

PROJECT: EMPLOYEE LISTENING

Develop a multi-modal employee feedback strategy that allows you to capture input on emerging issues, gauge engagement, and adjust your communications approach “real time” while also gaining advocacy and frontline champions for your programs.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- The newly formed Federal Reserve Financial Services (FRFS) was facing several rounds of disruptive changes including the original reorganizational impact as well as the impact of an unprecedented workforce reduction.
- As a result of early promises that there would be no staff reductions, team members were skeptical of all leadership messaging.
- Regardless of whether you're communicating organizational change or launching a new program or strategy, you need to know how your people feel and where they are coming from to communicate effectively.
- Baseline engagement data and regular pulse surveys became an important tool for assessing the “soil” in which the seeds of change might take hold and flourish.
- Disruptive organizational changes had created an environment that was resistant to receiving new input, regardless of whether offerings might ultimately benefit them.

Benefits

- Regular pulse surveys enabled leadership to measure team sentiments before, during and after disruptive change, allowing them to monitor the recovery curve, and target training and consultative discussion sessions at teams that were struggling to adjust.
- Focus groups enabled the Communications & Culture Team to “meet the people where they were”, adjusting the planned culture roll-out campaign to include messaging that would be credible, comforting and engaging to staff members who were skeptical of the motives of leadership in the wake of an unprecedented workforce reduction.

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

As the newly formed FRFS national business line came together, merging seven previously independent organizations into one, and redeploying the previous business line leaders into functional roles, they took care to assure their people that the move was not being made to “save money” and that no roles were going to be cut.

Unfortunately, as economic conditions changed, and anticipated attrition rates plummeted from their previous norms, word came from the Board that budgets needed to adjust accordingly. The result was an unprecedented workforce reduction that stunned the newly formed organization and seriously undermined trust across the enterprise.

The Communications and Culture Team was charged with helping the workforce stabilize and coalesce around a new enterprise employment brand and culture. To identify the steps needed to achieve these goals, it was critical to understand the attitudes, beliefs, and feelings that the workforce was experiencing.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

Develop a comprehensive employee listening strategy that employed both qualitative and quantitative techniques to understand:

- How people in different parts of the organization were dealing with the changes they had experienced;
- Where targeted remedial action, including leadership development, workshops and consultative discussion sessions to help team members navigate the effects of disruptive change;
- Where trust in leadership was lagging, and what team members felt would help them regain their belief and engagement with the newly formed organization's mission;
- How team members were responding to the carefully crafted integrated culture messaging that had been developed prior to the workforce reduction, and what changes in messaging and campaign design needed to be implemented for the culture building campaign to be effective.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

The Communications and Culture Team was able to understand, develop and deliver targeted messaging and change workshops to support teams that were struggling with the loss of colleagues because of the reduction in workforce.

Benefit Two

The Communications & Culture Group was able to refine culture messaging and campaign design to reflect and support the psychological discomfort the organization was experiencing.

PROJECT: CULTURAL INTEGRATION

Design and deploy an integrated communications campaign designed to create an enterprise culture that leveraged the strengths of the previous stand-alone organizations that existed before the enterprise was formed, while eliminating cultural norms that were perceived as getting in the way of the new enterprise achieving its mission.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- The newly formed Federal Reserve Financial Services (FRFS) was comprised of 7 former product offices that operated for years as stand-alone businesses within various regional Federal Reserve Banks.
- Each had its own unique culture based on leadership expectations as well as the cultural norms of the regional Bank it was a part of.
- As the product offices came together to form the new national business line, leaders wished to establish a single unified culture, leveraging the positive norms of the former product offices, while eliminating the more insular behaviors that would not serve the new enterprise.
- This cultural alignment needed to take place in the context of significant disruptive change, including a significant reorganization effort, as well as a reduction in workforce, which was unprecedented within the System as a whole.

Benefits

- Establishing a unified, behavior-based enterprise culture provided newly formed teams with a common language and expectations for how to treat each other – regardless of level – within the newly formed organization. This, in turn, helped team members to navigate and adjust to disruptive organizational change.
- Because a highly interactive, “listening” approach was taken in building out the cultural framework, putting trust and care at the center of the new culture design, and because pre-existing positive culture norms were integrated into the cultural design, the organization felt more comfortable and prepared adopting the newly formed culture framework.

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

As the newly formed FRFS national business line came together, merging 7 organizations into one, and redeploying the previous business line leaders into functional roles, the organization needed to establish its own culture, built on the cultural strengths of each of the former product offices. The culture, built on a central pillar of trust and care, would establish new behavioral norms, including how team members would address each other, and achieve the mission of the newly formed organization.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

The Communications and Culture team (C&C) partnered with leaders to capture the cultural norms of each of the former product offices, assessing commonalities and differences, as well as which were essential for the organization’s future, and those that leaders would like to see eliminated in the new integrated culture. They also considered additional behaviors leaders felt necessary for the newly formed organization to achieve its mission.

Once the initial framework was drafted, the C&C team executed a comprehensive listening tour to research employees’ reactions to the new framework and the language being used to describe the aspirational culture. Based on wide grassroots input, the culture framework was adjusted and vetted once again with leaders with the goal of meeting the needs of both leaders and staff, while maximizing the likelihood of widespread adoption by the team.

A year-long integrated internal communications campaign was developed including a dedicated culture portal, a daily blog and cultural newsletter, executive messaging videos, digital content and assets, a regular cadence of interactive live events, leader coffee chats and “game shows”. A team of grassroots culture champions from across the organization was deployed to bring cultural content into local meetings and conversations.

To help with culture ‘stickiness’, team members received mousepads to keep an at-a-glance view of the culture framework at their fingertips, a handy culture card deck describing how to demonstrate each of the 36 culture behaviors, and a team recognition kit for leaders to help them frequently show their gratitude and appreciation for their team’s efforts. An online “shout out” tool enabled peer-to-peer recognition as well.

