



## The Internal Comms Podcast – Season 9

### Episode 78 – Jason Anthoine, *Comms with courage*

#### Transcript

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#### **Katie 00:03**

The Internal Comms Podcast is brought to you by AB, the world's first specialist internal comms agency. For nearly 60 years, AB has worked hand in hand with internal comms leaders around the world, to inform, inspire, and empower their workforces, building great organisations from the inside out.

#### **Katie 00:30**

If you'd like to discuss new, effective, exciting ways to connect with your people, please get in touch. Visit [abcomm.co.uk](http://abcomm.co.uk). And if you do, I look forward to meeting you. And now on with the show.

#### **Katie 00:51**

Hello, and welcome to The Internal Comms Podcast with me. Katie Macaulay. This show is devoted to improving the way we communicate at work. Every fortnight I ask a comms practitioner, consultant, author, or business leader to sit in my podcast hot seat, and together we explore ways to make everyone feel more connected, involved and motivated at work.

My guest today is Jason Anthoine. Jason says on his company website, "I do one thing: help companies inform, involve and inspire their employees." Okay, maybe that's three things he says. That gives you a clue about Jason. He is very warm and funny, and surprisingly self-effacing for someone with so much insight and experience. Jason has spent a 30-year career working in internal communications, employee experience and culture change. Today he is the founder of the agency Audacity, which has a great tagline "bold thinking, at work." And we talk about boldness and bravery quite a bit in this podcast, you'll hear Jason say, "I'm not in the comms business. I'm in the courage business." We talk about the difference between management and leadership, why organisations know so much about their customers, yet seemingly so little about their employees, and an important finding from Audacity's What Employees Want survey. So without further ado, I bring you Jason Anthoine.

#### **Katie 02:46**

So Jason, welcome to The Internal Comms Podcast. it's a delight to have you here.

#### **Jason 02:52**

Thank you so much. I'm so excited to be here. it's humbling to me that you and anyone else thinks that I have something of value to say and that you're going to share with folks. So I hope I live up to those expectations.

#### **Katie 03:05**



I am absolutely sure you will. Let's start somewhere near the beginning. Because I've heard you say that growing up, it was actually your father and his work, basically, who sparked your interest in communications in the workplace? Can you share a little bit with us what life was like back then, the conversations that you were hearing maybe around the dining room table?

**Jason** 03:31

Absolutely. So my dad worked at a school bus factory. In fact he was there for 37 years making school buses. And then of course, my mom worked at the bank, she was a secretary at the bank. And so both of them, what we would call blue collar kind of jobs in this very small town in middle Georgia. And they both come home from work and talk about, you know, what we all talk about when you come home from work, which is all the idiots say you have to put up with, and then "why can't this be easier?" You know, I Don't really know What's going on, that sort of thing.

**Jason** 04:09

And in addition to that, the company, the school bus company, sent an employee newsletter, mailed it to our home every month, and so every month I would get that newsletter and I would read it cover to cover and felt like I knew everything that was going on in that company. So I think, you know, the combination of that and hearing from both of them about their day and reading that newsletter, and then one thing in particular that just stands out in my mind: one time there was a union organising effort at the school bus plant. I was asking my dad "I Don't even know what a union is. What is the union? Why did they want to organise this plan? Why are some people for it and some people against it?" And he said, "those employees that work there, they just want someone to listen to them and care about them. And they don't feel like either one of those things are happening. And so they think maybe a union can help make that happen."

**Jason** 05:03

And so that just really stuck with me, even though their titles and their jobs didn't really say so, I always thought they were just good leaders in sort of different ways in those roles that they were playing, and it just kind of rubbed, rubbed off on me.

**Katie** 05:18

It's interesting, isn't it, we can have all the fancy frameworks and the fancy strategies, and something as simple as making people feel heard, caring about what they care about, it can come down to something as simple as that can't it? And it often does.

**Jason** 05:34

It really can. And I think it also underscores how expensive it can be if you don't do that, People are like, "Oh, that's a big investment for us to have a big internal comms effort and really focus on our employees and our culture." And I'm always like, "well, if you think that's expensive, to try not doing something, you'll get really big numbers with a lot of zeros and commas."

**Katie** 05:59

You went on then to have a very long and successful career in communications, more than 30 years, in all aspects of internal communications, engagement and culture. I guess the big question there is, why has the discipline held your interest for so long?

**Jason** 06:19

This still happens. But it certainly happened early on, when you explain to people, what do you do for a living? Well, I do internal communications. What is that? And then you start explaining that and you just see their eyes glaze over. And they don't really understand it. And sadly, that's partially true today.

**Jason** 06:37

But the reason I've stayed in it, I think two things. One, work just fascinates me. I mean, we all spend the majority of our lives doing this. So you know, feels like we ought to enjoy it more than maybe some folks do. And especially early on, I had to do some external comm stuff, media relations, and press releases and things like that. But when I send out external comms, a press release, for example, I don't know if anybody read that. And if they did, if it changed anything a bit about what they think, feel, say and do.

**Jason** 07:12

Versus if I have the CEO stand up in a town hall, and I've written her comments and remarks. And we have the town hall. And then afterwards, I can see exactly how that has changed what people think, feel, say and do. And I just like having sort of that finger on the pulse there and just being able to see the results of the work. The other stuff, yes, it's important. There's a lot of ways to measure all that stuff on the external side, but just for me, for my preferences, nothing beats seeing those things happen as a result of what you're doing.

**Katie** 07:49

One of the things I love to ask people who have worked in this field for so long, is how they feel about the progress that discipline has made. What strides have we made as the profession over the time that you've been working in the field? And where do you think progress might have been a bit slow or lacking?

**Jason** 08:12

That's interesting to think about. I mean, obviously, the technology side of things played a huge role. I think all of those are good strides around the art of communications, better storytelling, better ways to connect, not just to employees, but with them. The profession, and the function itself now has an established career path. There's training and development around that it's, quote, 'real job.' In the past, it was just oh, you know, somebody needs to do this newsletter.

**Jason** 08:43

Now there's a lot more structure and discipline and rigour around that, and this podcast and other things, that provide the industry support, structure, all that stuff's in place. Now, for a long time, really, none of that existed. So to me, those feel like the good strides that we've made around the art of what we do.



**Jason** 09:05

But on the science of what we do, that's to me, where we've got some work still to do. For whatever reason, measurement seems to befuddle everyone, I think, a lot of times, because of the types of personalities, I think they get into internal comms, people have difficulty selling it internally. I don't know if it's because they're shy. They're introverts. They don't know how to sell... whatever those things might be. Our friends and external and marketing don't have a problem with that at all. But we seem to still.

