

# Engage Pillar

## Internal Communications

The Inclusive Employers Standard is built upon six pillars of inclusion, which serve as its framework. These pillars—Engage, Equip, Empower, Embed, Evaluate, and Evolve—determine the success and impact of inclusion efforts within the workplace.

To support organisations at all stages of their inclusion journey we host a panel event series focusing on one pillar at a time. Out of these events we have produced a suite of resources sharing insights and experiences on a specific topics.



**The Engage pillar explores how well you know who your people are and what they need from the organisation. As well as how you engage all staff with inclusion through communication and collaboration. In this resource we are going to explore internal communication.**

A 2024 study by Gallup found that employee disengagement could be costing the global economy over seven trillion pounds, which is approximately 9% of the global GDP. The report indicated that the UK ranked 33rd out of 38 countries in Europe for employee engagement, with Italy, Luxembourg, and France having the lowest levels of engagement. This disengagement currently costs the UK economy £257 billion annually, highlighting the need for us to address this issue.

Achieving meaningful change towards a truly inclusive and engaged workplace culture cannot be accomplished by Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) or HR professionals alone; it requires the involvement and enthusiasm of the entire workforce. Effective internal communications are crucial for fostering high levels of engagement throughout your organisation. In this resource, we will explore how you can utilise internal communications to excite and engage your workforce around inclusion.



### Share regular updates

Go beyond just talking about awareness days by sharing regular updates on your inclusion efforts. Offer detailed insights and measurable progress on a quarterly basis. These updates can highlight specific initiatives, goals, and outcomes related to inclusion, demonstrating how your organisation is actively progressing against your strategic objectives. This is also a key opportunity to integrate employee data, feedback, and survey outcomes, showing how their input is directly influencing decisions. By transparently linking their feedback to tangible changes, such as adjustments in policies, programs, or workplace practices, your people will see the real impact of their contributions and feel more engaged in the ongoing process of building a more inclusive environment.



### Reach the widest audience

Internal communications don't have to be limited to just emails or written messages. Consider incorporating a variety of formats, such as infographics and videos, to share updates in a more engaging and visually appealing way. Additionally, exploring gamification strategies, such as quizzes or team challenges, can significantly boost engagement, and digital badges can be a great way to recognise staff contributions or achievements. By diversifying your communication methods, you can not only enhance engagement but also improve accessibility across the workforce. Videos, are quick and easy to consume, making them ideal for employees with limited time. Physical posters can be highly effective for organisations with a large, non-desk-based workforce, such as those in manufacturing or logistics, especially where digital communication might be less feasible. A variety of approaches ensures that your messages reach the widest audience of employees.



### Tell a story

Storytelling in workplace communications is a powerful tool for crafting narratives that resonate with your audience, humanising ideas, and making abstract concepts more relatable. Storytelling is particularly effective for building emotional connections to complex ideas, data, and statistics. It can take many forms, from traditional approaches like role model campaigns or sharing lived experiences, to more creative techniques such as using real-world scenarios to illustrate training outcomes or demonstrate return on investment. By leveraging storytelling in various formats, you can make your communication more impactful and easier for employees to understand and connect with.



### Get leaders involved

Much of internal communication comes from HR, as it naturally serves as the hub for people-centred initiatives within an organisation. However, when an inclusion update comes directly from a senior leader, it reinforces that inclusion is not just an HR initiative but a core organisational priority. This could be as simple as the quarterly inclusion update email coming directly from the CEO or having different leaders share their team's inclusion progress during an all-company meeting. Additionally, involving managers in communication through a "manager cascade" approach can be highly effective. In this model, HR shares the key messages with people managers and equips them with the tools and resources needed to relay that message to their teams. This approach is particularly impactful in organisations with distributed or shift-based workforces, ensuring that inclusion updates reach all employees, no matter their working pattern or location.

