Organizational communication POV

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Organizational communication

In its simplest form, **communication is a social exchange between two or more parties.** Within organizations, there are several modes through which communication occurs (e.g., face-to-face, virtually), many types of communicative approaches and behavior, and several operationalizations of effective communication (e.g., information sharing, frequency of communication, quality of communication) (Jex & Britt, 2008; Marlow, Lacerenza, Paoletti, Burke, & Salas, 2018). When organizations approach communication with a lens of care, it can foster team performance and engagement as well as instill a sense of trust, support and inclusion in employees. As a part of our core beliefs at Limeade we seek to enable and encourage positive organizational communication that demonstrates care and enables employees to trust, inspire, support and connect with each other.

This paper reviews why organizational communication matters and outlines the characteristics of positive communication. We also present findings on how organizational communication relates to factors including employee engagement, well-being, burnout, inclusion and feeling valued by, connected to and cared for by one's organization. Due to an ever-changing global workforce and evolving working arrangements, it is important that employees be provided with the technology, tools and structures necessary to stay connected with their coworkers, managers, leaders and organization.

Why organizational communication matters

When organizations provide the support necessary for effective and positive communication, it signals to employees that they are valued, cared for and respected. This instills a sense of mutual trust, support and respect. It also prompts employees to reciprocate care and effort towards their organization. As mutual trust grows, so do positive climates where employees feel they can bring their unique selves to work and voice their opinions and perspectives. Psychologically safe climates (i.e., where employees feel safe in taking interpersonal risks) and promotive-voice climates (i.e., where employees are encouraged and empowered to voice their thoughts) enhance inclusion and foster engagement among employees, thereby contributing to organizational effectiveness (Morrison, 2014). Communication and trust therefore share a reciprocal relationship, where positive and effective communication practices foster trust, which subsequently improves relationships among employees (Donati, Zappala, & Gonzalez-Roma, 2016). Overall, environments that promote positive communication facilitate trusting relationships in which individuals can communicate more effectively with one another.

Additionally, when organizations communicate openly and clearly with employees and treat them with dignity and respect, employees sense a positive exchange where they feel valued (Colquitt et al., 2012; Greenberg, 1993). Based on social exchange norms, employees that feel a sense of open and honest communication are subsequently
more engaged at work, perform better and have more trust in their organization.

Positive communication norms and behavior signal the dependability, care and professionalism of an organization, which determines employees' attitudes towards and behavior within their company (Aryee et al., 2002; Costa, Fulmer, & Anderson, 2018).

Communication as a key driver of organizational effectiveness also contributes greatly to team and interpersonal outcomes. Communication is inherently interpersonal, whether it is taking place at the organizational, team or dyadic level. It takes place in interpersonal exchanges that subsequently provide resources in the forms of trust, socioemotional support, inclusion, knowledge sharing, instrumental support and positive emotions (Halbesleben, 2012; Lehmann-Willenbrock & Allen, 2014). In addition, because communication and social exchange helps meet workers' instrumental and socioemotional needs, it is linked to positive perceptions of teamwork and team satisfaction (which even further improves team performance and innovation; LePine, Methot, Crawford and Buckman, 2012; MacKenzie et al., 2011). Further, as positive exchange persists, individuals feel more compelled to reciprocate to their organizations and teams with increased effort, information sharing, innovation and proactivity. Subsequently, teams are more cohesive, learn more, perform more organizational citizenship behaviors, are more innovative and have stronger psychological safety climates (Costa et al., 2018).

Drivers of positive communication

There are two common approaches to how organizational communication trickles down to employees — decentralized and centralized approaches. Decentralized approaches (i.e., where communication flows freely throughout the entire organization; see Figure 1) allow for increased flow of information and unique information sharing, while centralized approaches (i.e., where communication tends to flow from one source to all group members) may help ensure all employees have access to the same information (Jex & Britt, 2008). It is important that organizations incorporate aspects from both (e.g., information flow, consistency and inclusion of all employees) into their communication strategies.
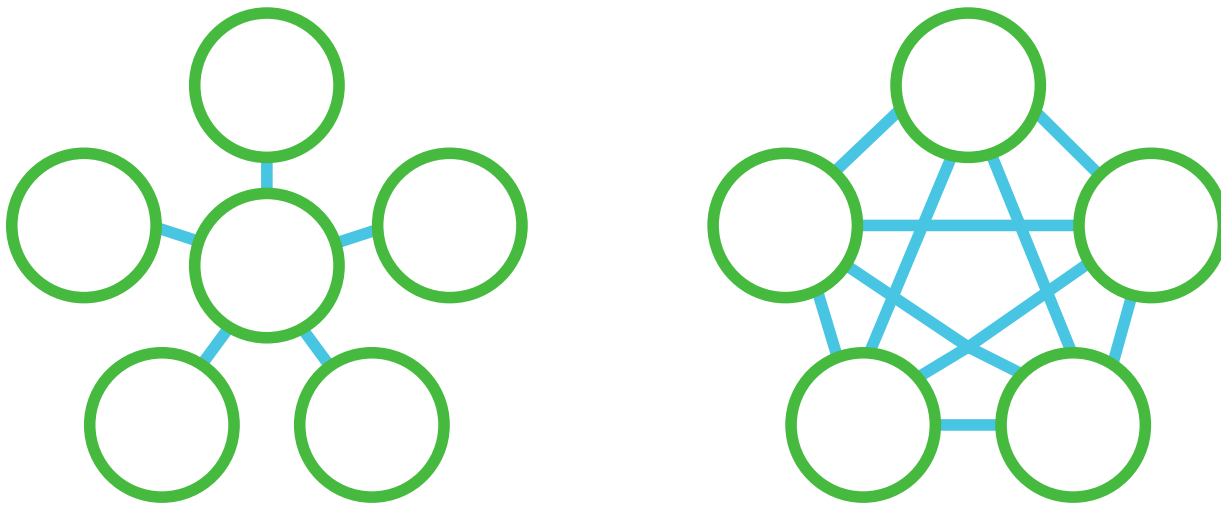
Figure 1. Centralized versus decentralized communication networks. The centralized network on the left demonstrates one source of information for all others, while the decentralized network on the right demonstrates free flow of communication.

Organizational leaders play an influential role in how organizational communication is received by employees. Leaders not only set norms around how to communicate but can also directly motivate or inhibit employee voice behaviors. For example, leaders whose actions and behaviors are ethical and moral (i.e., ethical leaders; Den Hartog, 2015), as well as transformational leaders (I.e., those who inspire vision and serve as role models; Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1994) motivate employees to participate in upward voice behaviors (see Table 3 in Appendix; Morrison, 2014) and convey to employees that they are trustworthy, dependable and caring (Engelbrecht et al., 2017). Conversely, abusive leaders, who display hostile behaviors towards employees (Tepper, Simon, & Park, 2017) inhibit employee upward voice behaviors (Morrison, 2014) and undermine trust. Positive exchanges such as humor, are linked to increased socio-emotional exchanges (e.g., supportive statements; Lehmann-Willenbrock & Allen, 2014).