Because a workforce reduction caused a delay in the culture rollout, the C&C team was able to develop and deploy a series of culture-based change workshops (based on the people-centric Kubler-Ross and Bridges change model) into the campaign to help teams navigate and adjust to disruptive change through the lens of the aspirational culture.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

The campaign provided the organization with unified, behavior-based cultural norms, and established a common language and expectations for interpersonal relations that could be measured and tracked through the performance review cycle, while setting forth the behaviors deemed necessary for the organization to achieve its strategic objectives and accomplish its mission.

PROJECT: LAUNCHING AN AUTHENTIC EMPLOYMENT BRAND

Capture and articulate the essence of Elkay's engaging culture and leverage it to attract top talent and to serve as a North Star for launching ongoing employee programs and communications.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Young professionals are not attracted to a career in manufacturing.
- They want to work for companies that are caring, responsible, that empower them to own their work, be successful, and that invest in them and help them build a career they can be proud of
- Elkay needed to create a brand narrative that authentically reflected the company and its culture and helps candidates understand that a career at Elkay would be like no other.

Benefits

- Elkay's employment brand and employee value proposition (EVP) was based on quantitative and qualitative data drawn from Employee Engagement surveys, focus groups and new hire and exit interviews
- Employees told us that they felt the company invested in their career growth, empowered them to do their best and be successful, that they loved their coworkers and felt like they were part of a family, and that at the end of the day, they were proud of the company and what they do, and their investments in people, the community and the environment.
- Elkay developed an enduring EVP that not only shapes their recruiting narrative, but serves as a north star for creating new programs and policies that help attract and retain top talent.

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

As the economy emerged from the 'Great Recession' and the 'war for talent' heated up, Elkay needed to articulate their value proposition and tell a story that would enable them compete and more effectively attract and retain top talent.

Many of today's tech-savvy workers avoid going to work for a manufacturing company, assuming that the work will be outdated, low tech and dirty, rather than the vibrant, innovative and growth-oriented experiences that a career at Elkay represents.

Elkay needed to capture the essence of its employee value proposition (what draws people to join the company and what makes them stay) based on input from employees, and leverage its strengths to create an authentic employment brand narrative that would attract the leaders and employees of the future.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

- Review employee engagement research, as well as new hire and exit interviews to develop an authentic employee value proposition (EVP). Validate the EVP through focus groups and one-on-one interviews.
- Identify key audiences (current employees, new recruits, local markets, etc.) and integrate cultural differentiators and employment brand messaging to bring life to the employee value proposition through all communications.
- Develop a unique brand voice/tone and key messaging that align with the EVP when communicating with:
 - **Current employees** -- elevate elements of the EVP in all internal communications, reinforcing messages and programs that amplify the EVP. Continuously improve upon programs that reinforce the key elements in the company EVP.
 - **Prospective employees** -- develop an attractive and appealing recruiting website that reinforces key EVP themes, leveraging testimonials and storytelling to lend credibility to the corporate messaging.
 - **External audiences** that may interact with the enterprise brand. Integrate consistent EVP storytelling into external messaging through social media, executive visibility efforts, job postings, etc.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Human resources understands the **key differentiators** that attract top talent to Elkay and make them stay. These include PRIDE IN THE COMPANY, CAREER DEVELOPMENT and EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT.

Benefit Two

EVP and key differentiators can be used in employee engagement messaging, as well as recruiting and executive visibility communications to reinforce the employment brand. New programs can be shaped to ensure that the key differentiators remain fresh and relevant in the minds of employees.



Visit the company's corporate recruiting website to see the Employment brand in action.

PROJECT: STRATEGY ROLLOUT

Drive enterprise-wide alignment around a new aspirational strategy by launching an integrated communication toolkit combining presentations, interactive virtual town-hall meetings, and a CEO-hosted video series featuring key strategy leaders describing their initiatives. House materials in a secure internet repository and team room to encourage collaboration and regular check-ins.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- A new CEO aims to introduce himself and his approach to driving business growth by reinvigorating the organization's accountability to results and performance against stated priorities
- Newly remote workforce was unable to come together in person to attend strategy launch events.
- Ongoing visibility, collaboration and alignment around key initiatives became more complicated as fully-remote work period extended to over 2 years.

Benefits

- Virtual events enabled global employees to participate in launch program.
- Recorded sessions made it possible for those hired after launch to achieve the same deep insights into the company's strategic direction as their peers.
- A regular cadence of video updates hosted by the CEO provided employees with an opportunity to get to know their new leader better while providing visibility into strategic initiatives as they unfolded.

The problem for most people and companies is not that they aim too high and don't make it -- it is that they aim too low, and they do.

Ric Phillips, Elkay Former CEO



COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

Elkay's new CEO was working to introduce a fresh, aspirational look at company strategy and inspire a stronger spirit of alignment, commitment and accountability... just as COVID-19 struck and the professional workforce began working from home.

A remote access solution became necessary which would enable the organization to engage in live townhall meetings, and then access and share strategic content with others across the organization as the strategic pillars and initiatives unfolded.

With the entire professional staff working remotely, leaders needed a forum to share progress and build a common understanding of strategic priorities, including what the various working groups were focusing on -- as well as what the business was no longer going to prioritize.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

Host a kick off and develop a year-long strategic communications campaign to help global workforce understand company strategy and align their own goals and priorities to achieve the critical objectives.