**Jason** 09:38

I think, also there's, we're still too focused on the arts and crafts and all of the outputs versus the outcomes. And then I think you've probably seen this too. I think most CCOs at large organisations have come up on the external side of the practice. And so I think just because of that, there's just a built in bias for the value and the understanding of external versus internal, that's slowly changing.

**Jason** 10:06

And then I think too, sometimes you tell me, but it feels like we, we let HR steal some of our thunder and bottle our lightning themselves instead of doing that or taking credit for that, I don't know. I'm sure there's been your experience too.

**Katie** 10:22

And it's interesting because with the interest in developing really powerful employee value propositions, culture statements, values, all the rest of it, that I'm reflecting on the fact that we must play a role in that otherwise it will be HR that becomes fully involved in all of that activity. And I think a huge part of it is actually the crafting and the communication of those things.

**Jason** 10:50

I think you're right. I mean, HR people are really, really good at HR stuff, and writing and messaging and being creative probably isn't on the list of HR stuff, but it's on our list. And I think the combination of what we can bring to that and what they can bring to that really makes it much more powerful than if either one of us were doing it by ourselves.

**Katie** 11:13

Yes. What is it, I suppose about measurement that we find so difficult? Do you see a reoccurring theme when it comes to measurement, why we seem to come a cropper?

**Jason** 11:25

Yeah, it's an oddity to me, because our friends down the hall in marketing and to certain extent, HR, and certainly external comms, they've been measuring things for a long time and are really good at it. And it almost feels like we've never ever thought to ask them, "Hey, how do you do that?" It's like we've just discovered it. And we're like, oh, we're gonna have to invent this thing. Although other people there that have been doing it for 20 years.

**Jason** 11:52



It's reimagining your role and walk and why that measurement piece is so important, because you've had this conversation, there's probably been 50 people on this podcast that have said the same thing. What we need is a seat at the table. Well, when you get the seat at the table around everybody else, they're all coming in there with charts and graphs. And we're coming in there with arts and crafts. And they get all the resources because they can prove that what they're doing is working. And all we can say is we got a bunch of likes. Okay. I mean, that's good. Yeah, we do need to measure our comms and how they're working and those outputs, but it's the outcomes that get discussed around that table, and if we want to have a stronger conversation about our outcomes, and we have to get a lot better at mapping our outputs to the outcomes that matter to the business. And I think the folks down the hall have been doing it really well for a long time. And all we have to do is ask them how to do it.

**Katie** 12:51

In my research for this show, I thought I detected a bit of a theme emerging in your career around courage and bravery. And being extremely honest when you're advising leaders and senior stakeholders. And I wondered about whether you could share an example of this and tell us about the story of a conversation you had with a CEO from a manufacturing company on a plane. Now I don't know if any of that means anything to you, Jason, but if that does, I'd love you to share that story.

**Jason** 13:27

It actually does. Because that was early on in my career. And it was really a seminal moment when a light switch flipped in my head and I was like, "Ah, this is what I'm supposed to be doing, even though in this specific moment it is totally terrifying." So, so I was working at this wiring cable manufacturer, so we had plants that may wire and cable, so stuff that goes on down the road to carry electricity and then all the wire in your house and things like that. And then we also had an aluminium Smelter next door to one of those facilities where we took molten aluminium literally molten aluminium in a giant cauldron, drove it across the street to the wiring cable plant and then made wire cable there.

**Jason** 14:13

And at both of those facilities, but especially the aluminium Smelter, we had a union organising campaign. And this was unusual for this company. They had been union free for decades. And they just were kind of caught by surprise.

**Jason** 14:30

And so we were up at that facility having a big meeting with the employees and then the CEO and then every labour attorney and consultant you can think of, I don't know how much money they were spending on all these high flying specialists to come in and help with that. And as you might imagine, it was contentious for most of that meeting and then on the flight home, somehow it ended up just being me and the CEO. And I was sitting next to him and we took off and he was quiet, he didn't say anything.

**Jason** 15:01



Now this CEO, his father has started the company and he was taking over from his father and his family was instrumental in running it. So this was not just a business thing. This was a personal thing to them, and especially him. And so he was quiet and kind of reflecting on what had just happened all day long. And he turned to me and said, "why do these employees want a union?" And I was like, "does this plane have like a parachute? Is there a way for me to like slip back somewhere and kind of avoid..." but it was just the two of us. I was like, "you have all these big wigs around you, nobody has told you?" So I was like, well, I guess I guess I'll have to tell him. And I was like, "well, it's because they're trying to protect their company from you." And I thought, well, that's it, he's gonna get up. it's going to open the door and mid flight, shove me out. Nobody will hear from old Jason ever again. And he sat there. And he had This puzzled look on his face, turned and faced forward, and then for another five or 10 minutes and didn't say anything. And I was like, oh, gosh, that's it. And then finally, he turned to me and said, "You know what? We need more people like you to help more people like me understand what's really going on." And that's when it hit me. My job, yes, is to crank out a newsletter. My job, yes, is to write speeches and do PowerPoints and fancy up the intranet site. But my job is really to tell leaders what they need to hear whether they want to hear it or not. And as weird as that feels, and as awkward a conversation as those sometimes are, no one else is doing that for them.

**Katie** 16:57

Yeah.

**Jason** 16:58

For all the same reasons. We don't want to do it, but somebody has to do it, they have to have that. And we have to be the ones to do it. From that moment on. I was like, You know what, I'm not in the comms business. I'm in the courage business. And I better start having a lot of it because it sounds like these are the kinds of conversations that are going to keep happening for the rest of my career.

**Katie** 17:18

I'm not in the comms business. I'm in the courage business. We've just got a title for the episode. Thank you.

**Jason** 17:26

You're welcome.

**Katie** 17:29

So aside from providing that really honest reflection on a business, I'm guessing you have had to coach and manage and support a whole host of senior executives over your career. What is the key to, aside from honesty, what's the key to building that strong, trusting relationship? And I suppose the flip side of that question is, what sort of help do they most need?

**Jason** 17:57

Gosh, how long is this podcast? A few months ago, I went to like an anniversary celebration for this elderly couple, they were, I dunno, had been married 50 something years or

something like that. And so everybody wanted to know, "What's the secret? How did you do it?" And he said something that I had never heard anybody say before, he said "the secret to a really strong relationship is extreme courtesy, and how you think about your partner, how you deal with your partner how you react, extreme courtesy. And I thought, that is, I've never heard that that is fascinating. And and so I think the same thing kind of applies here.