Tools and resources

For any of the characteristics listed above to take place, individuals must have the structures in place to communicate with coworkers, managers and leadership. For this reason, communication technology plays a key role in connecting an increasingly virtual and distributed workforce. For example, one study found that 96% of workers use the internet, email or cellphones to stay connected with their jobs (Madden & Jones, 2008). Communication technologies can allow for more informal communication, as well as organization-wide messaging and communication with individuals across teams (Jex & Britt, 2008; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006), which can reduce professional isolation within virtual teams (Golden et al., 2008).

While communication technology may increase connectedness among employees, it is also important that it is used in a way that is sensitive to employee work-life boundaries. Research has found that communication technology can blur the boundaries of work and non-work roles, thereby reducing employee recovery experiences and increasing work-life conflict (Dettmers, 2017; Park et al., 2011). As such, incorporating the use of communication technology also requires organizations to provide the structures, policies and resources to help employees set work-life boundaries and recover from work daily (Park et al., 2011). Employees should be able to reap the benefits of communication technology during non-work time, while also managing to unwind from the workday.

Current study

We sought to examine how different experiences of organizational communication — specifically around information flow and adequacy — related to employee engagement, well-being, burnout, inclusion and the overall employee experience. We also examined how different experiences in organizational communication relate to feeling valued by, feeling connected to, trusting in, and feeling cared for, by one's organization. To test the statistical significance of these relationships, we utilized Kruskal-Wallis tests.

Participants and procedure

We administered an online survey using Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). After screening the data and removing cases that indicated careless responding, the sample consisted of 354 individuals. Participants were U.S.-based employees — 90.1% indicated they worked more than 30 hours a week, while 9.9% indicated they worked less than 30 hours per week. 56.2% of the sample identified as men, 42.9% as women and 0.8% identified as non-binary or a third gender. The sample was predominantly White (65.5%) and aged between 25 and 35 (50.3%).

Measures

Organizational communication variables

Information flow. Organizational information flow was measured with one item, "Information flows openly throughout my overall organization." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond. For analytical purposes and to aid in the interpretation of results, respondents were placed into three categories; those who responded with disagree or strongly disagree were placed in the "Information does NOT flow" group, those who

responded with neither agree nor disagree were placed in the "Neutral" group, and those who responded with agree or strongly agree were placed into the "Information DOES flow" group.

Information adequacy. Organizational information Adequacy (not flow) was measured with one item, "I receive adequate information within my organization." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond. For analytical purposes and to aid in the interpretation of results, respondents were placed into three categories; those who responded with disagree or strongly disagree were placed in the "Inadequate information" group, those who responded with neither agree nor disagree were placed in the "Neutral" group, and those who responded with agree or strongly agree were placed into the "Adequate information" group.

Employee outcome variables

Employee well-being. Employee well-being was measured with one item, "Overall, I have well-being in my life." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Employee engagement. Employee engagement was measured with one item, "I am engaged in my work." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Burnout. Burnout was measured with one item, "I feel burned out." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Inclusion. Inclusion was measured with one item, "I feel included at my organization." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Feeling valued. Feeling valued by one's organization was measured with one item, "I feel valued by my organization." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Trust in one's organization. Trust in one's organization was measured with one item, "I trust my organization." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Connection to organization. Feeling connected to one's organization was measured with one item, "I feel connected to what's happening in my organization." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Overall employee experience. Overall employee experience was measured with one item, "The employee experience in my organization is a positive one." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Care. Perceptions of care was measured with one item, "I feel like my organization cares about me." This item was rated on a 6-point Likert scale with 1 = strongly disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 5 = strongly agree, and 6 = prefer not to respond.

Results

We used Kruskal-Wallis tests to examine differences in outcome variables as a function of group membership, specifically among the two communication groups listed above.

Information flow. Results indicated significant differences between the information flow groups on all outcome variables, including connection to organization ($H(2)=94.81$, $p < .01$), trust in one's organization ($H(2)=117.42$, $p < .01$), feeling valued ($H(2)=88.69$, $p < .01$), perceptions of care ($H(2)=106.34$, $p < .01$), engagement ($H(2)=41.24$, $p < .01$), overall employee experience ($H(2)=104.65$, $p < .01$), well-being ($H(2)=44.56$, $p < .01$), burnout ($H(2)=38.69$, $p < .01$), inclusion ($H(2)=91.35$, $p < .01$). Multiple pairwise comparisons (see Table 1 for statistics) revealed that those who experience information flow throughout their organization had significantly more favorable outcomes on all variables of interest when compared to individuals who did not experience organizational information flow. See Figures 2 and 3 for a visual representation of differences in outcome favorability by group.

Information adequacy. Results also indicated significant differences between the information flow groups on all outcome variables, including connection to organization ($H(2)=115.93$, $p < .01$), trust in one's organization ($H(2)=104.26$, $p < .01$), feeling valued ($H(2)=102.53$, $p < .01$), perceptions of care ($H(2)=94.70$, $p < .01$), engagement ($H(2)=41.93$, $p < .01$), overall employee experience ($H(2)=107.07$, $p < .01$), well-being ($H(2)=46.05$, $p < .01$), burnout ($H(2)=33.98$, $p < .01$), inclusion ($H(2)=102.07$, $p < .01$). Multiple pairwise comparisons (see Table 2 for statistics) revealed that those who receive adequate information within their organization had significantly more favorable outcomes on all variables of interest when compared to individuals who do not receive adequate organizational information. Figures 4 and 5 for a visual representation of differences in outcome favorability by group.

Table 1. Pairwise comparisons between information flow groups

Outcome variable	H	p-value
Connection to one's organization	-127.30	.00
Trust in one's organization	-141.33	.00
Feeling valued by one's organization	-124.00	.00
Perceptions of care	-136.16	.00
Engagement	-79.45	.00
Overall employee experience	-131.06	.00
Well-being	-81.27	.00
Burnout	84.19	.00
Inclusion	-124.34	.00

Note. These values represent comparison formula [Information DOES NOT flow–Information DOES flow]. Thus, a negative test statistic indicates that the Information DOES NOT flow group had lower scores on outcome variables compared to the Information DOES flow group (and vice versa). Comparisons against Neutral group not shown.