Program included:

- Comprehensive series of strategy presentations that enabled the entire organization to understand corporate and business unit strategies, as well as the strategic pillars that would enable their achievement
- Dedicated internet site and team room(s) to house strategy materials enabling employees across the global organization to refer back over time and confirm their alignment with the strategic direction
- A virtual launch event for key leaders and professional staff, complete with breakout sessions encouraging employees to engage and ask questions to enhance their understanding of the strategic roadmaps and priorities
- Year-long video series hosted by the CEO that provided a platform for leaders across the company to communicate their approach and share progress against their strategic goals.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Employees around the globe, including new hires, have access to information about the company strategy, and the key initiatives on the strategy roadmap.

Benefit Two

Leaders driving critical strategic initiatives have a forum for sharing progress and encouraging support, alignment and enhanced focus on the critical projects to help the business achieve its goals.

PROJECT: CULTURE STEWARD PROGRAM

Provide Elkay leaders with inspiring educational materials on Elkay's key Cultural Attributes, encouraging reflection on past leadership experiences, and supporting the application of new learnings to leaders' present and future leadership practices.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Maintaining organizational culture as leaders retire and new leaders step in
- Creating time and space for cultural development
- Aligning leadership practices of about 250 top leaders

Benefits

- Strengthens organizational culture
- Supports reflection, continuous learning and professional development
- Fosters internal connections
- Builds future leaders
- Provides cultural continuity as leaders retire and new leaders emerge



"In 2021, we introduced our Culture Steward Program as a way to reinforce the critical role our leaders of people play as stewards of our culture and helping us actively grow and maintain this vital workplace asset.

Through this program, leaders learn about our most important cultural attributes and how to embody them within their leadership style so that they are understood, experienced, and practiced within their teams and throughout the organization."

Ric Phillips

Former Elkay President and CEO

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

Elkay employees often say our Culture is what makes us stand out in a world of corporate sameness. As demographic changes see older leaders retire, new leaders must be trained to maintain this culture, which takes an investment of time, effort, and focus. In order for our distinctive cultural attributes to be sustained and strengthened over time, every Elkay leader must act as a proactive steward of the Culture and integrate Elkay's cultural attributes into their leadership practices.

THE SOLUTION

- Design and deploy an inspirational leadership program to encourage ongoing review and reflection about Elkay's key Cultural Attributes
- Define Elkay's key Cultural Attributes based on positive aspects of the current culture as well as aspirational attributes for the future
- Conduct monthly focus groups with high potential leaders to develop a regular cadence of coursework including reflection questions and suggestions for enhancing the attribute within each leader's management style; Share coursework with Culture Stewards through monthly communications
- Create a Culture Steward Passport with built-in storage pockets to collect coursework including space to journal and reflect on each month's learnings
- Develop a video series featuring Elkay's most successful leaders sharing how they leverage Elkay's Cultural Attributes with their own team
- Encourage Culture Stewards to record their journey on the journal pages and display their Passport Stickers on the cover of their Culture Steward passports
- Create a Wings Recognition System to highlight exemplary leaders and encourage strengthening of internal connections

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

The program develops Elkay's leaders and teaches them how to exemplify our Cultural Attributes by modeling, coaching, and fostering them within their teams.

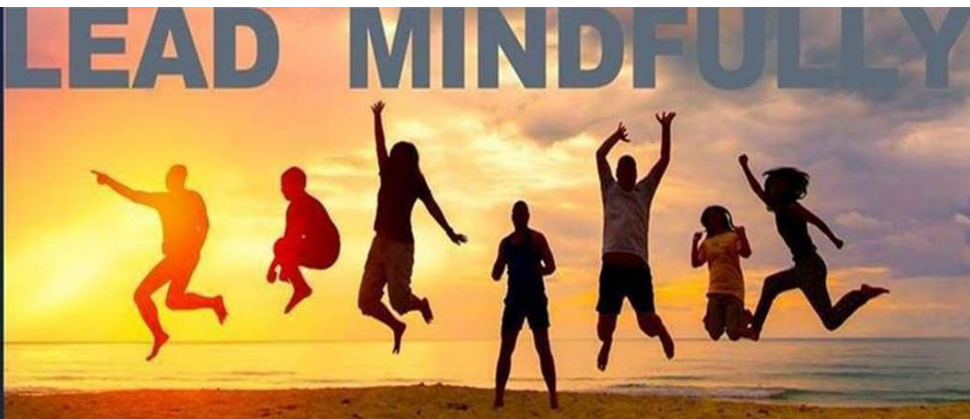


Benefit Two

The program creates an aligned network of Elkay leaders and provides peer-sponsored recognition opportunities for those who demonstrate mastery of the Cultural Attributes

Benefit Three

The program inspires leaders to pursue continuous learning and development opportunities and help build future leaders through their cultural stewardship.



CULTURAL ATTRIBUTES

- Leads the Elkay Values
- Approachable & builds relationships
- Two-way communication
- Vulnerable, transparent & willing to learn
- Exhibits inclusive behavior
- Focuses on the growth
- Empowers team members
- Encourages risk-taking & innovation
- Demonstrates empathy, equity & care
- Fosters teamwork & collaboration
- Pitches in to help
- Creates a safe environment

WINGS RECOGNITION SYSTEM



The Wings Recognition System allows leaders in the Culture Steward Program a chance to highlight great leaders within the company who already demonstrate mastery of one of the Cultural Attributes.

Each time a Culture Steward Module is completed, Culture Stewards are prompted to think about other leaders they work with and ask themselves if any of these leaders embody the attribute of the month. If they do, Culture Stewards can nominate that leader to receive a gift and a set of wings, a symbolic representation of their dedication to preserving Elkay's culture.

Whenever a Culture Steward receives a set of wings for exceptional leadership on a Culture Attribute, they are encouraged to put their "wings" on display by placing the announcement in the passport's storage pockets along with their monthly training materials.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Culture Steward Program was created to ensure Elkay leaders understand Elkay's most critical Cultural Attributes and become proficient at modeling, coaching, and fostering them within their teams.