**Jason** 18:41

I don't know that courtesy is the right word. But I think the right phrase is extreme empathy. Because at the end of the day, these senior leaders have these big titles and lots of seniority and enormous compensation packages compared to most of the rest of us in the real world. But they're just normal humans. They get nervous, they get excited, they get worried, just like us. Some of them are scared to death, they've got to answer to boards, they've got to answer to shareholders and other stakeholders, and they've got a hard job. I know it doesn't look that way all the time. But that's the hardest job in the company, usually. And for the most part, they're all alone with all these emotions all day long.

**Jason** 19:21

And so at first, it's easy to be intimidated by that, but there's no reason to be, because they're no different than us. Everyone else is intimidated by that. So my advice is to do the opposite. Like George Costanza says on Seinfeld, "today's opposite day, we'll make every day opposite day and do the opposite of what everybody else is doing." You gotta have the courage to tell it like it is and to say what needs to be said and to bring some context and relevance to those conversations and discussions because think about it, I mean, they live in a rational world. Everything that they look at is rational: numbers, charts, figures, spreadsheets, conversation, everything's rational. So we have to also be rational, but because they hear rational all day long, we can bring something that they don't hear, which is the emotional side of things. So that's the context. That's the relevance, you know, the rational thing to do is This, the emotional result of doing that is This. Everybody else is having rational conversations, let's bring some of the emotional in there as well.

**Jason** 20:26

So I think just telling it like it is, and, and having the courage to do that, and colouring it with, this is not just what I think, This is what I'm hearing, because we talk to our employees all the time. And I can we can bring that emotional piece that's that's usually missing.

**Katie** 20:44

You're making me reflect on some of the times when, and it hasn't been that often, but occasionally, as you say, you are alone with the chief executive. And the times when I've asked them simple questions like how they're feeling. And you catch them by surprise. "Noone asks how I'm feeling!"

**Jason** 21:05

Right. It's just a way to build trust, you know, and that's, if you want to be a trusted adviser, the first word is trust. So anybody can be an advisor, but it's the trusted part that matters. So you build trust by building that relationship. And that's built on courtesy and empathy,



and, you know, all the things that we are good at building with all every other relationship in our lives. This one's no different.

**Katie** 21:31

Is it also true that you often ask leaders to pretend that the teleprompter is broken? Is that true? And why is that?

**Jason** 21:42

Yes, as much as possible. I mean, we all know how that is, if we could just get them to not read this thing, This video would be better. So usually, what I do is if we're shooting a video or something I'd, you know, go ahead and turn record on long before they get there. And then they come in, they sit down and just say, "Hey, we're just going to do some practice. And then we'll start recording." all the while it's still recording, and they Don't know. And then you ask them the questions and then they say whatever it is, they're going to say. And then you say "Alright, now let's do the real one." And then soon as you say that, they stiffen up. They want to deliver nothing but talking points and they read it off the teleprompter and it's terrible. But you Have already recorded the best version of that. And then when you're done and you send it and you go, "here's what we got." Like yeah, got it turned out better than I thought it was. Sometimes you're gonna Have to ease them into being themselves because soon as you say, now we're gonna record they're like oh, I gotta go back to my media training. And This is how I'm supposed to sit and talk.

**Katie** 22:40

Yes, you reminded me years ago in my journalistic days, when you get to the end of an interview, and you'd ceremoniously put the pen down, which absolutely meant nothing. But a sign that suddenly were off the record.

**Jason** 22:54

Oh, that's when all the truth comes out. That's right.

**Katie** 22:59

All I've done is put the pen down. I'm still taking notes in my head.

**Jason** 23:05

I love it.

**Katie** 23:07

So true. So true. Now, I've also heard you say that there is a big difference between leadership and management. I remembered This quote from Warren Bennis, who says, "failing organisations are usually over managed, and under lead." How true is that? I'm just wondering, from your perspective, what you see is the difference between leadership and management. And I guess that plays out on two levels. The people we Have to advise, but also probably how we need to behave and act and think in our own roles.

**Jason** 23:41



Yeah, that's, an excellent way to put that, I love that, quote, over managed under lead. The difference between leadership and management is that it feels like management is all about controlling people and leadership is all about freeing them. In many organisations, it feels like quote, "the leaders are really just managers that have big titles, and so that's, you know, licenced, to act a certain way sometimes. And then they tend to just sit behind a desk and make decisions solely by looking at a spreadsheet." That's not leading. That's managing. And quite frankly, the poor example of managing in my mind.

**Jason** 24:25

Imagine if your CEO only looks at customer data and only hears about a customer experience from her team, and only reviews monthly and quarterly dashboards and KPIs and stuff. That doesn't seem plausible, right? The CEO is out talking with customers and meeting with customers and getting to know them and understanding what they want and don't want, and adjusting the business and making decisions based on all that. Now substitute the word employee for customer. Can you imagine the difference it would be if the CEO would get out and talk to employees and understand what they want, and hear What's working and What's not working, and then go back and adjust the business and the products and services to give them what they said they want and expect, they would just be a totally different thing. And I think part of that is the difference between leading and managing, where if I'm leading, I want to free people to be able to do their best. And the only way I can do that is to know what they think is the best. And then our job as the leaders is to help that happen. Versus managing, which is here's what the spreadsheet says, I Don't know the name of anybody else who works anywhere other than down the hall from me, but here, we're gonna make a decision based on that. That's managing and that's not a good way to run a railroad.

**Katie** 25:48

I love that thought management is controlling people, leadership is freeing them. That is, there's so much wisdom in that Jason.

**Jason** 25:59

That only took one cup of coffee.

**Katie** 26:05

I mean, it just it's so relatable. Even I think if you're managing a team, actually.

**Jason** 26:10

The same applies to us! I mean, we look up and say, Hey, guys, we need y'all to be leaders and managers. And we also need to look in the mirror and say the same thing. Like we Have really good people on our team, and we need to help them be better not Have our thumbs on them and not be micromanaging. And what can we do to knock down hurdles and Have conversations with others to help progress happen and all those kinds of things, so that they are being able to be free to do what we all know needs to be done, not constrained, because we're worried about how we ourselves might look to others in the organisation. That's the last thing you should be worried about.



**Jason** 26:21

Tell us about your consultancy Audacity, and particularly how it got its name.

**Jason** 26:54

Well, This actually is my second consultancy, my first one started back in '99 by joining a friend of mine who already had a consultancy, and she was doing some work for me back when I was running internal comms at Siemens Energy and Automation. So when I joined her, when I left Siemens and joined her, her consultancy was called Smiling Dog. Oh, as you can imagine, we had a heck of a time getting people to return our phone calls. What are you in the poodle washing business? Why would I want to talk to you. So when I ended up buying her out, I renamed it Cohesion, which is actually the name of that chemical force of attraction that holds molecules of a given substance together, and so in our minds, the molecules are the employees and the substances, the company and its culture, and we thought we were the most clever people in the world.

