

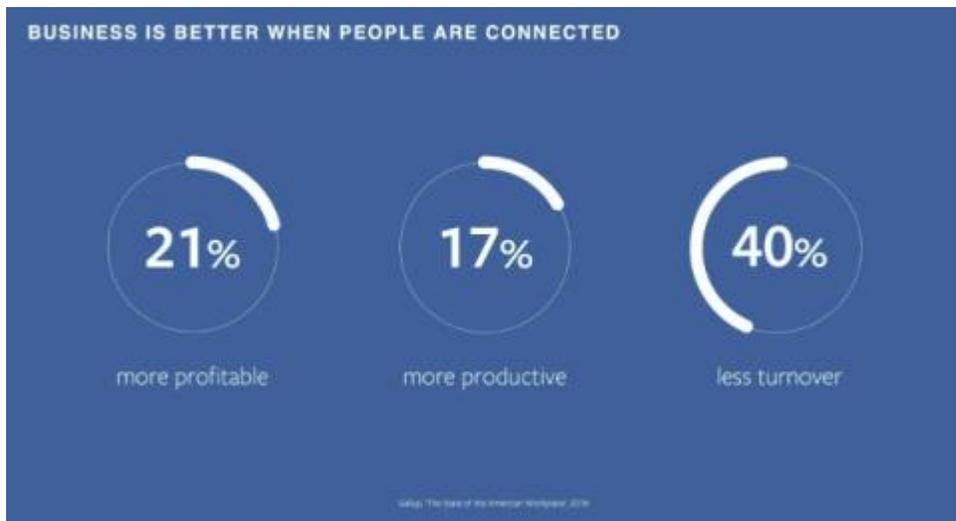
BURN AFTER READING

Key takeaways from 2019 Leadership & Executive Communications Conference (so your boss doesn't think you had too much fun)

Envisioning the CEO of the future

Abby Guthkelch, Workplace by Facebook, and Ben Gould, Facebook

- Fifty-four percent of front-line workers feel disconnected from their business headquarters.
- Only 14% feel connected to their business headquarters.
- At businesses where the top and the bottom of the org chart are connected:



- Doug Macmillan, Walmart—a good example of an executive who is open and connected to employees.
- Sara Blakeley, Spanx, especially on Instagram—for example, laughing at herself struggling to cut a birthday cake with her kids.
- Ladder everything up to a business goal.
- Three categories to organize your business content around:
 - Personal
 - Organization
 - Industry
- If an exec wouldn't say a phrase out loud, don't put it in a video or speech.
- A sharing economy is based on TRUST.
 - Airbnb, eBay rely on trust and transparency.
- One thing Mark Zuckerberg does well—making sure the culture is consistent across all geographies and functions.
- [Video](#): Walmart brings people together using VR training, ensuring consistency across functions.
- How do we get execs to take risks? Start with something they're comfortable with or passionate about and expand from there.

Executive communications at the intersection of corporations and nonprofits

Dee Mostofi, senior director, public relations and executive communications, Dignity Health; Shana Davis, director, executive communications, American Cancer Society; Kate Sachs, internal communications specialist, Johns Hopkins Medicine

- How did Dignity Health address the Charlottesville crisis? [CEO issued a simple tweet to start with.](#)
 - The CEO drove this because it was a passion point of his.
- Davis: Created a core narrative for the CEO, who had a personal connection to the cause.
 - They reuse parts of this narrative in every communication.
 - They have a literal document.
- Sachs: Work with Social Chorus app, have “Gary 360” to highlight what the CEO is doing.
 - Exec speechwriter replies to social media comments.
- Sachs: Post on [CEO blog](#) at least twice a week, each about two paragraphs long.
- Davis: Think of your workflow in an iterative fashion. If something comes out of left field, they have a formula for the response.
- Mostofi: What is the risk of weighing in on social issues? What is the risk of NOT weighing in?
 - Employees are looking for leaders to respond.
- Sachs: They don’t usually take stands on political issues, but when President Trump made comments about Baltimore, they [came out in support of Baltimore](#) and the people who live there.
- Mostofi: When working on social issues, be entrenched in proper, respectful language—for example, use “survivor” of human trafficking, not “victim.”
- Sachs: Johns Hopkins Medicine showed the [magnitude of solar fields with drone video footage](#). It’s one of the most popular pieces of content they’ve made.
- Mostofi: How do you decide when to address a mass-casualty event? Their general rule of thumb: Six casualties or more constitutes an event that needs to be addressed, depending on other factors.

