

9 Ways To Use Comms Channels To Build Frontline Worker Communities

By Simon Rutter, Award-winning Sr Communications Strategist

1



Customizable employee experience (EX) platforms

Deploying an EX platform that allows for personalized information enables your frontline workers to:

- ✔ Create groups based on location, job type, level and more. This can help forge ties even if people spend little time together face-to-face.
- ✔ Share stories, information and updates – all of which strengthen trust and build bonds, which are the bedrocks of community.
- ✔ Feel included. By having a channel they can tailor, you are showing that you value them and understand their specific needs as an audience.

Frontline workers rely on face-to-face communication with their line managers for instruction and inspiration. But in-person events can also create communities.

Examples include:

- ✔ Having Town Hall takeovers by certain groups on a rotational basis or allowing a representative cross-section of managers to speak.
- ✔ Inviting guest speakers to come and share their experiences.
- ✔ Providing a space for frontline workers to either speak up themselves, or have spokespeople do it for them, so they feel their voice is heard.

2



On-site meetings

Frontline workers rely on the two Vs – verbal and visual. They are time-pressured, so pictures help communications cut through more effectively.

This means:

- ✔ Use prominent posters and digital signage to showcase locally relevant initiatives and workers.
- ✔ Include a mix of performance-related information, such as safety guidelines, and people-focused updates, like Employee of the Month announcements.
- ✔ Allow people to post information on notice boards so they can share personal stories and shape their community.

3



Pictures speak a thousand words

This could be:

Frontline work is challenging and stressful, and [disengagement is at worrying levels](#). To counter this, bring in the fun wherever you can.

This could be:

- ✔ On-site team-building activities. Make these engaging and relevant (not too corporate) and ask workers for ideas.
- ✔ Off-site team-building activities. Consider external facilitation so everyone can participate.
- ✔ Mix up the teams so workers from different teams get to know each other, collaborate, and share the experience.

4



Teams that play together stay together

5



Recognition events

Being publicly recognized by your workmates is a community-building accelerant, so:

- ✔ Host regular recognition events on site, ideally at a time when the maximum number of employees are there.
- ✔ Allow frontline workers to vote for each other.
- ✔ Communicate pre- and post-event to build excitement and keep the momentum going into the next one.

Use feedback channels (online and offline) so you become a listening-and-learning organization.

This helps build community, because it:

- ✔ Demonstrates that you respect and value the views of frontline workers.
- ✔ Gives you the opportunity to show action that has been taken because of feedback.
- ✔ Provides a space for your people to come together and recognize common issues and experiences, which builds understanding, trust, and, ultimately, community.

6



Listen and learn

7



Shared interest groups

One way for your people to find their tribe at work is through shared interest groups.

Make sure to:

- ✔ Let them grow organically; they need to feel run by workers and for workers, so a genuine community can emerge and thrive.
- ✔ Visibly encourage and support them, whether that's giving funding or providing spaces for them to meet.
- ✔ Involve them in site-wide decisions and activities, so their sub-community contributes to the broader whole.

Social media and EX apps are perfect for creating fun and participative challenges and campaigns.

You can:

- ✔ Build some fun competition between locations, with prizes for the winners.
- ✔ Have sites take over your official social platforms for a set period – they will feel like stars!
- ✔ Use it as an opportunity to promote locally-specific deals.

8



Challenges and campaigns

9



Confidential spaces

Create safe spaces for emotional support, so your employees can:

- ✔ Share experiences, queries and concerns in confidence, whether that be face-to-face, online or over the phone.
- ✔ Feel heard, access resources and support, and know you are taking care of them as their employer.
- ✔ Discuss their mental health, manage stress and wellbeing, and take positive action.