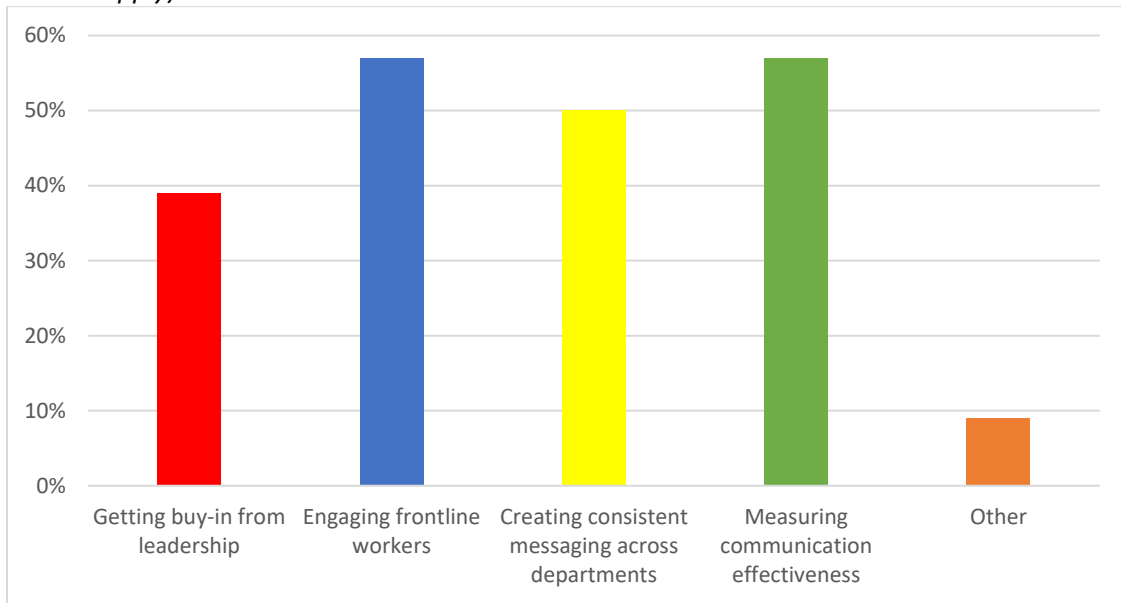


Member Meetup: Communicating CSR to Employees

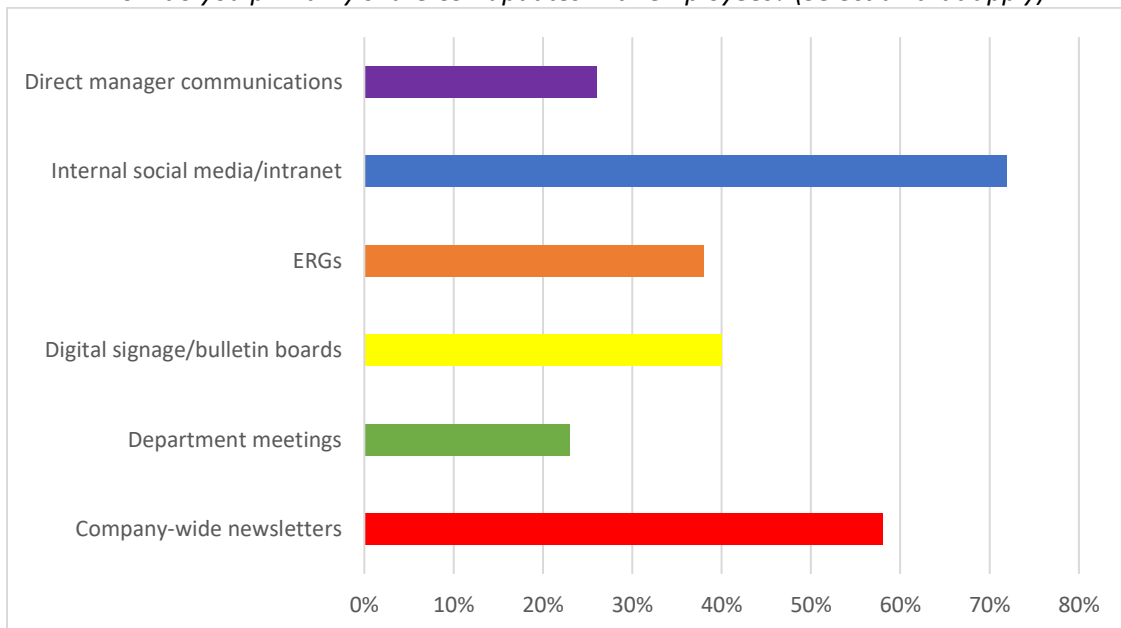
February 26, 2025

Polls:

1. *Where do you need the most help in communicating CSR initiatives internally? (Select all that apply)*

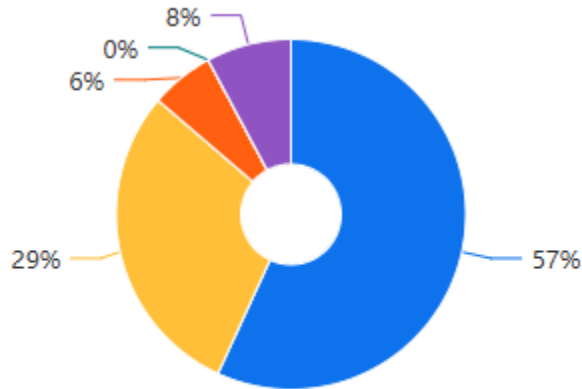


2. *How do you primarily share CSR updates with employees? (Select all that apply)*



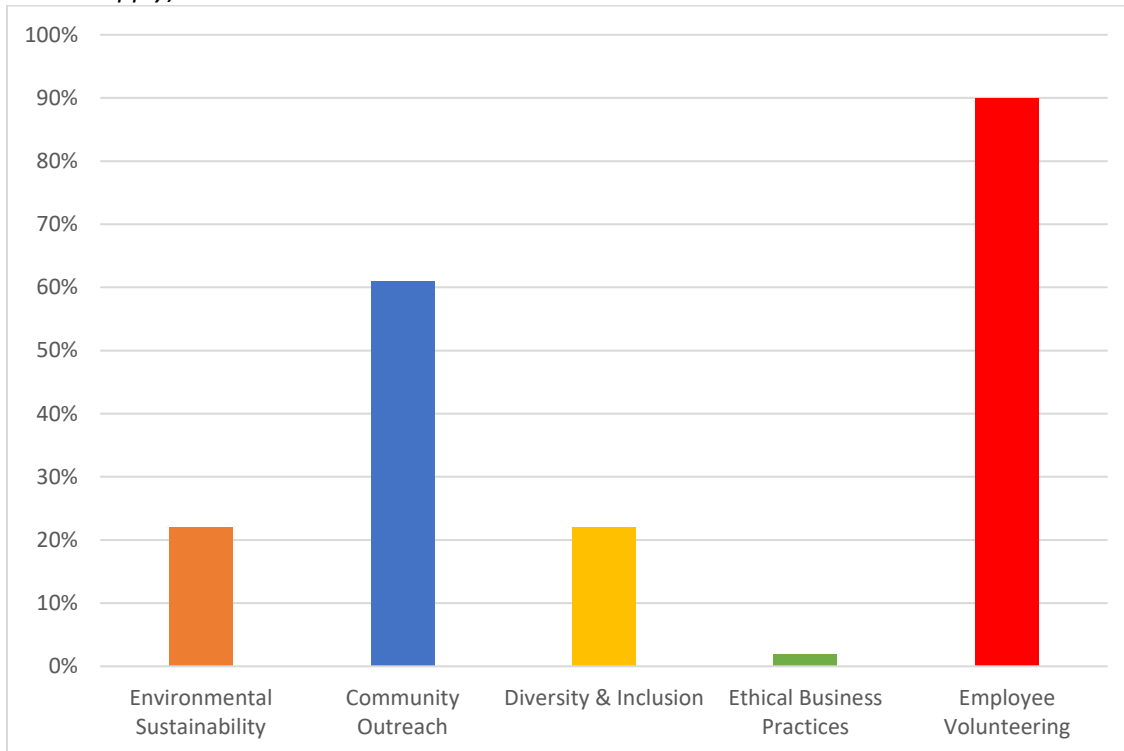
Boston College Center for Corporate Citizenship | 140 Commonwealth Ave, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467 | t: 617 552 4545 | f: 617 552 8499 | ccc@bc.edu | ccc.bc.edu

3. *What percentage of your employees would you estimate can accurately describe your organization's main CSR pillars/initiatives?*



■ Less than 25% ■ 26-50% ■ 51-75% ■ More than 75% ■ I'm not sure

4. *Which CSR topics generate the most employee engagement in your organization? (Select all that apply)*



Background Information:

The February 2025 Member Meetup focused on effective strategies for communicating corporate social responsibility initiatives to employees. Organizations shared their approaches to building employee engagement through strategic communications, storytelling, and recognition programs.