At the heart of the program are Elkay's Culture Stewards, or Elkay's key leaders, who act as stewards of Elkay's culture and ensure that their actions and behaviors strengthen and perpetuate the Cultural Attributes. To accomplish this, Culture Stewards are asked to look beyond their own leadership and team strengths and focus on building upon the attributes within their numerous interactions and relationships across the company. By doing so, Culture Stewards can ensure the holistic experience of Elkay's culture reflects each of Elkay's cultural strengths for employees.

Within the program, Culture Stewards receive monthly coursework prepared based on insights from monthly focus groups and access to the Culture Steward Video Series highlighting teachings from Elkay's most seasoned leaders that they can use to enhance their leadership practices. Culture Stewards are also asked to reflect on what they learn about Elkay's key Cultural Attributes and how they can best integrate them within their leadership style in the future.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- **Culture Steward Passport:** A ring-bound book with built-in storage pockets to collect Culture Steward monthly course material for future reference and reflection pages to record notes as each Cultural Attribute is covered.
- **Culture Steward Inserts:** Coursework focused on teaching Culture Stewards about the Culture Attributes and provides reflection questions to help leaders think about how they will demonstrate Culture-building behaviors with their teams.
- **End of Month Reflection Pages:** Note pages included behind each pocket of the Culture Steward Passport are for Culture Stewards to use at the end of each month to reflect on how well they demonstrated the Cultural Attributes and how to further strengthen their use of the Cultural Attribute going forward.
- **Culture Steward Video Series:** Each month, Culture Stewards receive a link to a new episode in the Culture Steward video series featuring Elkay's most seasoned leaders. These recorded sessions are often accompanied by supporting materials that can be stored alongside inserts within the Culture Steward Passport.
- **Passport Stickers:** Star stickers serve as a visual display tool that allows Culture Stewards to showcase their progress through the program on the cover of their Culture Steward Passport.

PROJECT: EXECUTIVE VISIBILITY

Plan and produce a series of executive byline articles highlighting Elkay leaders' expert insights on topics related to business leadership, creating a high-performance culture, and current business trends



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Positioning leaders as experts within their industries and the wider business community
- Identifying media outlets to achieve internal/external positioning goals
- Increase enterprise visibility by increasing leaders' presence in the greater business community

Benefits

- Positions Elkay leadership as thought leaders
- Showcases Elkay's values-driven business approach and company culture
- Reaches a variety of audiences
- Highlights various leadership topics and trends
- Strengthens company culture
- Position company as a desirable place to work



"Elkay's culture sometimes feels like one of the business community's closest kept secrets. We have grown to recognize what a powerful differentiator our strong cultural brand and thoughtful leadership approach are for our business.

The more we can spread the word about who we are, the more it helps us attract and retain the best talent and partners."

Ric Phillips

Former Elkay President & CEO

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

In order for Elkay to compete in the increasingly intense "war for talent", the company needed to become more visible and promote one of its key differentiators as a 'employer of choice' -- its warm and welcoming, people-first culture. One way to emphasize the culture is to amplify the 'voice' of the company's leaders, creating a platform where the team's leadership skills could be leveraged to their best advantage.

THE SOLUTION

Elkay Culture Conversations is a series of executive byline article ghostwritten by Corporate Communications, that provides Elkay leaders with a space to share their thoughts on the organization's culture, leadership, and business trends. The series' purpose is to reinforce company culture and leadership practices internally while opening a dialogue with fellow business leaders and professionals outside of the company on best leadership practices, overcoming modern-day obstacles, and understanding and utilizing emerging trends to your business's advantage in order to advance the visibility and reputation of Elkay and its employment brand.

The series is composed of articles that provide expert guidance on leading a forward-thinking business and maintaining a people-focused culture. The articles are developed internally and published to leaders' individual LinkedIn profiles quarterly, or through secured media opportunities and developed in partnership with key media outlets.

The program also encourages company leaders to become proactive stewards of the company's culture to strengthen the company's most potent cultural practices. Alongside the Culture Steward program, the article series aims to strengthen the company's employment brand and drive awareness and continuity of Elkay's people-focused, quality-driven culture as new generations of workers enter the workforce.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

The series positions Elkay's leadership as thought leaders within their respective industries and enhances corporate visibility by introducing a thoughtful dialogue within the business communities where Elkay has a significant presence.

Benefit Two

The series showcases Elkay's pride in the values-driven approach its executive leaders exhibit and builds upon the company's acclaimed Culture Steward Program.

Benefit Three

The series informs Elkay's partners, suppliers, employment candidates, and business leaders of the company's culture and how it guides business decisions, impacts leaders and employees and helps the business continue to grow.

PROJECT: AUTOMATED EMPLOYEE ONBOARDING

Leverage the Workday Human Capital Management System to deliver multi-media Employee Onboarding introducing new people to Elkay's warm, friendly culture and robust employee development programs



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Elkay has a rich culture and a multitude of programs designed to help employees succeed.
- Standard on-boarding meetings are too short to cover the company culture, strategy information and employee resources to their full advantage
- New employees typically learn only a fraction of the things they should know from HR and their manager during the early introduction meetings.

Benefits

- New employees feel more welcomed
- Employees are informed in a purposeful, systemic fashion
- Multi media drives enhanced engagement while timed release of information aids in retention
- New hires have a more comprehensive and enjoyable introduction to cultural norms and programs to help ensure their long term satisfaction and success in their new role.

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

Elkay has a rich culture and robust programs and resources to ensure employee success and long-term satisfaction throughout their career with the company.

As the company has grown, it has become difficult for HR representatives and functional leaders to fully cover everything about the company and its programs that employees ought to be aware of. This has resulted in an uneven introduction to the company and many new employees missing out on being able to access materials and tools that could help them successfully assimilate to the company, leverage programs to enhance their career experience, and fully appreciate and embrace the company's unique and caring culture.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

Develop a multi media communication campaign that delivers welcome videos, tips and tricks, helpful links and information about the company and its programs over the course of a three month period, starting with the week leading up to a new employee's first day with the company.

