



Case Study - NHS Blood & Transplant

Designing a verbal communications process

The National Blood Service (NBS) is part of NHS Blood & Transplant. The National Blood Service (NBS) collects, tests, processes, stores and issues over 2.1 million blood donations a year. Employing over 6,000 full and part-time staff, employees perform a wide variety of roles and are based in a multitude of temporary and permanent locations.

Following a workshop with the Executive Directors on their role and commitment to internal communication, the National Communications Manager wanted to improve communication in teams across the organisation.

Rather than imposing an “off-the-shelf” package, the National Communications Manager invited HarknessKennett to support her in the development of a tailored process and help win the commitment of senior and middle managers in this diverse organisation. To help create an appropriate solution we designed and delivered a series of workshops with a range of senior and middle managers. In the workshops we shared best practice data on face to face communication, discussed the role and commitment required from managers and the type of process most appropriate for the different locations at NBS. As a result of these workshops we were able to develop an overarching process and the key roles for leaders and managers for the National Communications Manager to share with her Executive team.

The NBS has now launched ‘Connect’ – a verbal communication system which is highly flexible accommodating the needs of different employee groups across the organisation. One of the initial benefits from this consultative approach is that many managers are now actively championing internal communication across the organisation.

“Having demonstrated the critical role that leaders at all levels play in the communication process, we were really keen to give our leaders some great tools to get verbal communication working really well.”

“The workshops really helped involve our managers in designing a process that they are comfortable with and that they know will work, and ultimately has made our communication process a lot smoother.”

Vicki Davies
National Communications Manager
National Blood Service