

# Communication memo

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



| To: | Dana Donnley, Director of EmployeeCommunication. | | From: | Rey,  
Employee Communication Manager. | | Date: | March, 8th 2013. | | Ref: |  
Confidential: Employee Communication Strategy | | | Proposal for the  
Whirlpool Corporation Employee | | | Wellness Program. | | | . Background.  
Whirlpool Corporation (hereinafter the “ Company”) is facing financial  
problems, and therefore has decided to lower the insurance benefits  
expenses of its employees. As stated in the Bain & Company’s memorandum  
dated February 28th 2013, there is a direct correlation between the amount  
of moneyspent by the Company on insurance benefits and their wellness. Not  
only that, but also having healthier employees boosts their productiveness.  
As a consequence, the Company has included within its Human Resources  
strategy to offer and persuade its employees (and their spouses) to get in  
the headquarters a free mini-physical test, denominated the Employee  
Wellness Program, whereby the height, weight, blood pressure, and vital  
signs of the employees are measured (the “ EWP”). This means only a  
routine exam that tests various bodily functions and reflexes, giving as an  
aftermath adiagnosticof the employee’s general condition.  
As a result of such test several diseases can be detected in their early  
stages, giving the employee the advantage of an early treatment, and the  
company its savings on insurance benefits payments. Whirlpool Corporation  
is heavily Unionized as a consequence of a responsibleleadershipof its  
authorities. 2. Query. You have consulted me in order to draw and structure  
strategy that the Company should carry out in order to communicate the  
employees the aforementioned EWP. 3. Response:

We propose a multistep strategy that takes fully advantage of the prestige of the Company's Union, and involves it directly to inform and persuade employees to perform the medical test. Also, main concerns should be specifically addressed, such as the confidential matter of the information, its propose, and the fact that taking the medical test is voluntary. 4. Foundations of the Response: From a Human Resources standpoint the EWP should be managed carefully to avoid that the employees (and the Union) get confused regarding the real intention of it. In general terms, the communication should be simple, forceful and straightforward.

However, some issues should be specially addressed, in order to avoid confusions. These are: 1. The Test is Voluntary. It should be pointed out that the medical test is voluntary, since employees could otherwise interpret it as a coercive measure by the Company. 2. Scope and Benefits of the Test. The communication should also explain the scope of the test, so the employees are sure what to expect when they take it. Also its benefits should be mentioned. 3. Confidentiality of the Information. In spite of being arguments against it[1], I am convinced that this point should be specifically addressed in the communication.

There should not be doubt about it within the workforce. Also, a mention to the Professional Secrecy legal obligation should be done to reinforce the Company's commitment to respect it. Hence, the only person to get the result of the test is the employee itself (therefore the Company does not get the information). 4. Use and Propose of the Information. It should also be pointed out that the only purpose of making such medical test is to get a diagnostic of the employee's general condition for his own benefit and use. . Meeting

with the Union. I believe that the Union's prestige within the vast majority of the employees should be taken advantage of. Therefore, Union leaders should be called for a meeting and deeply informed about the EWP. In such meeting, special emphasis should be given in order to highlight the medical benefits for the employees that the EWP could have. Also, the Company should argue therein, that the only purpose of the meeting is to inform the Union and address its doubts and concerns. 6. Role of the Union.

Having performed an informative meeting with the Union, I assume that it will have a very active role informing employees without any request from the Company whatsoever. In fact, for many employees, the Union has more credibility than management. Hence, by involving the Union with the communication, it will be the primary source of calm for many of the employees. In addition, it could advise employees of any legal consequence of a misuse of such information by the Company, which would have strong costs for it (could be considered an abusive dismissal). 7. The Test is Free.

This should be explicit within the communication. 8. Spouses of Employees. As stated above, the EWP also includes the spouses of employees. However, in the communication to be delivered, no reference should be made in such regard, since it could be interpreted as intrusive. Therefore, only for those who accept taking the test a verbal extension of the invitation should be performed to their spouses. 9. Formality of the Communication. I advise you to communicate the EWP to the employees via e-mail, since by communicating it by a more formal mean would only give this issue more significance that it has. 10. Further Details.

It also should be address specifically that if anyone has any doubt or wants further information about the medical test, should contact either someone at the Human Resources department or at the Union. 11. Other Factors Taken into Consideration. Intimate employee information and its use are of critical importance to maintain an excellent employee-employer relationship. Not only that, but also their productivity is at risk if the message is misunderstood or the information is misused. In that regard, the confidence that the Company has built over the years with its employees can be destroyed in days, if the situation is not managed properly.

I remain at your disposal for any further information that you may deem necessary. Yours truly, Rey. Employee Communication Manager.

----- [1] It could be argued that by specifically addressing that the information will remain confidential could provoke a concern on employees, that otherwise would not be concerned. Nevertheless, we doubt that this would be the situation in the majority of the cases. We are convinced that most of the employees would be concerned about the topic, if a commitment of the Company declaring that information confidential were not made.