The program also delivers timely guidance to hiring managers reminding them to take their new hire to lunch on the first day and strive to get to know them personally, providing tools to assist them in preparing and sending out a company-wide introduction to their new team member, and a reminder to introduce their new employee to their peers within the department

Program includes:

- Welcome videos from company leaders
- informational video to guide hiring managers through successful onboarding
- Interactive, timed-release reference materials with links to resources and company culture information
- Data-rich intranet page that directs new hires to tools and employee programs
- Embedded discount code that allows new hire to select an Elkay-branded welcome gift at the online company store

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Employees feel welcomed and informed before their first day with the company.

Benefit Two

New team members are made aware of key cultural norms, people they should know to be successful, and programs that are available to help them succeed in navigating their new role.

Benefit Three

Automated onboarding process spaces out the delivery of information so that new hires are more likely to review and retain it.



View the
welcome
video from
Elkay CHRO,
Larry Brand

PROJECT: COMMUNICATING CHANGE, COMPASSIONATELY

Structured communications toolkit helps leaders deliver difficult change communications in way that is aligned across audiences...and in alignment with Elkay's culture of caring.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Organizational changes can be difficult to communicate
- Different audiences must be considered - each with a unique communications challenges
- Not all leaders are equally skilled at delivering difficult news
- Messages to different audiences must be aligned to minimize dissonance after the fact

Benefits

- Tough messages are delivered with sensitivity and care
- Managers feel supported and equipped to deliver difficult news
- Messages are delivered right when they are needed



"The corporate communications team helps us think through the audiences, messages and timing needed for a seamless transition. The communications toolkit ensures we have covered our bases and planned ahead for the most likely concerns that might be voiced. During change consulting sessions the communications team asks tough questions that may have nothing to do with the communications themselves, but which help us consider all of the implications a change may have on various stakeholders."

Kevin Reiman

Vice President, Human Resources
Elkay Interior Systems

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

News of major organizational changes, from functional realignments to plant closings, can be tough to receive. How the news is communicated can have an outsized impact on a company's reputation - as both an employer of choice and as a strategic partner. When communications are handled well, employees who are leaving feel cared for and understand what is happening and why. While they may not welcome the change, they appreciate how they were treated during the transition. In today's social media world, news travels fast, so a thoughtful, caring - and structured approach to communicating change is key.

Likewise, stakeholders such as valued employees who remain, key customers, suppliers and industry partners as well as the local community and related media must be proactively informed of what is happening. They want to know the company is handling the transition in a sensitive and supportive manner. Each of these constituencies also want to know what to expect as the business moves forward.

Failure to consider the information needs of any key constituency can result in loss of business or top talent and a tarnished reputation as a good corporate citizen.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

The Corporate Communications team developed a structured approach to change communications that can be tailored and deployed for all major change initiative at Elkay. The subsequent toolkit provided to frontline communicators includes:

- A thorough **audience analysis** that considers the responses and expectations of each key stakeholder group that will be impacted by the change.
- **Key messaging** that reflects top leadership intentions, including a description of the change and why it is necessary, the support that is being provided for those most impacted, and the go-forward plans to support stakeholders who rely on the facilities, systems and people who are being transitioned,
- **Carefully crafted communication tools**, such as announcements, talking points, scripts, press releases and pre-written Frequently Asked Questions help those who will be delivering news of the change to stay on point and deliver messaging that aligns with what others are delivering to different audiences.
- A **precise timeline** that can be shared during pre-release training to ensure those most impacted by the change hear it first, and subsequent communications take place in a thoughtful, timely and well orchestrated fashion.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Thoughtful and credible change communications that reflect Elkay's culture of caring

Benefit Two

Aligned messaging that provides information when and where it is needed discouraging reliance upon "water cooler" discussions as a key source of information.

PROJECT: CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY / ESG

Initiating change to align the business with the evolving social and environmental responsibility expectations of employees, consumers and the financial community.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Conservative leadership slow to realize the emerging importance of the public's Environmental and Social Responsibility expectations (including DEI).
- CSR Initiative given the green light "provided it did not disrupt business activities or cause additional work"
- Many functional leaders view ESG Reporting as 'nice to have' side project, rather than strategic imperative

Benefits

- Elkay can respond with meaningful data to inquiries from stakeholders about our ESG impacts.
- Elkay has a systematic process for monitoring and improving against specifically stated ESG targets.



You can view our latest report by scanning this Code. We'd love to hear what you think of it - send us an email at corpcomm@elkay.com.



BACKGROUND

As recently as 2018, Elkay was a conservatively led, privately-held firm with a strong balance sheet that translated to having little-to-no dependency on outside financial resources and a limited vulnerability to the emerging societal expectations around social and environmental matters such as community relations, protecting water, reducing carbon emissions, and supporting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).

But there were increasing signs that the time to be more proactive was drawing near, such as Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that asked for evidence of social or environmental protection efforts, requests for documentation of the contents and origins of products and component parts, inquiries from employment candidates about the company's environmental and social investments...and the breakout popularity of Elkay's signature water delivery product, particularly among college populations, for its positive environmental impact.

The time was at hand to begin reporting on Elkay's social and environmental impacts and to demonstrate proactive efforts to improve in key ESG impact areas.

Corporate Responsibility (ESG) at Elkay began with a cross-functional team led by Corporate Communications in partnership with the Product Compliance Team. The full cross-functional team included members from every department that in some way impacted the company's social and environmental performance, including HR, Legal, Risk Management, Operations, Logistics, Compliance, and Supply Chain.

Together the team researched the most respected Corporate Responsibility reporting models available and settled on the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) because of its flexibility to shape reporting to include only metrics that were material to the business and its acceptance internationally as a reputable reporting model.