Table 2. Pairwise comparisons between information adequacy groups

| Outcome variable	H	p-value
Connection to one's organization	-143.32	.00
Trust in one's organization	-139.32	.00
Feeling valued by one's organization	-139.79	.00
Perceptions of care	-137.68	.00
Engagement	-80.81	.00
Overall employee experience	-138.35	.00
Well-being	-82.83	.00
Burnout	80.14	.00
Inclusion	-138.50	.00

Note. These values represent comparison formula [Information DOES NOT flow–Information DOES flow]. Thus, a negative test statistic indicates that the Information DOES NOT flow group had lower scores on outcome variables compared to the Information DOES flow group (and vice versa). Comparisons against Neutral group not shown.
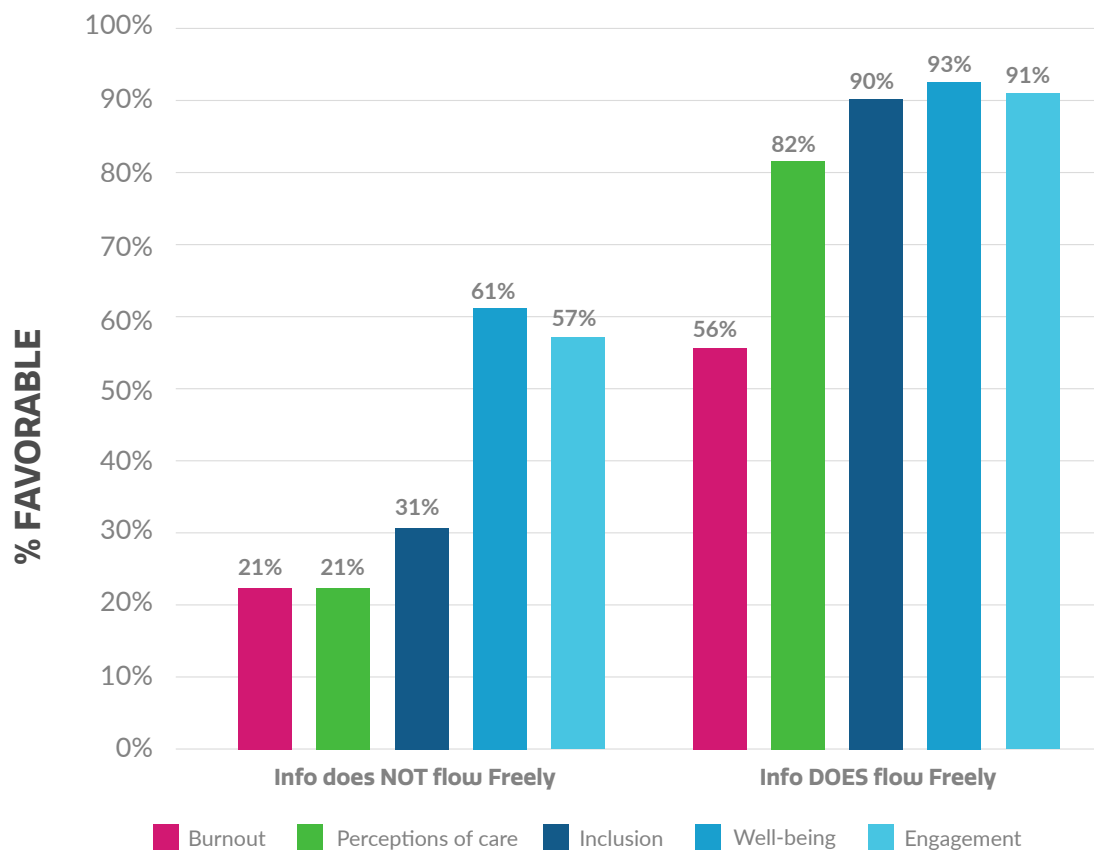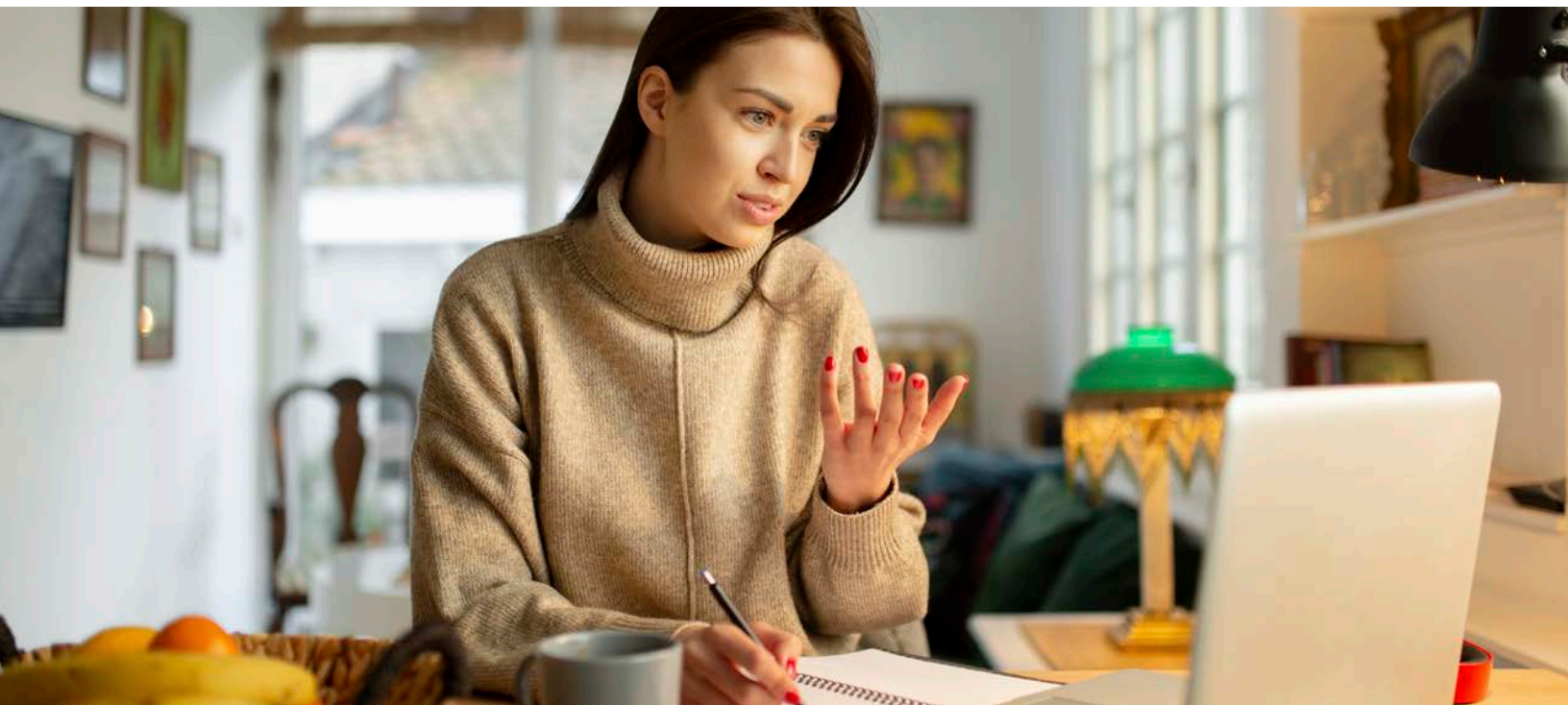
Figure 2. Compared to those that did not feel as though information flowed freely throughout their organization, those that did were also more likely to report favorably on feelings of burnout, care, inclusion, well-being and engagement.
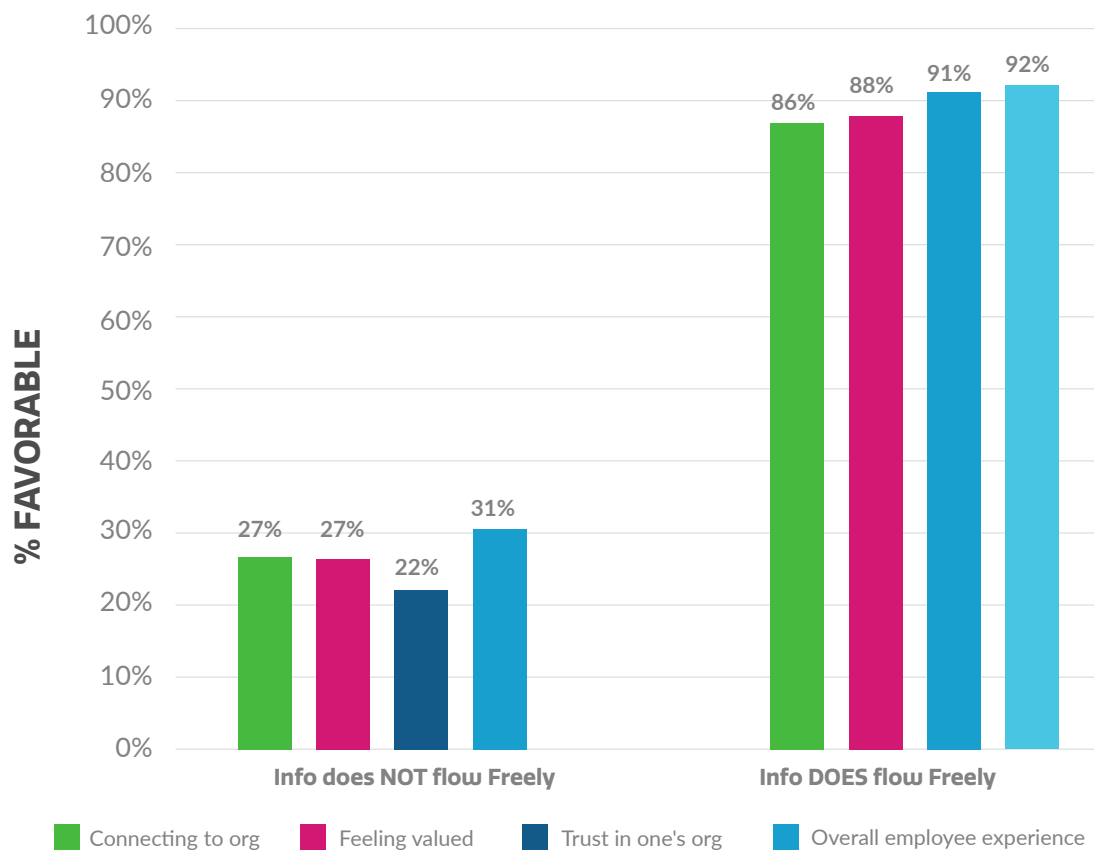
Figure 3. Compared to those that did not feel as though information flowed freely throughout their organization, those that did were also more likely to report favorably on feeling connected to what was happening within the organization, feeling valued, trusting the organization and their overall employee experience.