**Katie** 27:49

That's clever.

**Jason** 27:51

And then after that firm, I went back and worked for a couple of intergalactic PR firms and some other companies before founding Audacity. But the name Audacity comes from a couple of books written by Jim Collins, his books are Built to Last and Good to Great. And in those books, he talks about what companies need to do to be successful, including defining these big hairy, audacious goals or BHAGs as they're sometimes referred to. Yeah, and throughout my whole career, it's been my experience that most companies are really pretty good at big and hairy, and goals. But they're quite lousy at being audacious. So that's why I called the consultancy Audacity sort of as a nod to that great advice. And as a way to automatically get people thinking, "Oh, This is something a little bit different here." It also starts with an A, so that puts us closer to the front of the phonebook. For you kids out there and we can explain you got to look at what a phonebook is.

**Katie** 28:58

Audacity meaning in that context, something that is bold, unexpected, and also, potentially, you're thinking bigger than you really ought to, you know, you're being slightly cheeky because you're going beyond the realms of what normally would be expected. Is that how you're seeing or audacious in that context?

**Jason** 29:21

100%. I mean, the little tagline is 'bold thinking, at work.' And the whole idea is we've got to get beyond thinking how we've been thinking, not just as a profession, and as professionals or as a function, but as leaders of This organisation. What can we do that's unique and different, forward thinking? That doesn't mean it's reckless or careless or too risky. It doesn't Have to be any of those things to be audacious. It just has to be something that's no one's tried that why don't we huh? That doesn't work. Then we'll Find something else. But the goal is to keep trying to find that right combination. And I Don't know, anybody who's ever really



been as successful as they want to be by not being bold. You have to be. Otherwise you're just swimming in a sea of sameness.

**Katie** 30:16

I like that thinking because I seem to be having lots of conversations with clients at the moment about developing some kind of team charter or set of principles that they can rally around internally themselves, and kind of gather momentum with, but also communicate to the wider organisation to explain their *raison d'être*, if you want to use that expression. But you know, the reasons for being. And again, that the idea of being bold and audacious around that may be surprising, to some degree, you know, boldly surprising, I think is probably worth, when you're thinking about Have I got the right charter or set of principles, that might be a lens to look through. Is it also audacious?

**Jason** 31:01

When you're thinking that way, you are automatically drawing the line in the sand 10 feet further than where everyone else has previously drawn it for you. Just by doing that you're signalling: it's a new day, we've got a new approach. You used to know us as the people that push the everyone email button. Yes, we still do that. But that is not who we are. That is what we do. Different things.

**Katie** 31:29

We don't often get to talk tactics to guests on this show. But there was one tactic I came across in researching you. And I thought, I've got to ask you about this. It's both bold, it's creative. Can you tell us how *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*, and if no one has seen that show, we will put a link in the show notes. How that inspired a comms solution?

**Jason** 31:53

Well, two things. One, I'm a big *Seinfeld* fan. No one can see this because it's a podcast. But behind the there's a LEGO model of Jerry's apartment.

**Katie** 32:02

I wanted what that was.

**Jason** 32:06

And so there's the Jerry *Seinfeld* angle, because he's the host of that *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*. And then there's the car part, and I'm a huge car guy. So when he started doing this new show, I was immediately fascinated by it. Soon as I wake up, I started thinking about internal comms until I go to sleep. I don't know why, I probably need to get some help.

**Jason** 32:26

But so everything I see, think, feel, hear, live, whatever it is all through the lens of how can I, how can this be an employee for internal comp? So I started thinking the same thing about This show. And so why Don't we do This? Let's get the CEO in his car. We're going to put some GoPro cameras in there. And literally, he's going to drive up to the Starbucks, they're going to get coffee, and he's going to drive back. And that's the episode and sitting in the



passenger seat: customers, other leaders, regular employees, important vendors and partners.

**Katie** 33:01

Nice.

**Jason** 33:02

Not really scripted, generally, here's what we want to talk about. But get in drive and come back. You end up with fascinating conversations that are just normal natural things that people are talking about. Funny Stuff, stuff that Have anything to do about work, insightful things they're not aware of the cameras on, they're just driving and drinking coffee. So you get a whole lot of great stuff. And it's easy to edit that down and the budget is next to nothing. What is it? Five mile drive and \$10 for Starbucks? I mean, give me a break. it's one of the cheapest things we can do, but it's very effective, and it's fun.

**Katie** 33:39

But it comes back to that unscripted, informal, getting people at their authentic best. So yeah, watch out for this: Colleagues in Cars Getting Coffee here. When we met before this show, you said that you can't manage internal communication from behind your desk. And you really emphasise the need to get out into your business. And I'm wondering for an internal comms person that might have rocked up in a new role in a new organisation. What kinds of questions do they need to start asking about their new organisation? What kind of topics, areas of the business, do they need to look at?

**Jason** 34:20

Well, there's really not much more exciting on this planet than sort of that first 100 days in a new role at a new company, and I think it's just this wonderful honeymoon period, where you're this new shiny toy, and you get to spend, I think, a considerable amount of time learning what almost everyone else at that company thinks they already know. And because you're still shiny and new, and you're all dinged up, bits and pieces torn off and missing like everyone else, because you just got there, that gives you a licence to just meet with as many people as you can and ask basic questions that people are like, "oh, This person knows nothing." Good. You want them to think that because you want them to tell you everything that they know. So that you can talk to as many people as possible and listen and learn and hear stories and match that up with not only your own experience, but all the other comms that have gone out in the last quarter or two, before you've gotten there. And then you can match all that up with the business strategy. And looking at financial reports and dashboards and KPIs and really digging in to the numbers to learn what the leaders think success looks like. Once you've had that honeymoon period, then everything you do from that point on, is aligning your work with what the leaders think that success looks like, married to what your employees want, and need, to help make that happen. And you cannot do that if you aren't out talking to those people, you can't, you just can't, there's no, no substitute for that. So it sounds really simple to do. But that doesn't mean it is simple to do. It's a simple concept. But it's simple to define. And when you keep it that simple, you don't get distracted or sort of blown off course, by all that silly stuff that's going to start happening once people realise you're there, and they need you to crank out

stuff. So use that first 100 days to just understand as much as you can about the culture and the business and the organisation and the employees and marry that up with whatever everybody else thinks the reality is. Look for the gap. And there's opportunity.