The team's next steps were to assess whether key metrics were already being tracked and reported by the business in order to comply with the reporting requirements of the GRI.

With these legacy metrics in hand, along with a business case for why reporting Corporate Responsibility was good for Elkay, the team spoke with senior leadership to recommend the company begin to formally report on ESG. Fortunately, some senior leaders were aware of the emerging demands around ESG data -- they were hearing it from their larger customers, seeing requests crop up on RFPs, and reading about increasing interest in ESG in international financial markets (although the trend had not yet become mainstream in the U.S.).

In Spring of 2018, the team received approval to begin the company's journey into the world of Corporate Social Responsibility and ESG Reporting.

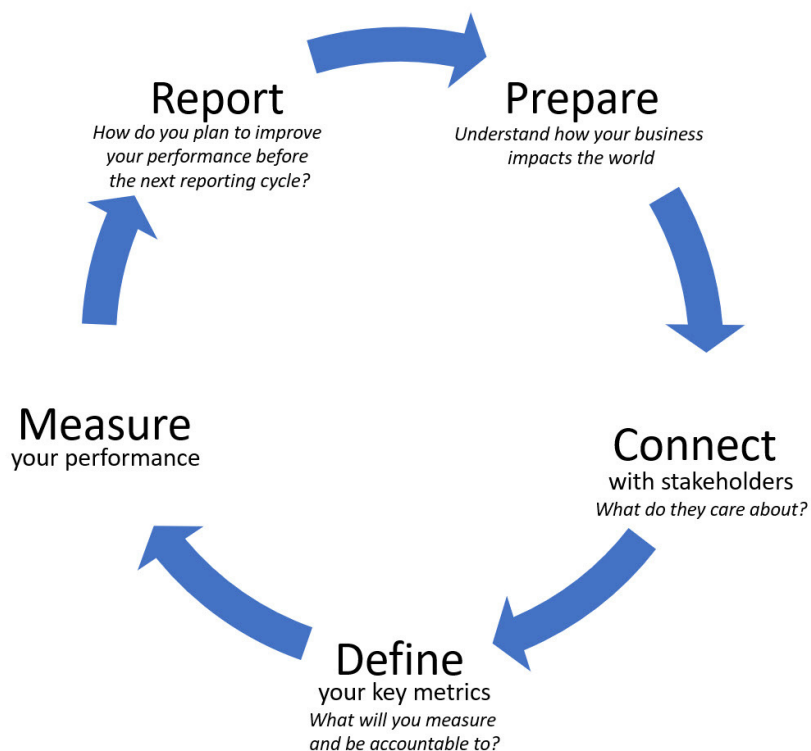
Elkay is committed to protecting the environment and the communities where we work and live.

One of Elkay's six core values is "We are in Business Forever."

Our social investments which include philanthropy, community involvement/volunteering, employee development and education, diversity equity and inclusion, environmental health and safety and associate wellness programs, as well as our conservation and sustainability efforts reflect Elkay's commitment to this principle and our concern for a better tomorrow.

Elkay reports our Corporate Responsibility/ESG efforts in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).

Linda Carlisle
Corporate Responsibility
& Communications Leader



ELKAY'S BIENNIAL ESG CYCLE

Elkay's CR/ESG process begins with an assessment of the GRI Standards to determine which are 'material' to the business.

Following this internal assessment based on deep cross-functional knowledge of the business, it is time for Stakeholder Outreach to ensue. A comprehensive survey is sent to all key stakeholder groups inside and outside of the business, including employees, customers, channel partners and suppliers, board members and shareholders, asking participants to rate and rank the importance of various GRI standards to narrow the focus on what the company needs to measure and report on. The quantitative research is augmented with in-depth interviews with key accounts whose formal ESG agenda includes requirements from supply chain partners such as Elkay, regarding GHG emission or supplier diversity targets.

Based on these inputs, Elkay's cross functional CR Team determines which GRI standards they will measure and report on -- and which they will place stretch performance targets against.

Each individual member of the team is responsible for gathering operating data to report on the standards that relate to their business function. These individuals are also responsible for describing the management approach their department uses to measure and control these critical ESG impacts, and for working with their functional teams to identify projects that will improve the company's performance against stated ESG targets. The Project Management Office (PMO) coordinates data collection and helps drive accountability to these deliverables.

Armed with data from the functional team that outlines the company's performance against the GRI standards, the corporate communications team produces the report, including the research-driven performance targets the team selected, taking care to highlight specific ESG-related programs and activities that have unfolded during the past reporting cycle to improve the company's performance.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Elkay is able to respond with ESG data to inquiries from stakeholders about our social and environmental impacts.

Benefit Two

Elkay has a systematic process for monitoring, measuring, controlling and improving ESG performance against specifically-stated ESG targets.

PROJECT: ELKAYCARES

Design, execute and market annual matching gift campaign to extend Elkay's employment brand by enabling employees to support social causes they care about to help their community



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Ad hoc local donations made it hard to tell a cohesive giving story
- Non-profits were not vetted
- Decentralized approach failed to engage employee hearts and minds and anchor caring as part of Elkay's culture

Benefits

- Annual campaign anchors generosity, caring and community at the center of Elkay's culture.
- Campaign generates over \$5.6 million over 10 years



"The ELKAYcares campaign enables our employees to share their bounty with those less fortunate in our communities.

The generosity of our extended "Elkay family", provides a deep sense of inspiration and pride inside Elkay while building a stronger connection with each other and the communities where we work and live.

Tim Jahnke

Elkay President, CEO & Chairman of the Board

ELKAYcares

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

Elkay has a long-standing tradition of giving back to the communities where they work, live and play. However, as the company grew, individual locations were making thousands of dollars in ad hoc donations to non-profits that were not vetted for performance or properly aligned to Elkay's culture and purpose. The team at corporate was not always aware of these donations and therefore, unable to tell a compelling story to current and prospective employees and other key stakeholders about their giving culture.