Figure 4. Compared to those that did not feel as though they received adequate information within their organization, those that did were also more likely to report favorably on feelings of burnout, care, inclusion, well-being and engagement.
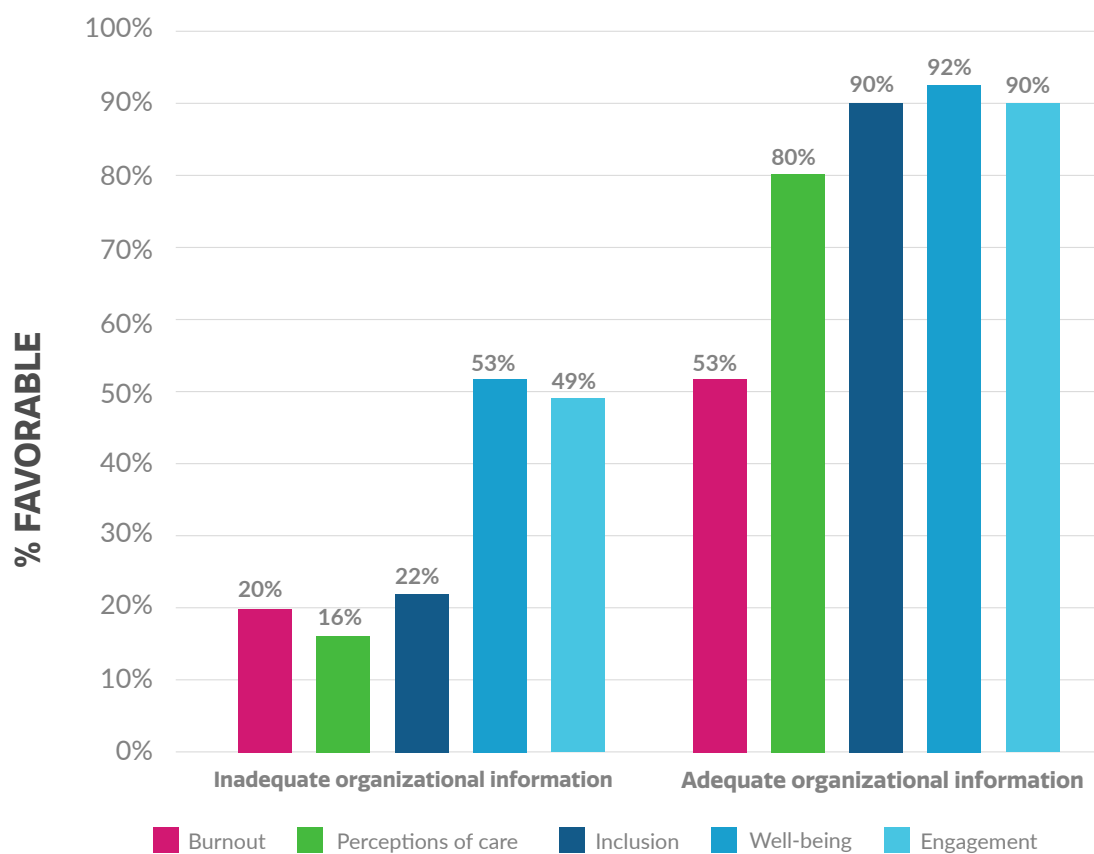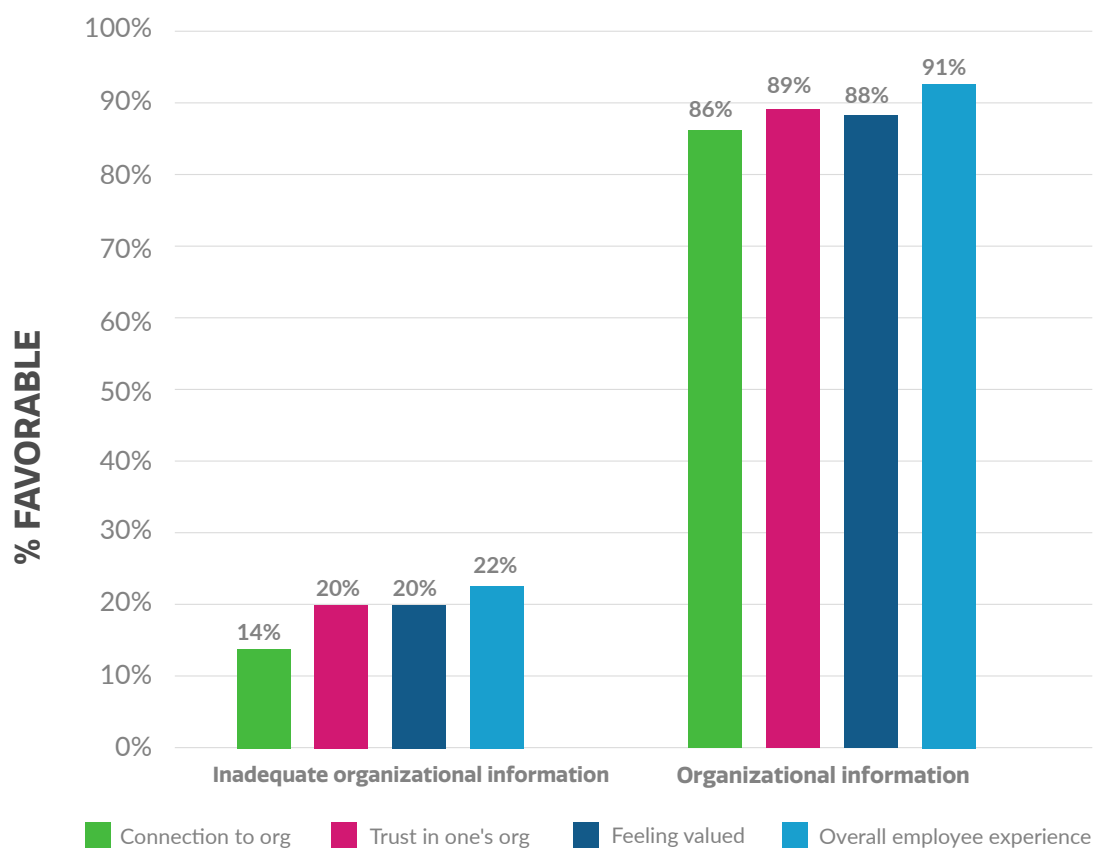
Figure 5. Compared to those that did not feel as though they received adequate information within their organization, those that did were also more likely to report favorably on feeling connected to what was happening within the organization, feeling valued, trusting the organization and their overall employee experience.