**Katie** 36:38

It's so interesting, because you reminded me of a boss, I used to have that used to say we're the bridge builders, you know, we're the ones that take, you know, the business goals, the business priorities and strategy. And then as you say, have to marry them up or create a bridge between that and the audience basically, what they need, what they want, what their desires are. bridge that gap, I suppose. Because there often is the gap there.

**Jason** 37:00

There is Katie, that's such an important point. Because think about it. In most organisations, we are usually one of maybe two functions, who are meeting with every other function.

**Katie** 37:13

Yes.

**Jason** 37:14

Accounting hardly ever meets with risk, risk hardly ever meets with safety. Safety hardly ever meets with customer experience. We do, we meet with all of them. And so we get to hear from each of those things. And every time we hear something, we can share that with the other part of the organisation who's never hearing those things. And so that's such an important role for us is that bridging that you talked about, because sometimes we are the only bridge that spans across that entire organisation.

**Katie** 37:45

That's why I often feel, and I think it's one thing that attracted me to the discipline for so long, that you really feel in this privileged position. Because you hear so much. I don't know if you feel that too, but it really does feel like a privilege sometimes.

**Jason** 38:00

Absolutely. Then when you get invited to a leader meeting, and they're all talking and then you weigh in, and people are like we've never heard this before, like, well, I heard it from y'all. If you are talking together, but when you're talking with me, this is the things that you're saying. You should be talking with each other.

**Katie** 38:18

And it's interesting when you speak to leaders, exactly that actually, when you speak to leaders individually, one on one, and you ask what success looks like, and how they measure success, and what are the obstacles to success. And you gather all that information, then you go back into the room and you say just for your information, you don't all entirely agree. And then there might be a point at which you would want or you might want to align because a degree of separation between you at that level is actually causing quite a big, you know, gap. That's really functions and departments further down.



**Jason** 38:52

That's right. it's like a cruise ship, you know, you're one degree off course. And then by the time you arrive, you're 80 miles away from the port you were supposed to get to. That's what's happening there one degree off in that meeting, and then they're 80 miles off out in the operations.

**Katie** 39:06

Yeah, yeah, that's really, really interesting. So we've talked a little bit about what we can learn from our friends in the marketing department, in maybe media relations, I think sometimes even in investor relations sometimes. We talked a bit about management and the importance of insight. I'm just wondering if you're seeing anything else in the sort of marketing world? Certainly we're seeing that things like the development of personas, where you'd have the customer journey, now people thinking about the employee journey. Are you seeing other things like that, that we need to sort of potentially look closer to and borrow from our friends in marketing?

**Jason** 39:45

Well, borrows a soft word, we should just outright steal it. Let's just call a spade a spade. They're good at it. They've been doing it a long time. We don't have to borrow it. Let's just steal it.

**Jason** 39:56

Marketing knows our customer profile is female, 34, married, two kids, blue Volvo, three bedroom house, and drinks decaf coffee and has an instapot. Anything you want to know about that customer, marketing knows. If you go down the hall and ask HR for anything, anything like that. Not only are you not gonna get it in five minutes, you're probably not gonna get it in five decades, because they don't understand the value of having that. Not because they're not smart, but because they've never thought about it that way. And they've never had to think about it that way.

**Jason** 40:42

So if we want to think about it that way, then we have to understand our employees the same way that marketing understands our customers. And so that means, like we said earlier, you got to get out in the operations, you got to visit locations, if you've got 10 manufacturing plants, then you need to go see all 10 of those. And not because you're going to do an interview, not because you're going to shoot a video, but because you're going to go and work from there that day, that week, and you're just going to be there. That's where you are, doing your job, and meeting and talking with people in the break room and in the lunchroom, and in the parking lot in the cafes, where they go in the bars, where they go after work, and just talking to employees and getting to know them. I can't imagine a marketing person who isn't having conversations with customers to try to deeply understand who they are and what they want. We're no different. I can't imagine us being as successful as we want to be without having that same innate curiosity to understand our employees, and to collect that data, sometimes on behalf of HR, so that then we can customise and personalise and do all the things that marketing has been doing. Even the worst piece of junk mail I get in my mailbox says "Dear Jason..." how many times there are companies since

things out to our employees that just say, Dear employee, what do you mean, I have been working here 25 years, and you don't know my name? That's just disrespectful. You wouldn't treat a customer that way.

**Katie** 42:14

No, just given me a light bulb moment, because I think I've been blaming all This for a while on HR systems that aren't up to the job. But actually, your point around the desire. You know, if you're human resources, and the word is resources, so you're thinking about what, you know, what gets called, I don't know if it's the same in the US, but in the UK FTEs, you know, from time equivalents. They're not people, they're FTEs; they're resources. If you're looking at your business through that lens, then yeah, maybe it's the will actually, that you don't see the necessity to get down to that level of the human being, and their sentiments, their motivations, their perceptions, all the things in marketing, we would never seek not to understand.

**Jason** 43:01

Here's a little experiment. Y'all, when you're finished, listening to this podcast, go down the hall, and ask HR... I say go down the hall, like anybody works in an office anymore. But you know what I mean, go down the hall and ask HR, I want a list of the women who've just come back from being on maternity leave. But because it was they had their second child, I want that list. You'll never get it, you'll never get it. Despite the fact HR has that data, because we're providing them with benefits. We know they've been to the hospital, we know they've delivered. We know, we know all of that stuff, that data exists. But no one's ever thought to put it together in such a place that it can be accessed as a way to personalise the communications that we're delivering for our employees. And that's not HR's fault, really, they've never thought like that, because they never had to think like that. But now they need to, and we can help them. Because we can use that data to do what we need to do and to make what they need to do even better. Who wouldn't want that? Employees want that HR wants that we want that. The company surely wants that. Like why not?

**Katie** 44:17

I think this plays into it this next question, but can you explain your concept of, and I'm doing air quotes here, "brand equals experience squared?"

**Jason** 44:29

Well, it plays off just exactly what we were just discussing, which is if you think about a brand, a company, it's a combination of the customer experience and the employee experience. Two of those things combined equals what that brand says they are, and more importantly, what everybody else thinks they are, which sometimes is two different things. So on the customer experience side, I've talked a lot about customer experience, but usually sales owns the transaction part of that, and marketing owns the relationship part of that. And combined, they own the customer experience. Now think about employee experience. Typically HR and IT on the transaction side: hiring, firing, promoting paying... all those things. And they're really good at that. And IT too, you need a new computer, we got to prop up a site, we got to connect all the systems, they own all of those transactions. Who owns the relationship? Not those guys. They might say that they do but they don't know the





level of detail about employees that marketing knows about customers. That's an opportunity for us. If they're gonna own the transactional side, then we can own the relational side. And then together, all three of us can own that employee experience. And it has to match what we're doing with the customer experience stuff, which fortunately, senior leaders know all about.