One organization discussed their multifaceted approach to employee communications across a large, geographically diverse workforce. Their CSR program centers on financial education, youth empowerment, and employee volunteerism with a strong focus on activating employees in their local communities. They emphasized the importance of using various communication channels strategically and tailoring messages to specific business segments.

The other organization shared their journey establishing a social impact program at a newer company, highlighting how they integrated social impact into the company's DNA from its inception. With employees in over 60 countries, they focus on future-forward education, inclusive economy, and climate action. They shared how authentic storytelling from both the company and community partners helps drive employee engagement and pride in the company's social impact work.

Analysis:

Successful CSR communications require thoughtful consideration of multiple factors, including:

- **Storytelling approach:** Identifying whose voice should tell the story (employees, leaders, nonprofit partners) and using authentic, compelling narratives
- **Channel selection:** Choosing appropriate communication vehicles based on audience and message type
- **Message simplification:** Focusing on key data points that employees can easily remember and share
- **Visual impact:** Using photos and videos to communicate impact more effectively than words alone
- **Feedback integration:** Being receptive to employee input and using it to refine communication approaches

Effective employee communications are essential for embedding CSR into company culture. When employees understand and connect with a company's community investment work, they become ambassadors for both the initiatives and the company's values. Organizations with mature programs emphasize the importance of making CSR communications authentic, accessible, and aligned with broader company messaging.

Challenges, Solutions, and Strategies:

1. Competing for Attention

- **Challenge:** CSR communications compete with product marketing, corporate announcements, and other internal priorities
- **Solutions:**
 - Integrating CSR into existing corporate communication channels
 - Creating annual communication calendars with corporate communications teams
 - Aligning CSR messaging with product launches and strategic announcements

2. Reaching Frontline Workers

- **Challenge:** Connecting with employees who don't have company devices or regular access to email/intranet
- **Solutions:**
 - Creating visible branding for CSR initiatives (lanyards, pins, t-shirts)
 - Developing on-site, accessible volunteer opportunities in common areas
 - Implementing recognition programs that create visible champions
 - Utilizing third-party mobile platforms that integrate with company systems

3. Measuring Communication Effectiveness

- **Challenge:** Determining if messages are resonating with employees
- **Solutions:**
 - Monitoring engagement metrics across platforms
 - Soliciting direct feedback from employees
 - Being willing to pivot when messages aren't working
 - Creating feedback loops with employee resource groups

4. Engaging Remote Employees

- **Challenge:** Building connection with distributed workforce
- **Solutions:**
 - Developing virtual volunteer opportunities
 - Creating local champion networks
 - Providing funding for remote employees to engage locally
 - Dedicating specific programming for remote employees

5. Empowering Employee Sharing

- **Challenge:** Encouraging employees to share on social media
- **Solutions:**
 - Creating pre-approved content employees can easily share
 - Using hashtags to identify shareable content
 - Leveraging peer influence rather than top-down directives
 - Using third-party platforms to simplify content sharing

6. Capturing Complete Stories

- **Challenge:** Getting all necessary details to tell impactful stories
- **Solutions:**
 - Creating simple templates or checklists for story submission
 - Using video capture tools to simplify content creation
 - Partnering with communication specialists for story development
 - Focusing on authentic, unpolished content over perfect production

Actionable Steps:

1. Know Your Why

- Define why CSR matters to your organization
- Articulate how it connects to company values and business goals
- Prepare to articulate this succinctly in any setting

2. Map Your Audiences

- Identify different employee segments and their communication preferences
- Understand what motivates different groups (impact, recognition, skills development)
- Create targeted messaging for each audience segment

3. Diversify Your Messengers

- Identify and empower employee champions
- Partner with executive sponsors
- Collaborate with nonprofit partners for authentic storytelling
- Consider whose voice will resonate most for each type of message

4. Simplify Your Data

- Focus on 1-2 memorable impact metrics
- Be transparent about numbers
- Create simple visuals that tell the story at a glance

5. Leverage Visible Recognition

- Develop simple recognition programs (certificates, awards)
- Create friendly competition through team challenges
- Highlight employee stories and achievements
- Provide tangible symbols of participation

6. Test and Learn

- Solicit regular feedback on communications
- Monitor engagement metrics
- Be willing to pivot when approaches aren't working
- Share learnings across the organization



Additional Resources:

- Executive Education Course: [Corporate Citizenship Communication](#)
- Webinar: [Communicating the Corporate Citizenship Message Internally](#)
- Research Brief: [CSR Communication](#)