Conclusion

This paper reviewed why organizational communication matters and covered characteristics of positive communication. We also conducted a study to examine how different experiences of organizational communication — specifically around information flow and adequacy — related to employee engagement, well-being, burnout, inclusion, and the overall employee experience, as well as feeling valued by, feeling connected to, trusting in, and feeling cared for, by one's organization. Findings revealed that communication experiences were statistically significantly related to all outcomes of interest — specifically, perceptions of organizational information flow and adequacy were positively associated with more positive employee results. These results suggest that when organizations approach communication with a lens of care, it has the ability to powerfully impact the overall employee experience.
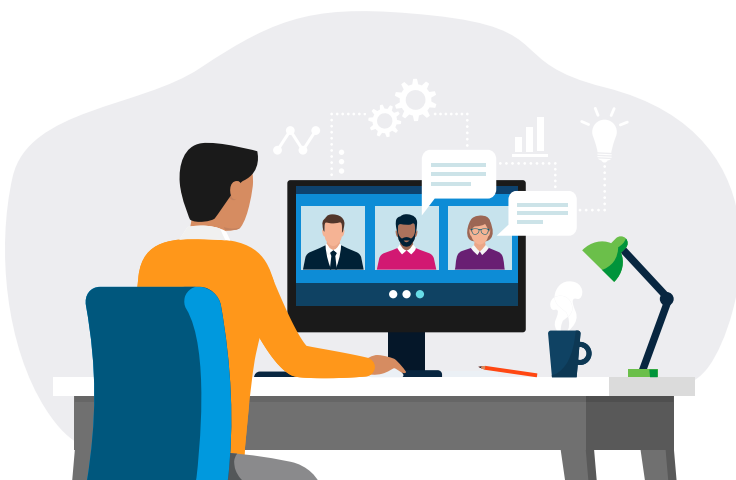
Recommendations: Organizations

1. Foster climates that promote exchange

Climates where employees share and agree on communication norms enable unique and open information sharing, as well as trust, which subsequently lead to innovation and team performance (González-Romá & Hernández, 2014). Further, climates where employees feel psychological safety in sharing their authentic selves and taking interpersonal risks increase feelings of trust and inclusion. In order for employees to experience a climate where positive exchange and communication is, what we do, begins with a focus on cultural beliefs. Organizations can do this by creating norms for these types of behaviors and developing practices and policies that encourage interpersonal risks, information sharing and voice behaviors (e.g., providing time for employee input during company meetings, providing formal processes in which employees are a part of organizational decision making).

2. Balance technology and well–being

Communication technologies enable employees to communicate with their teams regardless of where they are located throughout the world and has given employees the flexibility to work where they want, when they want. While tools like email, cellphones, online instant chat mechanisms and videoconferencing have increased convenience and open communication among employees, they also pose a risk for employees to feel pressured to be connected to work everywhere, all the time. In a rapidly changing workforce, employees need access to these types of technologies, but organizations must pair this provision with policies on technology use during non-work time, as well as an organizational culture that supports flexibility, recovery from work and well-being.
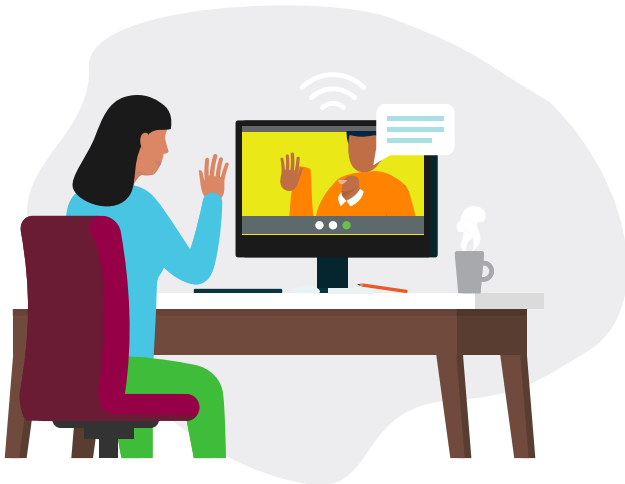
Recommendations: Managers

1. Model positive communication

Managers play an important role in setting group and team norms, and because positive communication practices are rooted in social exchanges, managers have an opportunity to help their employees develop these practices through modeling behaviors. Managers can demonstrate these behaviors by sharing their unique perspectives and by asking employees to voice their unique perspectives openly. They can additionally increase positive exchange relationships by modeling behaviors like instrumental and socioemotional support to their employees, recognizing when employees themselves support and demonstrate positive communication among one another as well as by taking appropriate action when employees engage in upward voice behaviors.