**Katie** 46:01

Yes, yes.

**Jason** 46:02

So you can go into a meeting with the senior leaders and say, "We're going to start doing employee experience the same way we've been doing customer experience," and their heads will nod because they understand customer experience.

**Katie** 46:13

Yeah.

**Jason** 46:13

Same thing, different word. But everything else is the same. Yes, you're much more likely to get them to nod and agree and want to move forward, because you're using something that they already are familiar with, and already know how to lead and manage.

**Katie** 46:27

And also from all the CEO surveys I'm reading at the moment, one of the things top of their agenda that's keeping them awake at night is retaining staff, attracting staff, in an incredibly tight competitive labour market.

**Jason** 46:41

Absolutely. And so all those things sort of lead to that overall employee experience. And it's, you know, it's just like anything else. It's just a trust building exercise, just like with your customers. And so every opportunity we have, we need to make deposits into that trust bank, because Lord knows, we're going to come along and write a check at some point and withdraw from that, that's just what companies do. So if we don't want to get overdrawn in that trust account, we need to make constant deposits into it. And the best way to do that is to focus on that employee experience. And to personalise it as much as possible, just like we do with our customers.

**Katie** 47:19

I noticed, I think it must have been on LinkedIn, I saw this. You've got a survey. I don't know if it's still running. But the What Employees Want survey, I'm just curious about that. What made you set up that survey and whether there's anything you can share with us in terms of the results, anything surprising emerging from that?

**Jason** 47:38

Oh, gosh, we love that little survey. We started that, I guess in the fall of '19 with the survey. And the idea behind it was "Yeah, everybody's doing engagement surveys, they should still



keep doing those." And don't get me started on why I think they shouldn't. But I can't change that. I don't have enough time left to change that. But so peace, we can still have engagement surveys. But my thinking our thinking on that is a employees lie. So they're not telling you the truth. I might say I'm engaged, but it has nothing to do with this culture. It has everything to do with the fact that I've got a kid going to college and I need this job. That's not going to show up in your engagement survey.

**Jason 48:17**

And then the second thing is, is that those survey questions are written by what feels like actuaries who don't spend a lot of time with actual humans. Writing these things! This is not what people's... So how am I supposed to ask this and answer it? Like I don't understand. So the whole idea was, let's have like a real survey, and have it be something that the company is not asking employees, because they're gonna lie, and just anybody can if you're an employee, somewhere, if you work for somebody doing anything, take it. And so it's on our website, which is thinkaudacity.com. And we're still live, we've got a couple of 1000 folks who've taken that survey since we launched it. That was in the fall of '19.

**Jason 49:03**

In January of '20, we did an in-person event that was called What Employees Want, which is almost exactly the same thing. So instead of people like me and other muckety mucks getting up there and chit chatting about everything we've ever seen in our lives. It is live focus groups of randomly selected employees who get up on stage and answer questions from internal communicators about what's working, what's not working, what they like, what they don't like, all day long. Just live people, real employees. It's just been a fascinating exercise.

**Jason 49:35**

And to your point about "what are a couple of surprising things." One is, based on that data, and some of the stuff that came out in those in-person events, employees have told us that they will give us roughly five minutes a day for the kinds of comms that we produce. So we call this capital C Communications, which is all the stuff that that we do in internal comms, versus the lowercase c communications, which is every other thing that gets communicated in the organisation. Employees say they'll spend five minutes a day on the capital C stuff. Now think about that. Think about all the content that we're constantly producing and loading on the website and making videos and emailing it around and dropping it in Slack and all that stuff. And you add all of that up, what is that? An hour, two hours, three hours, sometimes worth of content, and you're only going to get five minutes that day. And the next day, it resets, and they're not going to go back and look at whatever they couldn't get to the day before. So you've got five minutes, and you better, you better take advantage of that as best you can. So that was one surprising thing.

**Jason 50:44**

And then the other surprising thing was there's a question in there that says, "have you ever been sent any communications and thought, 'do they really expect me to believe this stuff?'" And so the full results set, 79% of people have gotten a communications and thought "I can't believe they really expect me to believe this." However, wow, when when you narrow those



results down to people who self identify as being either in internal comms or HR, then that number goes to 84 per cent. And these are the people who are sending this stuff out. And even they are like, "I Don't, believe this stuff!"

**Katie** 51:23

Wow.

**Jason** 51:25

So it's an even higher incident rate there with the people who were sending out, which I thought was absolutely fascinating.

**Katie** 51:31

Wow, wow, This is really, really helpful, because I think the workplace has got so noisy, and we know from lots of other surveys that, you know, that level of noise, trying to prioritise all this information and wade through it is becoming such a challenge. So the idea of saying five minutes, and that's your consumption time, if you like, that's what you've got, is really levelling, I think, as well.

**Katie** 51:57

Just coming back to your capital C, small case c. So I'm just, I want to check that I understand the difference. So sometimes I think of that as need to know versus nice to know. So the small c stuff is things like when does my shift start, the health and safety regulations, operational updates, the stuff that I need to know just to do my job, the capital C stuff is, why does this company exist? Why does it do things the way that it does? What's the culture? What are the business priorities? Where are we going? Am I barking up the right tree with that sort of split?

**Jason** 52:33

Absolutely. I think that's exactly the right way to think about it for the capital C stuff. And then also for that, you know, lowercase c stuff, it's not delivered by us. It's delivered by leaders, managers, and peers and other sort of influencers in the organisation that we want to influence. But it's not a process or a communications process that we sort of own and control. And in my mind, capital C stuff should probably be five, no more than 10% of all the comms that are going on, the other 90 to 95% is and should be that lowercase c stuff. We don't want to own everything, every conversation, we can't. They're never going to give us enough people. But we want to influence all the conversations as best we can. That means less focus on just the capital C stuff and more focus on making sure the lowercase c stuff is happening well.

**Katie** 53:27

And so that's providing guidance and toolkits and advice and influence rather than actually doing it ourselves.

**Jason** 53:34

Exactly. And a lot of times, we will default to "Oh, the leaders need to share this." We don't say cascade, because that doesn't work. But leaders need to share this, they need to have



these conversations. So here's some talking points. They Don't need content, they need confidence. These people have never been trained, they can't do what we do in our sleep, we have to give them that confidence to even be able to share that much less what they need to say when they are sharing. So yes, talking points and all that content is helpful, but it's the confidence part adds real value to that for them.