Elkay wanted to understand and describe their commitment to the community as a heartfelt extension of their business to attract top talent, and to ensure non-profit partners were high-performing organizations investing back in their programs.

THE SOLUTION

- Develop and execute a centralized annual campaign based on four giving "pillars" that align to the company, our culture and our products, while still enabling "choice" to factor into employee donation elections.
- Enable payroll deductions; match employee donations dollar-for-dollar.
- Remove pressure by recruiting and training well connected frontline 'Ambassadors' to promote ELKAYcares at the grass roots level.
- Gamify and market the campaign; incentivizing both donors and Ambassadors, celebrating locations with high donor engagement, and rewarding Ambassadors who generate the highest participation rates.
- Provide all Ambassadors with a souvenir recognizing their community service.
- Enable employees who are unable to make monetary donations to give back through volunteering.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Campaign generates millions of dollars in donations for high-performance non-profits doing good in the communities where we live and work.

Benefit Two

Employees see that Elkay culture values caring about each other and the world around us; generosity and caring become recognized as cultural anchors at Elkay.

Benefit Three

Employee engagement scores begin to reflect 'Pride in Elkay' as one of our highest scoring attributes.

PROJECT: ELKAYCARES THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Bring Elkay teams together to reinforce Elkay's culture of caring, strengthen internal bonds and support activities that enhance and serve communities in which we work, live and play - and the issues that impact quality of life.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Driving employee engagement in sponsored volunteer activities
- Making employees feel comfortable utilizing Volunteer Time Off (VTO)
- Focusing on opportunities that create a lasting impact for the business, employees, and the nonprofits involved, while aligning with values and purpose

Benefits

- Volunteer program increases employee retention, engagement and recruitment
- Company experiences an increase in employees' sense of purpose and a stronger culture of caring



"Elkay's Volunteer Time Off Program has given our employees the opportunity to make a difference in our communities. Participating in this program allows our people to feel good about what they can accomplish both inside the business and outside."

Tim Jahnke

Elkay President, CEO & Chairman of the Board



COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

Elkay has a long-standing tradition of giving back to the communities where they work, live and play. The company wanted to enhance their reputation and promote their commitment to their communities and their 'culture of caring' in order to attract top talent. Volunteering together gives employees an opportunity to work together outside of the work environment to do good in the world, while forging tighter interpersonal bonds that pay dividends back in the office. Volunteering together gives employees a reason to feel pride -- in themselves and in the company -- which in turn helped build stronger employee loyalty to aid in retention.

THE SOLUTION

- Plan and market volunteer activities that enhance and serve the communities in which company employees work, live and play.
- Support causes that positively impact the quality of life in local communities.
- Encourage the participation of Elkay employees to give back and support the community by planning quarterly Elkay-sponsored volunteer events.
- Create and maintain purposeful partnerships, including ones that align with Elkay's purpose and values.
- Develop a paid volunteer time off (VTO) policy, allowing for employees to use their VTO to donate their time -- including providing 'comp' time for weekend/evening volunteer activities.
- Establish a skills-based volunteering program for Elkay professionals.
- Team up with Elkay's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Team to create more diverse volunteer opportunities that pursue equity.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Having a robust volunteer program allows for employees to have pride in both Elkay and in the work that Elkay supports, resulting in an increase in employee retention, engagement and recruitment. Employees feel proud to work for Elkay.

Benefit Two

Elkay becomes recognized for its presence within the community as an organization that gives back. Elkay's culture is recognized by current employees and potential hires.

Benefit Three

Volunteerism at Elkay provides employees with an increased sense of purpose and connection to their peers, allowing them to feel that they are part of something bigger, contributing to both the success of the business and to a cause that is important to them.

PROJECT: BREAK THE BACKLOG

A temporary manufacturing experience allows corporate employees to help Elkay manufacturing plants to manage through an exponential increase in open orders, until a more permanent solution could be achieved



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Exponential, pandemic-driven increase in orders
- Delays in global supply chain impact timely delivery
- Orders being placed faster than the plant could scale the workforce to meet historic demand levels

Benefits

- Internal support of plant operations and employees
- Developmental opportunity for corporate employees
- Steady increase in production
- Reduced pressure on recruiters and plant training coordinators
- United the 'Elkay Family'



"We greatly appreciate the support from the Downers Grove team. Their training went well as all have remained safe during their time in the plant, and they did great quality work. The focus on the sub-assemblies to which they were assigned allowed the main assembly line team members to focus on the final assembly stations."

Joe Lentini

Elkay Senior Director of Manufacturing

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

Between the summers of 2020 and 2021, demand for Elkay's water delivery products skyrocketed. While this is usually a good thing, the speed at which the demand increased presented the company with a unique challenge. Over time, this exponential increase in orders, coupled with the pandemic's roadblocks on America's global supply chain, put pressure on Elkay's manufacturing plants to scale up the workforce and produce and deliver a record number of products in a short timeframe. The threat of falling behind quickly arose, risking significantly delayed delivery to many valuable customer. The business looked for ways to pitch in to help fulfill orders and lighten the load for plant employees who had been working around the clock to catch up with the unexpected spike in demand.

THE SOLUTION

To overcome the unexpected increase in open orders, Elkay tapped into our most valuable resource: Our people. In July 2021, Elkay's corporate employees were presented with the opportunity to temporarily step away from their office roles and travel to the Savanna and Lanark manufacturing plants to work in manufacturing. This manufacturing experience was designed to be a temporary way for the business to provide the additional manpower required to stay on track with fulfilling orders, enabling the plant to stay focused on maintaining current production lines and recruiting additional talent to meet the increased demand.

