



Case Study - Leonard Cheshire Disability

Developing an internal communications strategy

Leonard Cheshire Disability exists to change attitudes to disability and to serve disabled people around the world. It campaigns for change and provides innovative services that give disabled people the opportunity to live life their way. Leonard Cheshire Disability works in 52 countries and is the largest UK voluntary sector provider of care and support services for disabled people.

Internal audiences in the UK include over 7,000 employees, 4,000 volunteers, trustees and the 21,000 disabled people who use Leonard Cheshire Disability's services. Alison Lyon, Head of Internal Communication & Information, wanted to develop an internal communications strategy which would make the connections between Leonard Cheshire Disability's people and the organisation's purpose and vision; the different parts of Leonard Cheshire Disability and good communication and employee involvement.

The first step was to understand people's perception of internal communication and the reach and effectiveness of current channels. HarknessKennett undertook a research programme 'Making Connections', which involved extensive qualitative research with all audiences in the Leonard Cheshire Disability community.

The research revealed widespread pride in, and loyalty to, the organisation, the work of individual services, and the commitment of staff and volunteers. It also highlighted areas for improving the links between the roles of individuals and Leonard Cheshire Disability's overall goals.

Building on the research, HarknessKennett designed and facilitated a workshop with the Internal Communication & Information team, to clarify thinking and objectives and to lay the foundations of the strategy. The team contributed their ideas on adding value, working with the different audiences, communication responsibilities throughout the organisation, key message processes and the use of specific channels.

"The scope of the research was challenging, but was approached by HarknessKennett with thoroughness and sensitivity. After the workshop, we all felt enriched by our good ideas and the team is now tasked with progressing and refining the strategy. We know it will deliver what we need."

Alison Lyon
Head of Internal Communication and Information
Leonard Cheshire Disability