**Katie** 54:06

One of the other questions I wanted to ask you is around prioritisation. And if we talk a little bit about sort of stop, start continue. I've heard you say that the advice you often give clients is to do less, actually, not more when it comes to communication. In terms of what kind of activities to stop or at least do less of, What's the thought process that somebody should go through? What sort of questions should they be asking themselves and, you know, in a way to sort of prioritise what to what to do and what not to do?

**Jason** 54:37

Sometimes people think I'm a heretic and I don't care at this point. But to me, the person you need to be asking that question of is your employees.

**Katie** 54:47

Yes.

**Jason** 54:47

Ask them what they want. Get them to tell you what's working and what's not working and why. And then whatever that answer is, do more of what's working and do less of what's not. Even if some of those senior leaders are gonna whine about it. And they are. And that's fine. All right, that's an opportunity for us to educate them. This is not what I think, this is what our employees have said. We are spending an inordinate amount of time on this slick video or this really cool microsite, and everybody says it's a waste of time, and they don't go there. Now, I know, it's your pet project, and I know it's gonna hurt your feelings. But we have to stop doing this. And they still won't believe you, which is fine. So just do an AB test, just do an AB test and prove it. We're gonna keep doing it the way we have been doing it. And then we're going to do it the way employees said do it. And then you can see for yourself what those results are. And they can argue about your opinion all day long. But these rational people cannot argue with those numbers. They can't, they are what they are.

**Jason** 55:51

And so if those employees are only going to give you five minutes a day, and 79% have a hard time believing in the stuff that we're sending out, then we need to send less, and what we do send, it needs to have more value. So we got to stop pursuing bigger and get really focused on better. We Have to, because not only does it help, but it's also because we're resource constrained. They're not going to let us get 10 more people, two more people, one more person in some cases, and you're not going to give us all the money that we want. They never are. We can get more but not as much as we want, ever. So we need to be very targeted about what we're doing. And that needs to be based on what we think the employees want. Because we asked them that. Not because we think that's what they want

or we're guessing that's what they want. Or we're gonna give you this new intranet site because we want a better content management system. No, what do they want?

**Katie** 56:53

You're reminding me of another quote that I just saw the other day, which is, and I'm not going to, I think William Denning. Without data, you're just another person with an opinion. So I love those actually.

**Jason** 57:07

Right? That's exactly right. And in our world, comms world, opinions matter. But typically, the person with the bigger title wins. So you want to have a conversation people with bigger titles than you, you better have more than your opinion. Yeah. Especially about comms, because they all think they're the best writers and the best speakers, and all that... and they're not. But they think that, yeah, they don't value what we do. So you can't just be "because I'm a comms person." Nope. it's because I have the data that says so.

**Katie** 57:40

I've always been very curious about curiosity, and how that has driven, how that's driven people's careers and people's choices and how that shapes their thinking. I've heard you describe curiosity as "never accepting the first answer." I love that as the definition of curiosity. How has curiosity shaped your career? What role is it played? And how does it play out, I guess, in your everyday work?

**Jason** 58:06

Oh, gosh, I'm sure you know, my parents would say I was a precocious child. So always asking why, why, why? Why? I just want to know why. I just want to know why. And I'm going to keep asking why until I myself am satisfied that we've gotten to what the real why is? And the answer to the first why is rarely the real why.

**Katie** 58:33

Yes.

**Jason** 58:34

So for example, "Hey, I need you to send out this email. And I'm going to attach this 90 Page PowerPoint to it." "Okay, why?" "Because everybody in this organisation needs to know This, This is the most important thing that's ever been discussed in humanity." "Why?" "Well, because our safety numbers aren't quite where they need to be. And This helps people understand that." "Why?" "Well, are we getting a lot of pressure from one of our customers, and our whole purpose is around doing this, that, and the other thing, and this doesn't align to that." "Why?" "The CEO said he's going to strangle me if we don't get these numbers better, and I need your help. And this was my idea." "Okay. The CEO is going to strangle you because our safety numbers aren't where they need to be. There's your why."

**Katie** 59:25

Yes.



**Jason** 59:27

Let's come up with a way to fix that that doesn't have anything to do with an email with a 79 page PowerPoint attached to it.

**Katie** 59:34

Yes.

**Jason** 59:35

Good idea. Doesn't work for a lot of reasons. Here's the data why, here's what will work. Yeah. So if your why is I don't want to get strangled, my answer is, let's come up with a way to solve that that's not a solution that you might have read on the internet somewhere.

**Katie** 59:52

And I'm sure there is and we will put a link to the show notes but I'm sure there is a 'five why's framework' that is that kind of root cause analysis. So yeah, if anyone's curious, there is an actual framework for this.

**Jason** 1:00:06

Yes, there is. I think it's like a Japanese method, I think Toyota use I think, and then there's variations on that. Like what? You know, so what and what now? What next? That kind of stuff? Same kind of thing. But just, you're not, nobody's gonna give you the real thing immediately. Because they haven't thought it through themselves, either. Yeah, exactly. That's our job to counsel. You don't ask, when the phone rings or the email comes in, you don't say "When?" You say "Why?"

**Katie** 1:00:31

Have you got time for these quick fire questions?

**Jason** 1:00:36

If our listeners are still with us?

**Katie** 1:00:38

I'm sure they are. I wonder if we've covered this already? Maybe not? What trait or characteristic do you possess that above all others, most led to your career success?

**Jason** 1:00:51

I don't know. I think it's like a learned behaviour. Because I did I definitely did not, did not have this. when I first started out and I think it's like this combination of humility and empathy. I think. I don't know if there's one word for both of those. So humility/empathy I guess. Early on, I'm pretty sure I was hard to get along with, because like a lot of us, particularly those of you listening who are early in your career, we think we know everything.

**Jason** 1:01:23

And we have very low tolerance for the so called, quote "leaders," who seem to know way less than we do about leadership and communication. Like, if you're so smart, then why am I the one writing all this stuff for you? Why can't you just write your own stuff? And I think

that's just a normal thing for people who are young and little bit cocky, and not fully understanding the world yet. And I think over time, I and you know, everybody else, through professional and personal growth, you'll, come to realise that just because you're smart, that doesn't mean they're dumb. When that light goes off and we realise that our only job, our best job, is to help others have the courage to make things better. And when we realise that, then we begin to understand who we are, and how we ourselves can make things better. And I think that takes a lot of empathy and humility. And sometimes it takes a lot of wine and whiskey too. Some self reflecting moments to come to that conclusion. But whatever it takes, I think if you're going to be a trusted adviser, then part of that is understanding that you have to have conversations with people and approach them from extreme courtesy.

