

Q. I work for a large company and am responsible for managing 150 people. We recently asked for some feedback from our employees via a survey. The results showed there is an opportunity for us to improve our communication within our company. Our offices outside the lower mainland feel disconnected from our head office and would like more one on one time with me. When I can, I travel to visit with staff and enjoy spending time on their turf. Unfortunately, these trips often get cancelled because more pressing issues take priority. How can I address this challenge?

A. Sounds like you really value your people and you're interested in what matters to them. Knowing what others think, feel, and need better equips you to make decisions to align your people (your employees, your customers, your suppliers), to your business goals.

Connecting in a meaningful way is critical. As a Leader, being visibly present helps to ensure your people understand and feel connected to your organizations goals. How can you create a communication centred business that allows you to share what's important, and receive feedback on a regular basis, knowing you can't always do this in person?

Beyond your survey, there are some great resources available, for example, *OutsideIn Communications* (Outsidein.ca) – a BC based firm, works with companies to develop strategies for staying connected to their staff and their customers, to keep them informed, on side, and satisfied.

Invite your staff to share in the responsibility for staying connected – form a communications committee to produce an internal newsletter, or use the web to host informal discussions. Establish a means for publicly recognizing employee's who do great work, to reinforce they are your priority and their contributions matter.