2. Promote information sharing

One of the most important communication behaviors that drives innovation is unique information sharing, where employees share novel ideas and perspectives (Donati et al., 2014; González-Romá & Hernández, 2014; Hülsheger, Anderson, & Salgado, 2009). There can be barriers to sharing unique information, such as the lack of norms for sharing unconventional ideas, feeling unsafe or supported to share ideas, little opportunity to voice these perspectives or inability to reach other employees beyond one's immediate team. Managers can address these barriers to increase unique information sharing. Specifically, they can verbally encourage employees to share unique ideas, give them opportunities to voice these thoughts during meetings and establish time and opportunity to cross-collaborate with other teams.

Recommendations: Individuals

1. Use technology to connect

Employees use technology to communicate with their teams on interdependent work tasks, but this tool also gives employees an opportunity to connect with other employees whom they do not typically communicate with or see face-to-face. Employees should utilize technology to connect and share ideas with others who they do not typically speak with. In addition, this technology can be used to support employee interest or resource groups (e.g., working parent groups, women in the workplace, etc.), which give employees socioemotional support opportunities at work.

2. Practice positive communication behaviors

Individuals should make a habit of practicing positive communication behaviors such as upward voice, open information sharing, unique information sharing and instrumental and socioemotional exchanges with coworkers. These communication behaviors help employees connect in a way that inspires trust, engagement, innovation, team performance, inclusion and organizational effectiveness. Individuals should take note of communication practices that lead to positive outcomes, recognize each other for positive and supportive communication behaviors and enact positive communication behavior regularly.
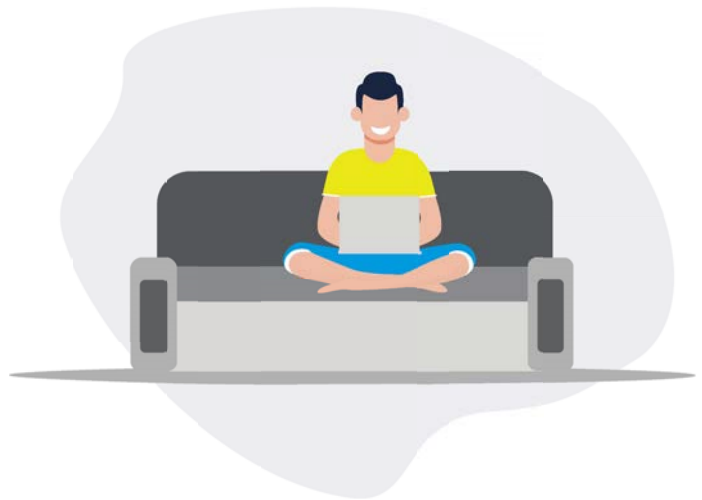
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Appendix

Beyond our research on the definition, impact and drivers of communication, we would like to acknowledge that communication is a complex topic that can take on multiple perspectives (e.g., organization-wide communication, team communication, individual communication behaviors).
To provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the more tactical elements of positive communication practices and behaviors, we further discuss the role communication plays at work and interpersonally and what specific positive communicative behaviors look like.

Organizational outcomes of individual and team communication behaviors

Based on our review of the literature, we find that various communicative behaviors drive organizational and team effectiveness and performance (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006). Scholars have argued that while the underpinnings of team performance include team coordination, cooperation and communication (Kozlowski & Bell, 2003; Kozlowski & Ilgen, 2006), team communication serves as a means through which coordination and cooperation are enabled. Specifically, research has shown that communicative behaviors such as information sharing (i.e., the open and honest exchange of unique information) and voice behaviors are predictive of effectiveness, performance and innovation. A meta-analysis demonstrated that unique information sharing and open information sharing (i.e., sharing novel ideas and sharing them freely) fostered innovation in teams and were directly linked to team performance (Donati et al., 2016; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011). Another study demonstrated that promotive team voice behaviors were linked to higher levels of team innovation and performance gains, as these behaviors involved the expression of novel ideas that were growth-focused (Li et al., 2017). Communication takes place between various parties, at various levels within an organization and

Communication and context

through various modes. For example, the organization or organizational leadership can communicate to all employees, two coworkers can communicate with each other or a manager can speak with their team. Communication can take place over phone, through webcam or face-to-face. Intricacies of the context can impact the effectiveness of communication and are therefore important to consider.

Organization-Wide Communication

Organization-wide communication plays a large role in developing trust, engagement and inclusion among employees. There are several aspects of the organizational context that influence communication including the organizational structure or networks, processes and tools for communication and organizational culture and climate. Organizational communication can be described by the patterns used to communicate within the network or organizational structure. Specifically, organizations typically utilize a centralized or decentralized communication network.

In **centralized** communication networks, communication tends to flow from one source to all group members. Typically, the leader takes in information and then disseminates it throughout the organization (Jex & Britt, 2008; Leavitt, 1951; Shaw, 1964, 1978). Centralized networks allow information to be standardized, allowing all organization members to obtain the same information. In this sense, centralized networks have high levels of open information sharing, in that all members receive the same information, no matter how common or unique. However, it is also important to have access to unique ideas and perspectives (Donati et al., 2016) and centralized networks tend to restrict and discourage the flow of information between members, thereby reducing a sense of trust

within the organization. **Decentralized** networks, on the other hand, enable the free flow of communication throughout the organization (See Figure 1). Every employee can communicate with all other organizational members, which allows communication to flow wider and faster and also enables sharing of unique information, thereby increasing feelings of trust and inclusion. To do this, organizations can encourage communication among and across teams, incorporate more cross-functional projects that involve various backgrounds and provide clear communication channels between leadership and front-line employees.

Organizational communication can also be **formal** or **informal,** where formal communication involves written memos, formal statements on policy and information provided at group meetings and informal communication involves socialization opportunities and chat mechanisms (Jex & Britt, 2008). Because centralized and decentralized and formal and informal organization communication serve different purposes, it is important that organizations strike a balance between these structures of communication. For example, organizational leadership should be responsible for sharing formal (and important informal) communications, such as memos, formal statements and organization-wide successes. However, employees should also be provided with the structures and technology to communicate across the organization and across teams, as this increases information sharing and unique ideas and perspectives and subsequently trust, inclusion and engagement among teams. Employees should also be provided with space, opportunities and structure to communicate informally with coworkers and managers (e.g., employee support groups, lunches) as this provides a context and climate where employees connect and are inspired by each other. Further,

employees can be provided with formal processes to provide feedback, opinions and take part in organizational decision-making processes. This shows employees that they are valued and provides a communication channel for the organization and employees to rationally discuss organizational decisions.