Temporary manufacturing assignments were designed to be 2-4 weeks in length, span a variety of shifts, and provide office volunteers a rich, hands-on manufacturing experience. For their efforts, volunteers were offered compensation in the form of bonus pay or an additional week of paid time off, as well as support for items such as lodging, travel, and dining. By August, twelve corporate employees volunteered to take on the temporary manufacturing assignments.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

The efforts of corporate employees supported plant operations enabling skilled plant employees to perform more complex operations while plant training coordinators trained new hires.

Benefit Two

Corporate employees were given the opportunity to learn about how Elkay's products are made while getting to know their colleagues and the frontline plant employees better.

Benefit Three

Manufacturing production increased as additional recruitment efforts for full-time employees took place within the surrounding community.

PROJECT: HURRICANE RELIEF

Elkay's Culture of Caring is reflected in the company's herculean efforts to help employees recover from the destructive impacts of a hurricane...not once, but twice.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Lumberton employees lost everything: homes, cars and clothing
- Employees needed their pay; they needed to be made whole

Benefits

- Employees were helped back into safe living spaces with reliable transportation
- Elkay teams grew closer through adversity; their loyalty to the company is unrivaled
- Lumberton employees are among Elkay's strongest cultural advocates. They repeatedly lead donor participation in our annual ELKAYcares campaign



"So many people had suffered catastrophic losses. That's when ELKAYcares kicked in -- pulling together donations from across the company, the Katz family, employees at other locations, and from suppliers.

We were able to pass that money on to the people who had suffered these terrible losses...it was amazing..."

Amanda McKenzie

Plant Manager, Lumberton NC

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

The town of Lumberton, NC, home to Elkay's southern manufacturing plant, was struck by catastrophic flooding from Hurricanes Matthew (2016) and Florence (2018). The plant lost power and access to water -- but what's worse, their people lost their homes, vehicles, clothing and food to the relentless floodwaters.

Elkay wanted to help people through the worst of the disasters and make them whole again so they could return to work focused on safety, quality and the needs of our customers without worrying about the troubles waiting for them at home.

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

When Hurricane Matthew devastated the town of Lumberton in October, 2016, Elkay leadership paid all hourly wages for the period the plant was inoperable, so a loss of pay did not further magnify employee troubles.

Corporate Communicates immediately created a Facebook community to help track employees and capture their immediate needs. They also initiated a fundraising campaign to enable employees across the company and strategic partners to participate in disaster response efforts.

Meanwhile, the communications team worked with HR to capture all employee losses, including related insurance, FEMA and local charity support, to determine net losses for each Lumberton employee. The company reimbursed employees for all uncovered losses, so that every Lumberton employee was made whole.

Later that year, the Lumberton team hosted an event for executives to thank them for their generosity in helping the team in their hour of need.

Two years later, the same response plan was deployed one more when Hurricane Florence again flooded the town. This time, the Corporate Communications Team ran point in establishing the Elkay Family Foundation - a 501(c)3 focused on helping Elkay employees through natural disasters and providing education and housing grants in our local communities to build the workforce of tomorrow.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

Employees were rescued from the ruinous financial impacts of two tragic natural disasters, resulting in strong company loyalty and further strengthening Elkay's culture of caring. **Total combined recovery investment: \$897,000.**

Benefit Two

Elkay established the Elkay Family Foundation which focuses on helping the extended Elkay Family (employees, partners, etc.) in their time of need and by issuing annual scholarships to invest in the workforce of tomorrow.

PROJECT: ELKAY FAMILY FOUNDATION OUTREACH CAMPAIGNS

Aid our current and future workforce and the communities in which they live.



AT A GLANCE

Challenges

- Bring the Foundation's Mission Statement to life
Creating/maintaining strong partnerships with Elkay Family Foundation stakeholders
- Keeping the foundation's programs visible and relevant to employees

Benefits

- Helps Elkay people, who in turn, want to give back to their communities
- Enhances visibility of the philanthropic efforts Elkay employees
- Provides educational support to shape the future workforce

COMMUNICATIONS CHALLENGE

As a private, family-owned business for 102 years, Elkay wanted to support and better serve its people. The Elkay Family Foundation's mission centers on several key principles that can aid the current and future workforce and the communities in which they live. This is accomplished through four pillars:

- To serve members of the extended Elkay family by helping in the recovery of those who have been impacted by Natural Disasters
- To attract and prepare the workforce of the future through educational scholarships.
- To support vocational training programs in the communities in which Elkay operates, and,
- To build pride for our neighborhoods in grants to support affordable housing.

Once the Elkay Family Foundation (EFF) was established, the challenge became developing programs that would bring the organization's mission to life.

THE SOLUTION

- Create/continue programs that align with the mission of Elkay Family Foundation and support Elkay's people.
- Establish a scholarship program to assist children and grandchildren of Elkay employees who plan to continue their education in college or vocational school programs.
- Donate Elkay bottle filling stations (through Fountains for Families) to communities throughout the United States, as selected by employees of Elkay.
- Serve members of the extended Elkay family by helping in the recovery of those who have been impacted by Natural Disasters.
- Recognize and reward employees who demonstrate deep commitment to giving back through the Sternberg Philanthropy Award.

BENEFITS | RESULTS

Benefit One

The EFF takes care of Elkay's employees and their families during times of need when natural disasters strike.

Benefit Two

The programs offered by EFF provide educational support for the families of Elkay employees

Benefit Three

The foundation makes it possible for employees to donate water bottle filling stations to non-profits that they care about within their communities.



"Elkay is deeply committed to the success of our employees and their families. Through disaster relief, education opportunities and economic development, the Elkay Family Foundation is proud to help the extended Elkay family and our communities survive and thrive in their hours of need."

Ted Hamilton

Elkay President, Plumbing

