Best Practices in Digital and Remote Communications

Presented by Jeff Miller, Director of Project Management
Agenda

• Why is the workforce changing?
• What digital communications tools are available
• What are the best practices in using them
• What are some Lessons Learned around digital communications
• What are the keys to managing remote employees
• Lessons Learned in managing remote employees
• Wrap-up and Q&A
The Changing Workforce

- Greater competition for limited resource pool (especially knowledge workers)
- Businesses are more global
- Lots of M&A’s
- New workers are digitally connected constantly
- Prefer communicating digitally vs F2F
- Want to live where they want to live
  - Family is #1 importance
  - Place where can pursue hobbies
- Fewer distractions when not in office
Why is competition greater?

- We are not training enough technical people to replace the Baby Boomers (Silver Tsunami)
- By 2020 estimating 165 MM Workers with 5 MM shortfall
- Some industries up to 50% of senior management will retire by 2020
- To find enough qualified workforce most WILL have remote offices / remote workers
Global Business

• Many businesses “yards” are much bigger today
• Instead of competing with locals take business global
• World is much flatter – less borders
• Our clients are going global as well
Digitally Connected Workers

- By 2020 studies estimate that 46% of the workforce will be in the Millennial group
- Digital communications is much of what they do
- The “Next” generation grew up with technology!
Flexible Work Environment

- More than 50% of the newest workers say flexible work environment is key to their satisfaction
- Many want to live near family and/or where they can do their hobbies
- Many will take this over any other benefit you can offer them
All that to say ....

• To survive and thrive as a business you are going to have to figure this out!!

• Business life as usual just isn’t going to cut it!!
Communications is Key!
Digital Communication Tools

- Email
- Cell Phones (Voice and Texting)
- Skype for Business (Instant messaging, video and screen share)
- Screen share programs (WebEx, etc.)
- SharePoint (PM Sites)
- Google Docs or DropBox
- Microsoft Yammer
- Corporate Knowledgebase / Wikis
Email vs Snail Mail
In the United States

Email
Email sent per year 14.4 trillion
That’s 39.6 billion per day
19% Legit
81% Spam

Snail mail
Snail mail sent per year 177 billion
That’s 485 million per day
53% Legit
47% Junk

Email outnumbers snail mail 81 to 1

Data sources: The numbers are estimates for 2009 based on data from the U.S. Postal Service, Radicati Group, Newdream.org, Pew Internet & American Life Project, and Internet World Stats.
Why is texting and instant messaging so popular?

- Many only communicate with family and friends this way
- Fast and I get only what is needed
- I am in control of the conversation and how long I allow it to go
- With IM presence detection I can know if they are there and will more likely answer my message
- I don’t typically get Junk Mail IM’s or texts!

Negatives:

- Impersonal
- Like emails, text doesn’t show my emotions
- Can capture text conversations but harder to use as backup for your exchange
Pam, just wanted to check with you to see when we have our next job site safety basics class scheduled?

Our next class is scheduled on Monday, August 31st from 1 to 4 PM.

Excellent! How many participants do we have this round?

We have 4 participants this round.

Sounds good! Thank you for the help.

you bet. No problem!
What is the importance of video and screen sharing

- Team building
- Collaboration – all team members can add to the pool of knowledge
  - Virtual white boarding
- Feels more like an office without the travel – I feel involved
**DISCHARGE AUGER**
The system uses a Discharge Auger for the discharge of carbon from the bulk bag hopper. The discharge auger has DCS controlled Automatic and Cascade modes that are selectable by the operator.

- In Automatic Mode, the operator can start and stop the auger at their will.
- In Cascade Mode, it will run when the carbon level in the carbon bin falls below the low level switch. A run status feedback signal from the motor starter to the DCS will be provided to indicate that the auger motor is energized. A miss compare between the requested auger state (on or off) and the motor starter contact signal (closed for running or open for stopped) will provide an alarm at the DCS. The auger will continue to run until the carbon level in the carbon bin reaches the high level switch.

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**CARBON INJECTION FEED SYSTEM**
The Carbon Injection Feeder System consists of a Hopper, a Feeder, an Auger, and a Weigh Scale. The purpose of the feeder is to accumulate and regulate the amount of carbon being injected to the unit.
SharePoint / Project Sites

- One place to find anything related to project
- Allows document control
- Automated work flows
- Team mates can collaborate on documents and know who made what changes
# Perham, MN - 88-12-3618 - Perham Resource Recovery Facility

Perham Resource Recovery Facility  
201 6th Ave. NE  
Perham, MN 56573

## Shared Documents

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What is Yammer?

- Basically Facebook or Social Media for business
- I can post quick updates to my group or team and only they see them.
- Replaces department emails that get lost in in-box
- Really a team collaboration site
Keep team informed about things you read

**Eric Schwinger**
May 12 at 8:13pm


**An inside look into VMware's new hybrid cloud strategy**

[www.networkworld.com](http://www.networkworld.com)

During the past week VMware has been making power play moves in the cloud comput...
What is a Knowledgebase / Wiki?

• Think of Wikipedia

• Basically a place to store company knowledge sharing articles that everyone can edit and add meaning to

• Easily searchable and can be categorized

Something to remember though ...

• Anyone can edit ... need someone to moderate / approve
Best Practices in Using Digital Communications

• Pick the right tools for your business

• Establish a technology team to evaluate the tools and build policies

• Set your digital communications tools up for success – make them easy to use!

• Plan system well – digital tools take internet bandwidth

• Train, verify use and re-train as needed

• Pick early adopter team to try them out before releasing to the masses
Conference Call in Real Life!

Conference Call

[Image of two smartphones]
Key Lessons Learned in Digital Communications

- Set policies on what information is allowed to be shared and in what tools
- Consider that digital media is “public”
- Negative info on Facebook or Linked In can get out quickly
- Confidential info must remain confidential!
- The tools are great but not perfect ... give them a fair try for 6 to 12 months before moving on
Best Practices in Managing Remote Employees

- Pick the right people
- Requires more communication and in different ways
  - Video Conference at least part of time
- Manage by Goals & Outcomes
- Weekly one-on-one meetings with supervisor
  - 2 per month via video conference
  - Consider daily 5 min “check-in” call
- Consider daily “Scrum” type meeting via Lync
- Bring to office at least annually
- Consider letting them work in a shared work space
- Consider having the entire team work remote part of the time
- Celebrate with the remote employee
Lessons Learned in Remote Worker Management

• Build it and they will come ... well maybe!
• Assuming the remote workers are well trained because they aren’t complaining
• Is the issue with the remote worker or the supervisor?
• Company culture is “King” ... but maybe clear as mud to remote worker
• Underestimating the value and expense of face to face communications
• Forgetting they are out there!
Wrap up

• It’s not “If” but “When”

• Pick the right tools

• Build policies

• Train and re-train as needed

• Pick the right people to start

• Make sure your supervisors are bought in and trained

• Help them feel like a part of the team
Questions?
Resources

• Remote – Office Not Required” by Jason Fried and David Heinemeier Hansson