Organizational **climate** plays a role in determining communication behaviors. González-Romá and Hernández (2014) examined climate uniformity (i.e., patterns on how climate perceptions are distributed across a group) and found that work groups who had non-uniform patterns (i.e., where climate perceptions were multimodal or skewed) tended to create sub-groups that subsequently influenced intrateam communication. Specifically, they found that in non-uniform climates, group members were more likely to feel less personal attachment and higher levels of interpersonal distance from team members who did not share their subgroup or views. Because of this, communication quality suffered across the work group as a whole. Another study examined the climate of authenticity within a healthcare organization, where employees and the organization valued and encouraged felt emotions to be expressed. Being in a climate where sharing emotions was encouraged helped to buffer against caregiver burnout (Grandey, Foo, Groth, & Goodwin, 2012). When employees exist within an organizational climate where open, honest and vulnerable communication is encouraged and accepted, they are more likely to perceive honesty and therefore be more trusting of those around them. Further, they are more likely to reciprocate and be open and honest themselves. Authentic climates create a space where employees feel like they can be their unique selves and openly discuss their thoughts, opinions and vulnerabilities. They trust that what they share will be heard and validated.

Specific behavior norms and climates exist at the organizational level as well. Namely, **group voice climate,** refers to shared beliefs about whether (1) speaking up is safe versus dangerous (group voice safety) and (2) whether group members can voice effectively (group voice efficacy) (Morrison, Wheeler-Smith, & Kamdar, 2011). Group voice safety is related to feelings of psychological safety (i.e., belief that it is safe to take interpersonal risks) and group voice efficacy indicates whether employees feel that their input will be taken seriously and acted upon. Similarly, it is also possible for a climate of silence to exist where employees have a shared belief that voice is ineffective and unsafe (Morrison & Milliken, 2000; Morrison et al., 2011). Because norms for and beliefs about these behaviors exist at an organizational level, positive attitudes alone do not guarantee voice. The organizational context must enable and support effective communication behaviors in order for those behaviors to translate into trust, engagement and inclusion.

Unit-Level and Interpersonal Communication

Unit-level and interpersonal characteristics additionally play a role in communication. Utilizing social network theory, LePine et al. (2012) developed a model dictating that task interdependence, experience and perceived similarity are all predictive of the network structure of teams as defined by **instrumental** (formal and job-related), **friendship** (interpersonal and informally supportive) and **multiplex** (comprised of multiple relational) ties. They argue that those with instrumental ties typically seek work-related help from their partner, which involves advice, communication or feedback that helps individuals address work demands. This type of tie and communication promote the receipt of informational support and completion of taskwork, as well as cognitive-based trust (i.e., viewing another as dependable and professional), thereby contributing to team performance (Baldwin et al., 1997; Cross & Cummings, 2004; LePine et al, 2012). Friendship ties provide an outlet to disclose and manage emotions, where

communication regarding good or bad things at work and non-work topics can exist (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000). They propose that this type of relationship provides a coping resource that fosters team member well-being but may also detract from taskwork as it may cause distraction or interruption during work time. However, these types of exchanges also lead to increased affect-based trust (i.e., viewing another as honest, warm and caring).

Multiplex ties are both instrumental and friendly and provide an enhanced mechanism to cope with work demands by providing richer interactions that improve understanding and solutions to work issues. LePine and colleagues (2012) argue that this form of relationship contributes to completion of taskwork, teamwork (as they increase social interactions, support and trust) and team satisfaction (as instrumental and socioemotional needs are met simultaneously). Generally, communication among teammates is a must in order to develop trust. When team members have multiplex ties, they feel better connected to others both emotionally and professionally, which makes those teammates more likely to trust and cooperate with each other. For these ties to be developed, teammates should communicate with each other both formally and informally. They can do this by setting regular team check-in meetings, regularly chatting online, or stopping by coworkers' desks regularly to chat about work- and non-work-related topics. Having frequent, positive and casual communication will help develop relational ties that lead to trust.

Communicative behaviors also exist at the **team and interpersonal level.** For example, any type of communication with a coworker or manager can be conceptualized as a social exchange. In this sense, relationships are defined as a series of discretionary transactions where each partner benefits from said transactions (Baker & Dutton, 2007; Halbesleben, 2012). Behaviors that exist under these social exchanges include

recognition, social support, helping behavior and knowledge building and sharing, which all provide socioemotional resources to each partner, thereby enabling improved well-being, inclusion and performance (Halbesleben, 2012). Further, Li and colleagues (2017) examined voice behavior at the team level (i.e., the extent to which team members as a whole engage in expression of opinions, concerns or ideas about work-related issues; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011) and found that promotive team voice was linked to higher levels of team innovation, which increased team productivity and performance gains.

Additionally, team prohibitive voice led to higher levels of team monitoring, which increased team safety performance. This means that promotive team voice (i.e., expression of novel ideas for improving team functioning) mobilizes teams to perform and pursue growth-related goals by surfacing new ideas and focusing on a future ideal state. Prohibitive team voice (i.e., expression of concerns about practices or behaviors that may be detrimental to the team) mobilizes teams to pursue security-related goals by focusing on possible threats or hazards in the work environment that harm or put the team in jeopardy. Team-level and interpersonal communicative behaviors have a profound influence on individual and organizational outcomes, particularly because they exist in interpersonal exchanges that provide employees with resources necessary to cope with work demands and pursue work-related goals.

Virtual Communication

Virtual communication is on the rise as work-related technology and alternative work arrangements have changed the way workers communicate with each other (Giumetti et al., 2013; Halbesleben 2012; Spreitzer, Cameron, & Garrett, 2017). One study found that 96% of

workers use the internet, email or cell-phones to stay connected with their jobs (Madden & Jones, 2008), demonstrating the potential for virtual communication to be extremely effective. However, communication technology presents both benefits and risks in the workplace. The term "autonomy paradox" has been coined to reflect the notion that because workers have the option to be at work (or online) anytime and anywhere, they feel pressure to be at work (online) all the time and everywhere (Barber & Santuzzi, 2015; Spreitzer et al., 2017).

Boswell and Olson-Buchanan (2007) examined the use of communication technology (including cellphones, voicemail, e-mail, PDAs, and pagers) after work hours and found that use of communication technology was linked to increased work-family conflict. Similarly, Dettmers (2017) found that when employees felt like they had to be available during nonwork time, they experienced decreased psychological detachment from work, and subsequently increased work-family conflict. However, recent research has demonstrated reattaching to work in the morning (i.e., mentally tuning into work, preparing for the upcoming workday) before going to work is tied to increased engagement throughout the day (Sonnentag & Kühnel, 2016). This indicates that reconnecting with work before work can be beneficial for daily work behavior.

Technology also provides opportunity for global teams and for workers to work flexibly. For example, Golden and colleagues (2008) examined professional isolation in teleworkers and found communication-enhancing technology reduced professional isolation, thereby buffering against negative effects on performance and turnover. Communication technology enables flexible work options where workers can decide when and where they work. Therefore, if workers are able to set impermeable work-life boundaries, communication technology

can be very effective in improving work-life balance, productivity and job attitudes (Park, Fritz, & Jex, 2011; Spreitzer et al., 2017). Communication technology is a powerful tool that provides employees with the convenience of connecting to work, tasks, coworkers, mangers and more when they need it. While this tool provides convenience and efficiency, organizations must also ensure that employees are adequately recovering from work during nonwork time to maintain their well-being.