# Adapting our communication approach to meet the needs of our youth audience



Lewis Denmark (he/him)  
Cricket Development Director

Norfolk Cricket Board is the governing body for cricket in Norfolk, England. We are responsible for promoting and developing the sport of cricket across the county, providing support and resources to clubs, coaches, and players of all levels. We work with schools, community groups, and local organisations to increase participation in cricket and ensure the sport is accessible to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

## Problem

Like many sports and community-focused organisations, Norfolk Cricket Board relies on a large cohort of volunteers and young people to help deliver its services. However, gathering perspectives and insights from these harder-to-reach groups can be challenging, as they are often not based at a central location or do not have regular access to an office. Consulting with our volunteers and young people is crucial to ensuring that we are providing support and services that truly meet the needs of our community. To address this, we recognised the need for a solution that would make it easier for these groups to share their feedback with us.

## Solution

We recognised the importance of adapting our communication style to meet the needs of our

audience, rather than expecting them to adjust to us. One particularly effective solution for gathering feedback from young people was the use of QR codes linked to a feedback form. Each young person received a keyring with a QR code that could be easily scanned using any smartphone or tablet. This approach enabled them to provide feedback and suggestions after sessions and events through a platform they found convenient and familiar.

## Impact

Adapting our communication style to better meet the needs of our young people resulted in a significant increase in valuable insights, diverse perspectives, and constructive feedback from our youth cohort. This enabled us to tailor our sessions, support, and services more effectively to their needs, enhancing their overall experience with us. This approach to consultation and feedback is easily transferable beyond sports settings, offering a practical solution for engaging hard-to-reach groups or non-desk-based segments of your workforce.

**“We pride ourselves on being inclusive but it’s easy to mark your own homework. For us going through the IES we wanted to try and benchmark ourselves. To start with we weren’t 100% sure what we would get out of it, but it was a really nice evaluation process that helped us highlight our successes as well as where we need to focus. We were delighted to achieve the Bronze award ”**

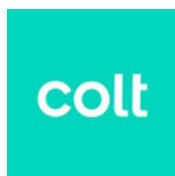
Lewis Denmark  
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**Want to learn more?**

**Email us at [standard@inclusiveemployers.co.uk](mailto:standard@inclusiveemployers.co.uk)**

## Using consistent and engaging communication to widen participation



Rachel Collins (she/her)  
Head of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Colt Technology Services is a global telecommunications and IT services provider that offers high-performance, secure, and scalable solutions to businesses across a wide variety of industries. We have a global presence with offices in cities across Europe, Asia, and North America.

### Problem

Driving inclusion and connection in a large, global organisation presents several challenges, including time zone differences, language barriers, cultural diversity, and varying levels of accessibility. As a result, we have had to be deliberate and consistent with our communications, ensuring they are not only relevant and engaging but also reach all employees in a way that resonates with their unique needs and perspectives.

### Solution

We have implemented a variety of approaches to ensure our communications are both engaging and accessible. First and foremost, we maintain consistency to make inclusion a familiar and integral part of our everyday business. Our bi-weekly "Staying Connected" e-newsletter regularly highlights updates and progress on inclusion initiatives. Additionally, we are fortunate to have a passionate and

engaged leadership team that actively supports and shares inclusion messages. For instance, inclusion updates are always included in our CEO cascade pack, which is distributed to our leadership team. This ensures our people managers are well-informed about our progress against the inclusion strategy, enabling them to share these insights with their teams. Lastly, we incorporate clear calls to action in much of our communication, providing our employees with specific instructions and guidance on how they can get involved. For example part of our "Allyship in Action" campaign, where employees were encouraged to commit to one allyship behaviour by taking an allyship pledge, included videos and written tips to help employees across the organisation actively engage.

### Impact

We've experienced a significant increase in engagement with our inclusion communications and campaigns. For instance, within the first six months of our "Allyship in Action" initiative, over 500 employees actively participated and took the allyship pledge.

**"In 2024 we completed the IES and achieved Bronze, which was a great achievement, but what it really did was help me to have productive internal conversations. It meant I could give key stakeholders a model to show what we were great at and help shape the harder conversations around what we should do next."**

Rachel Collins  
Head of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion  
Colt Technology Services



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