

Case Studies

Mobilizing Front-Line Supervisors Carolina Power & Light

Carolina Power & Light (CP&L) wanted to improve how it communicated with its workforce by establishing and recognizing first-line supervisors and managers as primary and reliable communications sources.

L.M. Dulye & Co. developed and implemented a two-way communications program to help first-line supervisors deliver and receive information about CP&L's business performance, products and people - a process that ultimately helped the organization improve its internal business climate and better compete in the marketplace.

Communications Issues

| Desired Outcomes | Required Actions |
|---|--|
| Improve employee understanding of and satisfaction with CP&L's business direction, goals and performance. | Implement rigorous two-way process for sharing messages and receiving/responding to feedback. |
| Accelerate culture change efforts. | Integrate 3-phase process into business culture. |
| Improve the quality of internal communications at CP&L. | Develop various support tools including key messages from senior leadership and feedback collection tools for leveraging feedback and measuring performance. |
| Improve the ability and responsibility of CP&L managers and supervisors to communicate. | Conduct communications skills training for all managers and supervisors. Secure strong leadership commitment. |

Two-Way Communications Improvement Initiative

The CP&L Corporate Communications department managed the execution and required actions to successfully support a pilot two-way communications program, with L.M. Dulye & Co. providing strategic planning, implementation and measurement support.

PHASE 1: PLANNING

CP&L started the change process by identifying business units to pilot the new, two-way communications program, which was marketed to the business unit leadership through a presentation that built awareness, understanding and support for the new program. One-on-one and small-group meetings were held with senior leadership to review the presentation, address questions and concerns, and enlist their full support to implement the pilot plan. The plan and executive support was then communicated with mid-level and first-line managers and supervisors.

L.M. Dulye & Co. conducted extensive research of the existing communications climate at each pilot business unit using both informal and formal assessment tools to gauge the strengths, weaknesses and operating practices.. Within each pilot business unit, eight to ten focus sessions were conducted with employees, supervisors and managers to gather feedback on existing communications climate and needs. Afterwards, L.M. Dulye & Co. followed up with a brief written survey to 15 percent of employees at each pilot business unit. The survey, which was distributed to employees at all levels, again measured the communications climate.

L.M. Dulye & Co. then used these results to develop a customized and disciplined process - along with support tools - to promote the pilot two-way communications program. The roles and responsibilities of senior leaders, managers and supervisors were defined and support tools developed, including a key message packet, a one-day training workshop and feedback collection tool.

PHASE 2: IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the two-way communications program began with skills training for all managers and supervisors. We also used key message packets and feedback tools to officially launch the ***two-way communications cycle*** - a process of moving information from CP&L's executives and managers to employees and then back again to executives and managers. We then used feedback to develop the next round of key messages and monitor the entire process.

PHASE 3: ASSESSMENT/REFINEMENT

L.M. Dulye & Co. measured the impact and effectiveness of the program via a personalized metric system developed to assess both the impact of the two-way communications program and the effectiveness of the two-way communications process and tools. Assessments were conducted four to six months after launch of the pilot program and data was analyzed and results reported for each business unit's leadership.

The program was a success across the pilot business units because L.M. Dulye & Co. worked hand in hand with CP&L to closely monitor progress on two-way communication actions, and make adjustments as needed. We also identified and publicly recognized best practices and role models, and communicated the impact of these successes across the company.