Increased virtuality of work has also coincided with increased cultural diversity, as it has made it possible for organizations to grow globally. Han and Beyerlin (2016) developed a framework demonstrating how cultural diversity within virtual teams influences task-related and socioemotional processes. Through their framework they discuss how multicultural virtual teams may experience challenges with task-related communicating, coordination, developing trust and intercultural learning, to name a few. While diverse teams may find it more difficult to establish communication practices and trust, organizations can learn to handle these challenges in order to reap the benefits of cultural diversity (e.g., diversity of knowledge and perspective). Organizational strategies to overcome communication and trust barriers include creating trust-building opportunities, increasing cultural awareness, providing time and space for members to develop interpersonal relationships and ensuring inclusive practices within the organization.

Communication behaviors can result in differing outcomes based on mode of communication. For example, information sharing can be dependent on the context of communication, where unique information sharing is more common in virtual teams. This means that when teams with high virtuality communicate, they share unique information but information is not always shared openly across the team. In

their meta-analysis, Mesmer-Magnus and colleagues (2011) found that open information sharing was more closely tied to team performance for virtual teams than unique information sharing. Conversely, unique information sharing was more closely tied to team performance for face-to-face teams. This means that while virtual teams do a good job of sharing unique information, this information is not always shared openly. It is important for virtual teams to focus on openly sharing information, because this improves the effectiveness of their team. Face-to-face teams do a good job of sharing information openly (likely because they are physically around each other more frequently), but information that is unique is not always shared. As such, face-to-face teams should focus on openly sharing unique knowledge that is held in order to increase team effectiveness. Further, there are resources, processes and tool organizations or managers can provide to craft technology use in a way that maximizes positive outcomes.

For example, organizations can equip teams with informal communication mechanisms (e.g., instant messaging), give team members the option of using a webcam for meetings and create a culture of inclusion where managers seek out opinions and the voice of virtual members during meetings. Trust develops in virtual teams as members continue to demonstrate reliability, consistency and responsiveness (Costa et al., 2008). For this reason, it is important that teams who are virtual, or have flexible work arrangements, to communicate in a way that expresses enthusiasm, respond in a timely and meaningful manner, provide feedback, provide transparent information and exchange information about team processes.

Communicative behaviors and conceptualizations

Information sharing

Information Sharing is a commonly practiced communicative behavior through which teams utilize their available information resources. Information sharing can be broken into two components: (1) unique information sharing, or the extent to which teams or individuals share information that is uniquely held by them (i.e., unique and novel perspectives and ideas) and (2) openness of information sharing, or the extent to which information is shared overtly and openly within a team in general (Marlow et al., 2018; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009; Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011). Both components of information sharing are directly linked to team performance (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011) and foster innovation in teams (Donati, Zappala, & González-Romá, 2016; Woodman et al., 1993). When information is not shared effectively, teams are not able to capitalize on their available information resources (Mesmer-Magnus et al., 2011). Open and honest exchange of information not only ensures that all individuals have equitable access to information, but also increases trust and inclusion within work groups. Specifically, when everyone has equal access to information, they feel a sense of communion and equity among individuals, thus promoting more trust within the group and increasing the likelihood of even further positive communication.

Voice behaviors

Voice Behaviors involve informally and voluntarily communicating suggestions, concerns, information about problems or work-related opinions with the intent of bringing about organizational improvement or change. Upward voice specifically refers to reporting these cognitions to someone in a higher organizational position that will be able to take appropriate action (Detert & Burris, 2007; Morrison, 2011; Morrison, 2014). Employee voice is key to helping organizations function. It is associated with learning, improved work processes, innovation, error correction, curtailment of illegal or immoral behavior and crisis prevention (Detert & Edmondson, 2011). As such, organizations can be deprived of crucial information when employees choose to participate in **silence,** that is withholding of potentially important input or failing to share what is on one's mind (Morrison, 2014). When choosing to participate in voice or silence behaviors, employees weigh costs, benefits and likely success, but are also subject to unconscious processing risks (e.g., fear may reduce likelihood of voice without the employee realizing it).

Unfortunately, employees often withhold input and frequently choose to remain silent about important issues for several reasons. There are several factors that either motivate or inhibit voice behaviors.

They include individual dispositions (e.g., extraversion and proactive personality motivate; achievement orientation inhibits), job attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction motivates; powerlessness inhibits), emotions and schemas (e.g., anger and psychological safety motivate; fear and career risks inhibit), supervisor behavior (e.g., ethical leadership motivates; abusive leadership inhibits) and contextual factors (e.g., group voice climate motivates; change-resistant culture inhibits; Morrison, 2014).

Ultimately, organizations perform better and have less turnover when employees voice their suggestions and opinions (Morrison, 2011, 2014). For this reason, it is important for organizations to empower employees to use their voice. When organizations and managers listen to and value what employees have to say, and utilize their opinions and feedback in decision making, employees see that they have contributed. This increases employees' perceptions that the organization is dependable and honest and cares about employees' well-being, thus increasing trust and engagement.

Table 3. Communication Behaviors and How they Contribute to Organizational Effectiveness

Behavior		Definition	Contribution to organizational effectiveness
Positive communication behaviors promote trust and inclusion. This fosters a norm of reciprocal trust, respect and support, where employees reciprocate coworker, managerial and organizational efforts with support and engagement. Positive communication, trust, inclusion and engagement subsequently contribute to positive well-being.			
Information sharing	Unique information sharing	The extent to which teams or individuals share information that is uniquely held by them (i.e., unique and novel perspectives and ideas).	- Initiates an exchange between two or more individuals, among a team or within the organization - Facilitates innovation by increasing the number and awareness of uniquely held perspectives - Establishes a sense of trust and inclusion
	Openness of information sharing	The extent to which information is shared overtly and openly within a team in general.	- Promotes trust and inclusion by giving everyone the same access to the same information - Fosters a climate where sharing information, supporting teammates and helping behaviors are encouraged
Voice behaviors		Informally and voluntarily communicating suggestions, concerns, information about problems or work-related opinions with the intent of bringing about organizational improvement or change.	- Normalizes employees speaking up to contribute to organizational changes and decision-making processes - Improves work processes, aids in error correction, prevent crises and curtails illegal or immoral organizational behavior - Facilitates learning and innovation through increasing risk-taking in communication
Silence		Withholding of potentially important input or failing to share what is on one's mind.	-Exists where organizations discourage voice and put employees in a powerless position - Comes with unethical or abusive leadership, change-resistant culture and climates that promote fear - Eliminated through positive job attitudes, ethical, transformational and servant leadership, psychologically safety and group voice climates - Does a disservice to the organization

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