

Beyond The Bulletin Transcript

A video blog by Cameron Wood

Episode #04

Title: Ethical communication

Welcome back! Today, I want to talk to you about ethical communication.

Ethical communication in the workplace is not just a choice but rather a fundamental necessity for any organization committed to long-term success.

It's not just about having defined policies and procedures - it's about some of those things that can't be captured in a document from your compliance department. It's about a commitment to trust, integrity, and transparency.

When communication breaks down, so does trust. And when trust is lost, so is engagement.

As communications professionals, we're more than just writers or designers ... or, heaven forbid, the people who "make it pretty" — we are advisors and strategists. We guide leadership toward ethical excellence, ensuring that all of our audiences feel informed, valued, and included.

But a little too often, organizations fail in this area.

Let's talk about where things go wrong, why transparency is non-negotiable, and how we can create a culture of ethical communication that benefits everyone.

Where does Ethical Communication Break Down?

[SLIDE]

A lack of clear values. Inconsistent messaging. Withholding information. Dodging accountability.

Any of that sound familiar?

These missteps create confusion, frustration, and mistrust. But one of the biggest culprits?

A failure to consider the needs of employees—the very people who keep your organization running.

[END SLIDE]

Transparency—just like trust in leadership—can't be talked about enough. Too often, leaders believe they've communicated simply because they've sent a corporate email or posted a memo.

But if your audience is left confused or disengaged, have you really communicated at all?

When transparency is lacking, employees sense it. When big decisions happen behind closed doors, it doesn't take much for suspicion to spread.

And once rumors take root, they're almost impossible to control.

If employees feel left in the dark, they start filling in the blanks themselves. You know it, and I know it - and if you're not new to this rodeo, you've lived.

And let's be honest—those assumptions are rarely positive.

When leadership suddenly becomes "too busy" for regular communication, or key players are left out of conversations, employees notice. And the silence speaks volumes.

So how do we prevent this from happening? How do we build and maintain trust, even in challenging times?

Ethical communication isn't just a checkbox—it's an ongoing commitment. And it starts with leadership.

And this is where we, as communications professionals, can make the biggest impact:

Advocate for Transparency – Work closely with leadership to ensure open, honest communication. Employees don't need every detail, but they do need clarity.

Develop a Strong Code of Ethics – Ensure your organization has a clear, accessible document that outlines its commitment to honesty, integrity, and transparency.

Train Leaders in Ethical Communication – Offer real-world case studies and practical strategies for navigating tough conversations.

Encourage Open Dialogue – Employees should feel safe to voice concerns and ask questions without fear of repercussions. Town halls, feedback channels, and anonymous reporting options all help create a culture of openness.

Align Words with Actions – Leaders must be role models. If they expect transparency from employees, they need to embody it themselves.

[SLIDE]

Consistency in communication builds credibility. Employees should receive aligned messaging at every level of the organization.

And - as we can see from these A.I. generated images - that trust in credibility, that ethical messaging and transparency - needs to be human-driven.

When leaders make promises, they need to follow through. If they don't, trust erodes, and skepticism grows.

[END SLIDE]

We've all seen what happens when organizations say one thing but do another. Employees remember broken promises, and once credibility is lost, it's incredibly hard to regain.

Our job as communications professionals is to help leadership stay accountable.

A clear communication strategy—outlining key messages, target audiences, and best practices—can make all the difference.

Ethical communication isn't optional—it's essential. It impacts compliance, accountability, reputation, and even employee retention.

Engaged employees are more productive, more innovative, and more committed.

When employees understand the company's values and goals, they align their efforts accordingly. And when organizations prioritize honesty, transparency, and consistency, they cultivate a culture where trust thrives.

So, let's challenge our leaders to do better. Let's advocate for transparency. And let's continue to be the strategic advisors our organizations need.

Thanks for joining me today. If you found this helpful, don't forget to like, subscribe, and drop a comment below—let's keep the conversation going.

Cameron is an award-winning communications strategist with a remarkable career spanning over three decades. His expertise covers internal and external communications, crisis management, branding, and change communications. He has worked in corporate, academic, and media environments, shaping narratives, driving engagement, and navigating organizations through change with strategic precision.

Want more insights on internal comms? Follow for expert strategies, or connect on LinkedIn to discuss what's working in your organization.

Primary Keywords: Internal Communications, Employee Engagement, Data-Driven Strategy, Workplace Communication, Employee Retention.

Secondary Keywords: Engagement Surveys, Communication Metrics, Sentiment Analysis, Internal Messaging, Productivity Trends.