Announcing organizational changes effectively, particularly changes that employees may perceive negatively, represents an important communication skill for managers. For this assignment, you will work with your team to announce a significant change that has already occurred to an internal audience.

This document contains the following sections to help your team create a successful presentation:

1. Presentation Context (p. 1)
2. Assignment Objectives (p. 1)
3. Team Change Analysis (p. 2)
4. Project Tasks (pp. 2-4)
5. Presentation Reminders (p. 4)
6. Tools for you: Audience Analysis worksheet (p. 5), Project Schedule and Deliverables (p. 6), and Team Change Presentation Grading Report (p. 7)

Presentation Context
Imagine that your team is part of the management team of a real, hospitality-related company. For example, your team may represent the chief executive officer and her/his direct reports or serve as the management team of a division within a company. Recently, your team has either initiated a significant change or received information about an organizational change that affects the staff negatively, and your team will need to communicate this information through a presentation. Please let me know in advance if you would like to invite internal members to attend your presentation either in person or via videoconference.

Assignment Objectives
This assignment will help you to achieve the following learning objectives:

- To announce an organizational change in a business situation to an internal audience using relevant information and specific details about the change;
- To enhance your communication ability to work effectively as a member in the team process (e.g., meeting management including ground rules, project plan and schedule, and deliverables);
- To connect with your audience using verbal (e.g., language choice, examples, and stories) and nonverbal delivery (e.g., authenticity, compassion, tone, eye contact, body language and appropriate energy) when conveying a potentially unpopular message;
- To anticipate your audience's points of disagreement and to handle these objections appropriately (e.g., refutation, concession, or cost-benefit analysis) and credibly;
- To apply the visual presentation principles from class and the assigned readings, so you may communicate information clearly and effectively; and
- To actively participate as an audience member for your peers by asking challenging questions throughout the team presentation, excluding the introduction and conclusion.
**Team Change Analysis**

As your team develops your approach for announcing this change, you will need to conduct a thoughtful analysis of the organizational change. Consider the following areas in your research and analysis:

1. **Significance - What is the change and why is this change significant?** Your team might define the change by emphasizing its qualitative (e.g., reorganization, new job training programs) and/or quantitative (e.g., 250-employee reduction; $75,000 increased training costs) significance. Provide adequate contextual/background information to ensure that your audience understands the situation.

2. **Causes - What are the causes (reasons) for this significant change?** In other words, why has this change occurred? Your team will need to carefully analyze the underlying causes (reasons) that have contributed to this change. Consider whether the causes are internal or external to the organization. Did the organization make this change voluntarily or were they required to make this change to comply with laws or other regulations? Did the leaders implement this change proactively to maintain the health of the organization or reactively in response to an issue?

3. **Benefits - What will the organization gain from this change?** Identify three or four benefits of this significant change. What quantitative and/or qualitative results will this change produce? Provide concrete evidence with sound reasoning to convince your audience that the benefits outweigh the costs for this significant change. Consider WIIFT – What’s In It for Them.

4. **Costs/Concerns - How much will this change cost my organization?** What are the potential negative consequences? Consider the costs (i.e., both tangible and intangible) of this change for organizational members. How will your audience perceive these concerns? What strategy (e.g., refutation, cost-benefit analysis, etc.) will you use to handle your audience objections credibly? For example, you might develop appendices containing data that will support your answers to audience questions. *Anticipate your audience’s major concerns and questions while doing research and planning your presentation, so you are better prepared to respond to their questions during Q&A.*

5. **Next Steps - What are the next steps that your audience can expect after this announcement?** What specific steps might you emphasize to persuade your audience to embrace this recent change that your business has already approved? Use your presentation to provide accurate information to reinforce your credibility and reduce reliance on the grapevine.