Cyber and the C-Suite: How executives need to be prepared to navigate a cybercrisis and its effect on the company

Amy Mushahwar, partner, Alston & Bird; Eben Kaplan, manager, strategic advisory services, CrowdStrike; Siobhan Gorman, partner, Brunswick Group

- Kaplan: Cybersecurity risks are just business risks—95% of business owners would likely say that cybersecurity is one of the top five risks to their organization.
- Kaplan: Ransomware is a huge phenomenon that can help you identify your “crown jewels” pretty quickly.
- Kaplan: Criminal enterprises have become mature enough that they are knocking on thousands of doors, finding the weak points and then selling access.
- Mushahwar: Make sure your organization is doing a good job of vetting both big and small companies before accepting a third-party vendor.

- Mushahwar: Instead of hounding vendors and punishing them when there is a breach, how can you assist the smaller vendor in getting data back online? Incentives, resources, etc. At the end of the day, protecting the customer comes first.
- Kaplan: Make sure you're only giving your vendors access to the things they absolutely need access to.
- Kaplan: Think of the CIA in terms of your organization and how a breach is affecting you:
 - Confidentiality: Has customer data been taken?
 - Integrity: Can you still trust the data or has it been altered?
 - Availability: Do you have access to the data when you need it (ransomware)?
- Gorman: The one thing you can control during a cybersecurity crisis is external and internal communications.
 - Think through these preparations in advance.
- Gorman: How is a cybercrisis different from other types of crises?
 - Mushahwar: You might not have access to your standard ways of communications/might not be able to trust them (ex: email).
 - Mushahwar: In most forms of crisis, you can still carry on your services.
 - Kaplan: Far more uncertainty and far less information than a regular crisis.
 - Kaplan: You have to make decisions with incomplete or uncertain information.
 - Amy Mushahwar: You're making legally significant decisions based on very incomplete knowledge.
- Transparency can pay off in the end when it comes to reporting a potential breach.
 - Most important things for Mushahwar and her organization:
 - Who is the attacker?
 - What is the data at risk?
 - What do you believe your values are as an organization?
- Mushahwar: Communications is the most essential element of responding to a data breach.
- Mushahwar: When working with legal, don't be afraid to push back on what you know is important to your customers. Their job is to protect the organization, yours is to decide how much risk you're willing to take.
- Mushahwar: Breach is no longer just a company problem, it's also a bottom line and SEC disclosure problem.
- Kaplan: The lines between a nation-state actors and criminal actors are blurring, and there are fewer ways to deter them.

Leading by example: Harnessing your executive's digital presence to engage and inspire

Blake Jackson, senior director, brand content, Walmart

- After the shooting at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas, things changed for Walmart.
 - This has become a part of Walmart's history now, and the CEO's response was important.
 - The CEO's Instagram post about the shooting was one of the most-liked photos they posted.

- Had to answer not only the public's questions, but questions from all of the associates who were rightfully scared and traumatized.
 - Had to come up with a plan for what the next steps will be.
- The expectation for executives is to be a thought leader.
 - It doesn't have to be on huge issues—a short, 300-word message on LinkedIn can make a huge splash.
 - Walmart's CEO did a "3 tips for becoming CEO" on LinkedIn that was less than 300 words. It ended up as a featured article.
- Getting the CEO involved with more employees has been crucial at Walmart.
 - Getting him involved with interns, becoming a culture champion, highlighting employees who are doing great things at stores, etc.
 - Walmart opened up to ideas about how the CEO could get more involved.
 - Did a "pun contest" with the interns to see who laughs at the other teams' puns the most and recorded it to get him more involved.
- Find a purpose for your CEO: What do they care about? What do they want to do more of?
 - The CEO of Walmart wants to seem accessible and authentic. He wants to seem like a real person and he wants to help people.
- Be ruthless in your focus: Build a content lens around each social media platform so you can be more intentional in saying "yes"—and say "yes" more often.
 - Each social media platform has a different content type and audience that it's focusing on, so when you understand each platform, you can understand where content belongs and make sure you're posting it where it is most effective.
- Maximize the time investment: Slice content into as many pieces as you possible can.
 - Make one event into multiple formats for multiple platforms.
 - Invest in a short and simple approval process without a lot of hoops. Send clear emails to the CEO for approval process.
 - Be clear about what is being posted, where, what media is being used, when it will be posted, etc.

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