**Communications Plan – Message Guidelines for Managers**

Using the master communications content, reduce the information to fit a mid-level manager audience:

* Present those key messages that you would expect **them** to communicate to their employees
* Keep managers **one-step ahead** of their employees (avoid surprises)
* Focus on the scope of the change including clear explanations of what is in **scope** and what is out of scope (some managers will shut-out information and filter it away from their organization if they do not see a direct connection with their work processes or systems)
* Be clear on the expected **action** you need them to take to support the change within their group or department

Use the manager outline below as a starting point. Yellow highlights show emphasized or new content for managers.

1. Messages about the business today
   1. The current situation and the rationale for the change
      1. Business issues or drivers that created a need for change
      2. Competitive issues or changes in the marketplace
      3. Customer issues
      4. Financial issues
   2. What might happen if a change is not made?
2. Messages about the change
   1. A vision of the organization after the change takes place
   2. Scope of the change (including process scope, organizational scope, systems and technology scope)
   3. Objectives for the change (what does success look like?)
   4. Overall timeframe to implement the change
   5. How big of change is needed (how big is the gap between today and the future state)?
   6. Who is most impacted and who is least impacted?
   7. The basics of what is changing, how it will change, and when it will change including what will not change
   8. How will this change affect other projects underway?
   9. Will this change affect the budgeting process or impact any existing budgets?
   10. What do we know about the design of the change right now?
   11. Business case summary and details about the future state design (process change, technology change, organization changes, job role changes)
3. Messages about how the change impacts employees
   1. The expectation that change will happen and is not a choice
   2. The impact of the change on the day-to-day activities of each employee
   3. WIIFM – “what’s in it for me?” – from the employees’ perspective
   4. Implications of the change on job security (will I have a job?)
   5. Specific behaviors and activities expected from employees
   6. Messages that should be reinforced with employees by managers
   7. Ways to provide feedback
4. Actions required by managers to support the change
   1. Specific activities expected from managers
   2. Where managers can get more information and assistance for employees
   3. Sample presentations that managers can use with their employees
5. Status updates and progress reports
   1. The schedule for the project overall
   2. Who is making the major decisions for the project?
   3. When will new information be available?
   4. How will information be shared about the project?
   5. Early success stories