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Certified Public Accountants

PICPA Headquarters: 1650 Arch Street, 17th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19103 Phone: 215-496-9272 Fax: 215-496-9212  
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## Internal Focus: Communicating with Employees

By Jill Lock

In-house communications are as vital as external communications. Internal communications keep employees informed, make them feel appreciated, and enhance recruitment and retention efforts. Employees need to understand the valuable role they play, and a successful internal communications program will facilitate this process. The program should include information vehicles, a marketing tool box, and other strategic initiatives.

### Information vehicles

Employees need to know firm activities, services, and industry to represent the firm properly. Dissemination vehicles can include marketing updates—such as information about new clients, client success stories and industry updates—and employee update meetings—including client speakers, industry leaders, and firm updates. These vehicles tell the story of what is going on in the firm.

### Orientation program

All new employees should be given detailed information about the firm, including its services, industries, history, staff specialty areas, and so on. Employees are ambassadors of the firm, and they need to understand what the firm represents from the beginning.

### Marketing tool box

All communications materials used frequently by staff, internally or externally, should reflect the firm's profile and image, and be consistent with the firm brand. These items would include e-mail signature, fax cover sheet, new account data sheet, proposals, business cards, brochures, biographies, and fact sheets.

### Strategic initiatives

Initiatives can be directed at team building and employee recognition. Employees always should be encouraged to improve service and work together as a team. Success in these initiatives should be recognized and rewarded.

### Employee survey

Various types of employee surveys may be developed for in-house communication, depending upon the objective. If you want to improve the recruiting process, a survey about the reasons employees selected your firm (or why they may have thought twice) would be helpful to know.

Contemplate what makes sense to implement at your firm. Your objective is to be certain all ambassadors project the desired image.

Jill Lock is the director of marketing at Isdaner & Company LLC. She can be reached at [jlock@isdanerllc.com](mailto:jlock@isdanerllc.com).

LAST UPDATED 5/13/2010

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