navigation of the WVU website. All those important links could live on a website designed for how employees work. Here's some great information about intranets from the Nielsen Norman Group: http://www.nngroup.com/reports/intranet-usability-guidelines/"

“I read E-news every time. However, sometimes it's a lot to absorb because there is so much information. I just scroll through quickly to see if anything catches my interest. I realize what may be interesting to me may not be interesting to someone else or vice versa. It seems like it would help to have categories such as: Events, Faculty News, Student News, Staff News. Also, I was recently nominated for a Climb Higher mention, which was very nice and flattering. However, I'm not one to toot my own horn, but as far as I can tell, my supervisor was not notified about this. The only reason I found out was that some people on campus read my nomination and emailed to congratulate me.”

“I have submitted several items to be listed both in Mountaineer E-news and WVU Today and received no follow up while I see other members of the faculty who repeatedly get their events/accomplishments listed.”

“Cultural and similar events are often advertised on or just prior to the date on which they occur. It would be helpful to receive an announcement at least a week in advance for these events, especially if they occur in the evening, so that appropriate planning can be made to attend.”
“The sections of E-news don't seem to make much sense. Athletics has its own section in E-news indicating its importance. Research and Healthcare are their own sections. But anything related to any other part of the University (student success, academic achievements, human resources) must fit into the announcements/news catchall. I would highlight academic and other key/newsworthy activities occurring that impact the University and/or create separate sections for this type of news. Perhaps a people section that highlights individual achievements be they faculty, staff, students, alumni. Perhaps a campus/community section that highlights events (arts, culture, athletics) occurring.”

“The division of campuses adds to a sense of disconnect, and I think that applies to communication. We communicate in a variety of ways – reading, seeing, hearing. If something is happening on the downtown campus, I am less likely to know about it or connect to it because I’m never down there. I teach on the Evansdale campus. I know this campus better and connect to it more. Perhaps by highlighting the different campuses in the news it might connect people more to the events.”

“In my opinion, the news flows from a very narrowly focused part of the university. The rest of the university waits for some sort of recognition to make them feel they also contribute to the great things of WVU. If programs aren’t important enough to recognize/support, then why have them.”

“Lots of newsy stuff----cut not much of actual substance related to how the university is run. I don’t need to hear about Gee’s travels in a PR-ish way. I want to know what’s really going on. But perhaps this isn’t the point of E-news. I guess I’m saying that E-news can seem like advertising, not news.”

“I think it would be great to hear more about what is happening with the divisional campuses. I would also like a nice digest email that summarizes the changes in the higher ed landscape, including how we are affected by higher ed legislation. I know nothing about the BOG meetings, so that would be important to know. I would also personally like to hear more about Gee’s leadership vision and what his thoughts are on strategic initiatives for the university.”

Please list any topics, concerns, and/or issues about which you would like to hear more.”
“Cultural and similar events are often advertised on or just prior to the date on which they occur. It would be helpful to receive an announcement at least a week in advance for these events, especially if they occur in the evening, so that appropriate planning can be made to attend.”

“…Keep up the great work! Overall the University has done a much better job providing more frequent, useful, communications over the past year. In the grand scheme of things, just keep doing what you are doing. The only things I would recommend are: E-News is starting to become overly cluttered. It would be nice if articles were arranged more by interest than by subject. It would be great if the E-News staff took a page from Feedly or Flipchart and tried to organize their newsletter’s content off of historical readership data from past articles and demographics. For example; articles that tend to have high readership among faculty should be at the top of faculty emails while that same article has low readership among staff should be closer to the middle or bottom of staff emails. Also students should have a less frequent version of E-News. Furthermore, a lot of the articles tend to be recycled press releases which can be a bit off putting. I completely understand and sympathize with the fact that people and time are extremely limited. Although, it would just be nice if some of the articles felt more like they were originally meant for employees at WVU - treat us as if we are already in on the joke - rather than repeating the same information we will likely hear on the 6 o’clock news. It is a small observation, yet could a large impact on the overall culture of working here.”

“Consider a newsletter that allows me to select categories I’m interested in. I have given up on searching E-news for valuable things because I have to muddle though a ton of “headlines” such as research recognition and student information to get the things I actually care about…The experience should be a lot more personalized, which would then provide a worth while experience.”

Please list any topics, concerns, and/or issues about which you would like to hear more.”