



→ e-book

# How to communicate your speak up culture to your employees: 5 steps

We believe communication is key to the success of SpeakUp. Therefore, we think it is important to take your time in thinking about how to truly embed and communicate SpeakUp, especially for the (silent) ones you want to reach. This article discusses the communication to the internal reporters, mainly the employees. →

# Table of contents

Step 1: Make a clear analysis of the ‘reporting personas’ within your organisation .....	04
Step 2: Define the message .....	05
Step 3: Define the communication means .....	06
Step 4: Consider your existing communication programme .....	07
Step 5: Define the communication strategy and planning .....	08

# Step 1 Make a Clear Analysis of the Reporting Personas

At SpeakUp, we reflect on what we call the “*reporting persona*”. Reporting personas are the different types of people that are potentially willing to speak up about the risks within your organisation. With this concept, we want to encourage organisations to step inside of the mind of the potential reporter. Ultimately, with the purpose of activating these silent witnesses, by means of tooling and communications most suitable for the specific reporting persona. One simple example is that a blue collar worker needs a different approach than a banker from London.

The primary focus group for planning your internal launch of SpeakUp are your internal reporting personas. With external reporting personas we mean people who are not on the payroll (so, suppliers or customers). We won't discuss the external reporting personas in detail here. The group of internal reporting personas needs to be thoroughly analysed within your organisation.

Who are your internal reporting personas? Are they blue or white collar workers, managers, or something else altogether?

It is important to think about who can potentially report and what type of messages can come in (or what cases do you expect to come in), reflecting on your organisation. What are the risks within your company? Do you also reflect on cultural issues?

To be successful in your communication, you need to carefully address your internal reporting personas and ensure that they can trust you as an organisation and the SpeakUp system. You want the message to address and encourage all reporters to go over the (high) barrier and report.

## Action steps of an analysis of internal reporting personas

- Who are your internal reporting personas related to compliance risks? What types of reports or messages do you expect to come in? Who will be posting these messages?
- Who are your employees? Are they white or blue collar workers? Are there minority groups? Which countries do you operate in? Are there big cultural differences? How are the living conditions of your employees around the world? Do they have easy access to the Internet and/or phone lines?

# Step 2 Define the Message

Once you defined who your internal reporting personas are (who are you communicating with?), the next step is to formulate and define the message you want to communicate within your organisation. Reporting about unethical behaviour can be portrayed in many ways. The terms whistleblower and misconduct reporting have a very strong meaning and bring a heavy weight on the potential reporter. The barrier to report is high, therefore, it is important that the way you communicate to potential reporters lowers this barrier.

**To help you define your own message, please find helpful focus points below:**

- The use of terminology - too much difficult jargon might scare reporters away
- Your key message - what is the key message you want to convey?
- Coherence on your company's core values - these must be clear from your communication
- Don't forget to translate your message/communication!

To get you inspired, we have some best practices/examples of some of our clients regarding how they communicated SpeakUp within their organisation. Please visit our [catalogue](#).

# Step 3 Define the Communication Means

It is important to think about what means you will use to communicate SpeakUp. The means are as important as the message itself. The message can only come through if you have the right means addressing your reporting personas. For example, if you only communicate SpeakUp via the Intranet, and you have employees who do not have easy access to the Intranet (or possess a laptop), the message loses its reach. Therefore, you need to think of what tools or materials you want to use to convey the message.

When thinking about what means you will use, one vital question you need to ask is: *How will you reach all your employees?* Depending on different workplaces, company cultures, and company size, different means can be used. We provided some examples to help you examine what communication means are effective for your organisation.

## Digital

- Visibility: Make your Code of conduct / SpeakUp policy easy to find and visible on the Intranet (e.g. via a quick button on the Homepage)
- Use your corporate internal communications to share SpeakUp related information: the Intranet, newsletter, employee-app, screen savers, annual report
- Make SpeakUp part of your E-learning / the gamification of the Code of Conduct
- Be sure to make an explanatory video of the SpeakUp system

## Hard-copies

- Awareness posters within different workspaces. Posters are a good communication means to ensure constant awareness
- Take-home material: leaflets, handouts, and wallet cards. Such means are important since they ensure that employees can also report from home

## Other Means

- Include SpeakUp in your onboarding material for new employees
- Create a SpeakUp day (e.g. “Thank You for Speaking Up Day”)
- Check our [catalogue](#) to see how our clients have communicated SpeakUp!

# Step 4 Consider your Existing Communication Programme

When launching SpeakUp, and prior to designing your communications strategy and planning, it makes sense to see whether you can hook on to existing organisational communication programs. Take some time to understand which programs are already in place and whether things can be combined. Why?

## #1 Power

If you hook existing communication programs on to the SpeakUp programme, it will empower the message. A combination of communication that we often see, is combining the communication efforts for the SpeakUp programme with the communication programme for the Code of Conduct. Introducing an improved SpeakUp

programme can be a great way to renew your Code of Conduct.

## #2 Clarity

Less is more. Employees are often flooded with communications from HQ. Especially for a sensitive topic like this, clear and simple guidance is key.

## #3 Efficiency

Make use of the terminology or images already exist, or have already been designed.

# Step 5 Define the Communication Strategy & Planning

The last vital piece for communications is to draft a strategy and plan of the roll-out of SpeakUp.

when the first messages coming in you can building more knowledge about the topic and create a more extensive communication programme afterwards.

## Big bang vs. soft continuous

We experience that organisations often lack time and resources when first implementing SpeakUp. Therefore, we say there are two ways to roll-out SpeakUp – you can either have a big bang or a soft continuous roll-out, gradually introducing the SpeakUp programme.

A big bang means creating a big roll-out or campaign in which all key elements of your onboarding plan are completed and all communication materials are ready for the live date.

The other approach is to start small (we call this a soft approach). Sometimes resources and time are lacking. When starting small, you can gradually build your SpeakUp programme by selecting what are the most important elements for your organisation to start with on the live date. By doing this you can go live comfortably and

The important factor is to do it right and to set realistic goals for yourself. SpeakUp is a continuous 'living' project in which the most important objective is that your employees are aware and trust the SpeakUp programme.

## Your SpeakUp Ambassadors

Another significant part of your strategy and planning are your SpeakUp 'promoters' or ambassadors. Different people or 'layers' of the organisation can support you and strengthen the communication of the roll-out.

Within your company, top management (HQ), local compliance officers, works councils and local managers can all be part of the SpeakUp programme. They can potentially play a key role in promoting SpeakUp. It is good to plan and involve decisive people from within your organisation.



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