



Case Study - Environment Agency

Cascade Briefing Review

The Environment Agency is an independent public body whose aim is to protect and improve the environment in both England and Wales, encouraging people to create cleaner air, land and water for the benefit of future generations. With around 12,000 people spread across nine UK regions, the Environment Agency is committed to face to face communication and in particular its monthly team meeting process.

HarknessKennett was invited by the Central Office of Information (COI) on behalf of Helen McCallum, Director of Corporate Affairs and Simon Leech, Internal Communications Manager to review the organisation's cascade process and to suggest how the process could be further improved. Within an eight week period and in partnership with the Internal Communications team and Robert Johnson from the COI, we observed team briefings and held focus groups across the country to gather employee opinion. We also devised a paper-based questionnaire and interviewed, both face to face and by 'phone, a large number of team briefers and recipients to understand which elements of the cascade process were working well and what aspects could be developed further.

Equipped with a wealth of qualitative and quantitative data, we presented a summary of our findings to the Communications team, offering detailed recommendations for improvement, both short-term and medium-term. As a result, the team was able to quickly implement a number of practical solutions whilst building the remainder of our findings and suggestions into longer-term plans for the organisation.

"Working with HarknessKennett we were able to quickly obtain the evidence – both qualitative and quantitative to challenge the premise that 'one size fits all' for our team meeting process. We are now working on a flexible framework that will enable our communications to be more successful built on knowledge of what is already working across our organisation" .

Simon Leech
Internal Communications Manager
Environment Agency