**Project Tasks**

To successfully complete this team project, team members will need to collaborate to complete the following tasks:

1. Your main task is to plan, research, organize, rehearse, and deliver a team presentation suitable for a business meeting in which you have been allocated 30 - 35 minutes on the agenda, which includes time for questions throughout your presentation, to announce a recent organizational change initiative. Your team will present to the natural audience for your topic, for example, employees, supervisors, and/or managers within the organization. Because you will communicate your message to an internal audience, you may assume that you have already established a relationship with them. Your tone should be informal but consistent with the change (e.g., serious if you plan to downsize or restructure an organization). *Prepare to adapt your presentation content, as you will receive many question interruptions during your presentation, so you may respond to your audience concerns about this significant change.*
2. Your team will need to identify your presentation scenario; specifically, you will need to decide on a real company and change to announce. Consider the following areas:

   a. **Choose a real change that is broad enough that it affects staff yet specific enough to allow your team to provide details.** The change should be something that will be perceived negatively by the targeted audience. Examples might include closing a property, merging companies and reducing redundancies, eliminating a product line, banning employee travel, or downsizing staff to reduce expenses.

   b. **Complete an audience analysis (worksheet on page 5)** to understand the organizational change from your audience’s perspective, and then, adapt your message to the audience needs, and potential questions and concerns.

3. The course schedule includes four official team meetings on Fridays (i.e., 01/30, 02/20, 03/20, and 04/10). With the exception of the first meeting (01/30), your team may meet at these times or identify other times during the scheduled week when everyone can meet together. To ensure you have sufficient time to complete your project tasks on time (Project Schedule and Deliverables table on p. 6), your team might need to identify additional meeting dates or other ways to share information. **The proper functioning of your team is the responsibility of every team member.**

   In your first meeting, consider the following questions as you discuss your team functioning process and define your proposed topic and presentation audience, team roles, and ground rules, and project plan task deliverables and due dates (HW 3a):

   a. What is the best way to organize the team? Should you elect a leader, allow the leader to emerge naturally, or operate by consensus? What role (e.g., coordinator, recorder, communicator/reporter, researcher, timekeeper) will each team member fulfill? What are your ground/operating rules that all members have agreed to follow?

   b. What tasks must be done as a team, and which tasks may be completed individually? Should you assign the same task to everyone or delegate different tasks based on each member’s interest or ability?

   c. How should you make sure that everyone participates and contributes?

   During your subsequent meetings, you should designate a team member (communicator) to send a brief team project email update (HW 3b-3d) to me (pro2@cornell.edu) about your progress in completing team tasks and project plan deliverables.

4. Your team should develop a presentation plan that provides each member with a similar amount of presentation time. For example, a four-member team would allow about five minutes for each member to present in a 20-minute presentation, recognizing that you will need to remain flexible in moving between content areas to respond to audience questions throughout your presentation.

5. To support your presentation structurally, your team should develop relevant PowerPoint visuals that are easy to follow, offer an attractive format, and include meaningful graphics. Create at least one visual that provides an overview of the organization, the change, and its significance; a preview slide of the presentation structure; and your bibliography slides.
6. Your team will participate in a practice session with the TA, two days before your class presentation. In addition, you may arrange to practice in front of a group of your classmates/other teams to obtain peer feedback. As you practice, you should brainstorm potential questions from your audience, and organize your team approach for responding to the questions in a coordinated manner. You can impress the audience by introducing new information in the Q&A beyond what you have already presented.

Presentation Reminders
As you prepare for your presentation day, consider the following reminders:

- Send your visuals to me via email (pro2@cornell.edu) before class
- Bring the following to class:
  - A back-up copy on a USB/flash drive;
  - A hard copy of your presentation visuals – three slides per page; and
  - Bibliography slides printed on individual pages for readability.
- Arrive to class at least a few minutes early to arrange your presentation space.
- Set the stage for your audience by describing the presentation situation and role of your intended audience (context).
- Use a “conversational” speaking style by limiting your speaking notes.
Audience Analysis

Complete the following audience analysis worksheet and use the insight that you gain from this analysis to prepare presentation content to persuade your targeted audience to embrace this recent change.