**Katie** 1:01:23

Yeah.

**Katie** 1:02:43

You will also reflect I'm reflecting on, I think it's a quote, I'm not going to quote it quite right. But it goes along the lines of "if you're meeting someone, and they don't seem that interesting, maybe they seem a little dull or unintelligent, it's simply because you haven't asked them the right question yet.

**Jason** 1:03:00

That's right.

**Katie** 1:03:02

This idea that everyone has something to offer, you just need to find a way in basically.

**Jason** 1:03:08

All these internal comms people. Were all introverts, we all feel that way ourselves most of the day. And we struggled sometimes with this impostor syndrome concept, and I get all that. But if all of that is true, for us, it is also true for every other human. So we don't want to be approached like that. And we shouldn't approach others like that, because that just puts up walls between building trust and and getting to a better relationship.

**Katie** 1:03:37

So how would you complete this sentence? World class internal communication is...

**Jason** 1:03:48

World class internal communication is because of us, not by us. Our job is to make that happen. We do a lot of that with the big C stuff. But the most valuable is the little c stuff. And so for it to really be world class and for us, our organisations, our employees, our leaders, us, everybody to get what we want, it's because of us and not by us. I don't want to do it for you or for this organisation. I want you and this organisation to understand the value of doing it at all, and then learn how to do it themselves.

**Katie** 1:04:36

Do you have a book recommendation? If you had to make one recommendation of a book? What would you recommend to our listeners?

**Jason** 1:04:45

Oh, my son laughs because I buy like a book a week, and stack them up behind me on this bookcase, and he goes, "you buy more books. cuz then you have time to actually read books. I've never once seen you sit down reading any of these books that you have here. Why did you keep doing this?" And I said, "well, I read the summary, I thumb through and look at the charts and graphs and look at what table of contents is, and then I've got a pretty good idea of what that book is, but they're mostly there for reference, something's going to come up, you know, random Wednesday, that's in one of these books. So I have a lot of books that I would recommend. That doesn't mean that I've read them all and studied them all.

**Jason** 1:05:35

But one that I have that I think is really important is called Drive by Daniel Pink. And he's a great author. And in this particular book, he talks about the three motivators that drive all human behaviour, including at work. And those three things are autonomy, which is this need to direct our own lives, feel like we're in control and have some choice. So autonomy is one. The second one is mastery, which is a desire to get better and better at what we do, we want to evolve and become really good at that. So autonomy and mastery. And then the third one is purpose, which is combining those previous two into a practice to do something that's bigger than ourselves. And so autonomy and mastery, and purpose, purpose in this use being a little bit different from how we talk about in corp comms and marketing and things like that, but related. And so if you can weave those things into what you're doing for internal comms and culture change, employee experience, then you're now starting to hit on innate human needs that people will respond to. It has been so influential in what we do and how we advise our own clients and how we work with each other as a team, quite frankly.

**Katie** 1:07:00

Yes. Thank you for that, very helpful. And finally, we give you a billboard, a metaphorical billboard for millions to see and you can put on that any message you like, Jason, what are you going to put on your billboard?

**Jason** 1:07:16

Do we still not know who let the dogs out? No, I'm just kidding. Although I still think we have no idea who did that?

**Katie** 1:07:28

I don't think we know.

**Jason** 1:07:29

No, the question still remains. I think I for me, and my team will attest to this. And so will anybody that I talk to clientside or strangers on the street, somebody standing in line at the fast food restaurant, everybody will say the same thing, which is, I truly believe that "what if is greater than what is." That's what I would put on my billboard. Because all of us,



everybody is constrained by what is. I don't have this, I don't have that. I can't do this, I can't do that. All of that is being constrained by what is. And you can spend your whole life bemoaning all of that. Or you can spend some of your life thinking, what if? What if we did this differently? What if we thought about this differently? What if I tried to go for that big job that I don't think I'm quite ready for? What if I told the CEO the truth, that apparently he doesn't know. And no one else has told him? What if I did these things? How could that make a difference? And so to me, that just encapsulates boldness and courage and bravery and audacity and being a trusted adviser, and it is just not accepting that you have to be constrained by what is by just continuously focusing on what if.

**Katie** 1:09:00

Jason, This has been an amazing conversation. Thank you for your wisdom, your insight. I've loved it.

**Jason** 1:09:07

I'm just humbled that I've had all these experiences that apparently people want to hear about them. So anything I said today was helpful, I'm glad. If there's anything, any questions or like, hey, when you said this, what you really mean? You can find me on LinkedIn or through our website, whatever.

**Katie** 1:09:26

Sounds good. We will put all the links so people can contact you in the show notes. Thank you so much.

**Jason** 1:09:33

Thank you, Katie. I appreciate that.

**Katie** 1:09:38

So that's a wrap for this episode of The Internal Comms Podcast. For the show notes and the full transcript, head over to AB's website, that's [abcomm.co.uk/podcasts](http://abcomm.co.uk/podcasts). If you found this episode helpful, I would be immensely grateful if you could give us a review on Apple Podcasts that just gives the algorithms a gentle nudge, and will help other IC pros out there find the show. My thanks to Jason, our producer, John Phillips, sound engineer Stuart Rolls, and my fabulous colleagues at AB for keeping the show on the road. And finally, my heartfelt thanks to you for choosing The Internal Comms Podcast, the show would be nothing without you. I love it when people get in touch to say what they're enjoying what they want more or less of, and I do try to respond to every comment. So please reach out to me anytime via Twitter, or LinkedIn. I genuinely do want this show to be as helpful as possible to you in your work. So, my lovely listeners, until we meet again, stay safe and well. And remember, it's what's inside that counts.

**Katie** 1:11:01

This episode of The Internal Comms Podcast was brought to you by my very own Friday Update. Would you like to get a short email from me, never more than five bullet points long, giving you my take on the week's news from across the world of communication? This might be the latest reports, books, podcasts, conferences and campaigns that have caught





my eye during the week. I always limit myself to just five nuggets of news. So you can read it in record time, but still feel a little bit more informed, hopefully a little bit more uplifted as you end your week. Now this is a subscriber only email, which was initially intended just for colleagues and clients, I don't post this content anywhere else. So you do need to sign up. But that is super easy. Simply go to [abcomm.co.uk/Friday](https://abcomm.co.uk/Friday) and you just need to pop in your email address. It is equally easy to unsubscribe at any time. So give it a whirl that signup page again [abcomm.co.uk/Friday](https://abcomm.co.uk/Friday). And if you do choose to be a subscriber, I look forward to being in touch.