



**"Putting  
Communication  
on the RPA Agenda"**



# **Communications in Support of Large Scale Change**

**Lorraine Langham  
Managing Director  
Verve Communications**

## About Verve

Verve brings together leading public sector management and communications expertise (Renaissance) with creative, advertising, technical and broadcast professionals (Channel 2020) under the same roof, to offer a unique combination.

We offer end-to-end, integrated communications solutions – and specialise, among other things, in turning audiences into advocates, and assassins into ambassadors.

Wake up and smell the coffee

---

# The case for change

---

# Devising a communications strategy

---

## An effective communications strategy must:

- Be shared and have a high degree of ownership
- Address internal and external needs
- Be evidence based
- Be customer focussed
- Set clear objectives, supported by realistic, pragmatic, bold and innovative action plans with performance indicators to measure success
- Have clear messages and a visual identity which supports their delivery
- Have a strong set of communication principles
- Recognise the two way nature of communication, providing listening as well as telling and selling opportunities
- Be forward looking and visionary
- Maximise the use of all available communications tools and technologies
- Never be filed!

## Establishing resources

- ...Money
- ...People/capacity
- ...Skills and experience

# KISS

Keep it simple, stupid

## Innovative external communication

- ...Press – reactive, proactive, crisis
- ...Web – blogs, emails, e-newsletters, bulletins
- ...Collateral and publicity materials
- ...Direct mail
- ...Magazines and council newspapers
- ...Point of access communications
- ...Posters
- ...Advertising
- ...You name it – you'll need to use it

## Internal communication

...Organisations which communicate effectively with their staff inspire loyalty, win support, create a sense of belonging, shared values and direction.

## Keep the information flowing

- ...face to face ...1.2.1s, team, directorate wide
- ...workshops, seminars, breakfast sessions, lunches
- ...walk the floor
- ...team briefing cascade and feedback loop
- ...newsletters, staff magazines
- ...intranet, emails, e-bulletins
- ...merchandising
- ...events
- ...DVDs, Videos, CD-Roms
- ...and more

## Creating the new culture

Culture is a manifestation of 'the way we do things here'

... a manifestation fed, nurtured and shaped by the underlying values of an organisation that governs our instinctive reactions to how we deal with situations in terms of our interactions with customers and ourselves, for good or bad.

“Officers and their ladies, NCOs and their wives, other ranks and their women, are invited to the Christmas dinner.”

## So why does culture matter?

---

Because... organisations with positive cultures outperform those without  
...they are trusted and respected ...they recruit and retain the best staff  
...they create a sense of belonging, shared values and beliefs  
...they are great places to work ...they have pride in everything they do

You've got to persuade people

---

Does the audio match the video?

---

So, finally, if you want to use the opportunity of the change to create a better, more effective local government for Northern Ireland, you need to:

- Get your Communications people together
- Devise a top line strategy covering internal and external communications
- Develop detailed communications action plans with SMART targets
- Put structures in place to oversee delivery and review effectiveness
- Ensure that you have the time, money, capabilities and expertise to deliver
- Develop a strong brand to hold it all together
- Start now by explaining the case for change
- Share and get buy-in to that case throughout your organisation
- Paint the future state with energy and vision
- Use every method imaginable – do so with real imagination and creative flair

...And communicate, communicate, communicate

...And communicate, communicate, communicate