What do we know about the audience?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

What information do audience members need?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

How are audience members likely to react to this presentation?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
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**Project Schedule and Deliverables**

You may use this schedule to plan ahead and complete the required deliverables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Deliverables Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs., 01/29</td>
<td>Review the assignment instructions before class, and select your team during class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri., 01/30</td>
<td>Participate in your <em>first team meeting</em> to define the presentation scenario and team process (i.e., define team’s purpose – change announcement, audience, individual roles of team members, operating/ground rules, and project plan task deliverables and due dates). <em>Teaching assistant will attend this meeting.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs., 02/05</td>
<td>Submit HW 3a: Team Presentation Scenario and Project Plan with expected deliverables, designated persons, and due dates. Schedule a consultation meeting with our librarians to receive customized research advice for your team change project; include this task in your deliverables.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 5</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri., 02/20</td>
<td>Facilitate your <em>second team meeting</em> to complete the audience analysis and discuss potential concerns from your audience perspective. Gather research to find credible and supportive evidence to develop your line of reasoning. Submit HW 3b: Team Project Email Update on your progress in completing tasks; send to me at <a href="mailto:pro2@cornell.edu">pro2@cornell.edu</a> by the end of this week.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 9</strong></td>
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<td>Fri., 03/20</td>
<td>Conduct your <em>third team meeting</em> to determine content (e.g., context/rationale for change, relevant information to share, amount of detail to provide, presentational role for team members such as the chief executive officer, vice president, human resources director, etc.), written presentation plan, and visual support design (PowerPoint slides). Submit HW 3c: Team Project Email Update on your progress in completing tasks; send to me at <a href="mailto:pro2@cornell.edu">pro2@cornell.edu</a> by the end of this week.</td>
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<td><strong>Week 11</strong></td>
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<td>Fri., 04/10</td>
<td>Conduct your <em>fourth team meeting</em> to finalize presentation plan and visual slides, and to begin practice for your team presentation. Consider potential audience questions, and organize a team approach to manage Q&amp;A throughout your presentation. Submit HW 3d: Team Project Email Update on your progress in completing tasks; send to me at <a href="mailto:pro2@cornell.edu">pro2@cornell.edu</a> by the end of this week.</td>
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<td><strong>Weeks 12</strong></td>
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<td>Week of 04/14</td>
<td>Participate in TA Practice Session (Rehearse two days before your team presentation).</td>
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<td>Tues., 04/14 - Fri., 04/17</td>
<td>Deliver Team Presentations and send visuals via email (<a href="mailto:pro2@cornell.edu">pro2@cornell.edu</a>) before class, and bring a hard copy of visuals, with three slides per page, and bibliography printed on a separate page(s) for readability.</td>
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## Team Change Presentation Grading Report (15%)

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<th><strong>Key Elements</strong></th>
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### Strategy and Approach; Audience Analysis
- Provided a solid strategy and approach to announce change.
- Utilized appropriate presentation style and tone for your audience.
- Developed rapport; connected with your audience.
- Presented a credible, authentic, and transparent approach.

### Content and Evidence
- Offered enough context to explain change (broad information first).
- Provided relevant information for audience; how does the change affect them?
- Included adequate (not too much) amount of details.
- Described the change clearly and concisely.
- Provided qualifiers and reservations as appropriate.

### Organization
- Created an appropriate introduction to capture your audience’s attention.
- Provided a preview/agenda.
- Developed clear and logical organization.
- Offered clear and smooth transitions.
- Presented a solid closing.

### Delivery and Visuals
- Spoke extemporaneously.
- Displayed appropriate energy, enthusiasm, and empathy with audience.
- Delivered good vocal variety.
- Provided good eye contact, gestures (hand and facial), and meaningful movement.
- Presented appropriate support: easy-to-follow visuals, attractive format, and relevant graphics.

### Question-Answer Session
- Prepared for questions and anticipated difficult questions.
- Addressed questions directly, clearly, and concisely.
- Answered questions honestly.
- Demonstrated appropriate empathy.
- Appeared organized in your team approach to Q&A.

### Overall Presentation Grade: ____/20

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**PRO 01/19/2015**