



# Corporate Communications: Getting the Next Job Done

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# Corporate Communications: Getting the Next Job Done

## DAY ONE

Thursday, February 29, 2024

8:00 am – 9:00 am

### Registration and Breakfast

9:00 am – 9:10 am

### Welcome and Introductions

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

9:10 am – 9:25 am **General Session**

### How Senior Communications Executives View the Function Today

How have communications leaders perceived their impact on the business post-pandemic? How do they think their CEO values that impact? How do they measure their performance, and how do they communicate it back to the head of the business as well as to other internal audiences? And how is hybrid work going for them and their teams?

We'll share fresh research on these topics as well as what else may await communications teams in 2024 according to the annual survey by The Conference Board of CEOs and members of the C-suite from around the world.

**Denise Dahlhoff, PhD**, Director, Marketing & Communications Research, **The Conference Board**

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

9:25 am – 9:45 am

### Networking and Cross-Pollination

We'll kick off our event by meeting one another to share priorities and accomplishments since we last convened.

9:45 am – 10:15 am **General Session**

### Sally Susman, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer of Pfizer, on Breaking Through

Having been thrust into various crises and distractions unlike ever before, how are communicators supposed to break through the noise given such unprecedented social polarization? We will welcome Pfizer's Sally Susman, author of the *Wall Street Journal* bestseller *Breaking Through: Communicating to Open Minds, Move Hearts, and Change the World*, to illuminate a way forward. She will share insights from Pfizer's recent efforts to combat vaccine misinformation and will offer strategies to connect, to build trust, and to drive change despite the challenges ahead.

**Sally Susman**, Executive Vice President and Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, **Pfizer**

**Moderator: Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

*Audience questions and reflections*

10:20 am – 10:35 am

### Networking Break

10:35 am – 11:05 am **General Session**

### Telling Your Sustainability and Impact Story

As the world grapples with increasingly severe and frequent examples of climate change and the demand continues to rise for companies to take a more active role in addressing societal challenges, businesses across every sector and geography are faced with heightened stakeholder expectations around transparency and performance.

Leaders and experts will share their goals, strategies, and tactics for crafting and communicating their sustainability and impact narratives.

**Stacey Rammer**, Senior Director, Strategic Communications – Sustainability & Social Impact, **Northwestern Mutual**

**Dan Strechay**, Director of Sustainability Communications and Engagement, **Mars**

**Moderator: Dave Armon**, Executive Vice Chairman, **3BL**

*Audience questions and reflections*

11:10 am – 11:55 am **General Session**

### Communicating the Employee Experience Internally and Externally to Drive Culture Change and Growth

At a time when employee expectations are evolving, labor activism is increasing, and the nature of work itself is undergoing rapid change, effective communication of the employer brand is essential. In this conversation, communications leaders will share how they are collaborating with partners across their organizations to tell the story of their employee experience. Gain insights into practical tactics and tools and their corresponding impact.

**Annie Burt**, Vice Chair, Enterprise Strategic Communications, **Mayo Clinic**

**Tiffin Jernstedt**, Chief Communications Officer, **Neiman Marcus Group**

**Trina Hoppin Lee**, Assistant Vice President, Communications & Community Affairs, **CarMax**

**Lauren Odell**, Partner and Chief Operating Officer, **Gladstone Place Partners**

**Moderator: Jan Botz**, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy and Internal Communications II Councils, **The Conference Board**

*Audience questions and reflection*



12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

## Networking Lunch

Available on a first come, first served basis (registration required), attendees will have the opportunity to continue the conversation with the following on-stage presenters:

**Annie Burt**, Vice Chair, Enterprise Strategic Communications, **Mayo Clinic**

**Aimee Christian, PhD**, Vice President, Global Head of Corporate Communications & Engagement, **Jazz Pharmaceuticals**

**Dea Fischer**, Global Head of Culture & Communications, **Squarespace**

**Trina Hoppin Lee**, Assistant Vice President, Communications & Community Affairs, **CarMax**

**Tiffin Jernstedt**, Chief Communications Officer, **Neiman Marcus Group**

**Lara McCauley**, Global Vice President, Strategic Business Communications, **Mars**

**John McGrath**, Chief Communications & Marketing Officer, **The College Board**

**Mandy Mooney**, Director of Internal Communications, **Prologis**

**Shawn Roberts**, Head of Corporate Communications, **Rakuten International**

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm **Concurrent Session**

## Measuring and Communicating Your Impact

One of the primary pain points corporate communicators experience is measuring the impact of their work. How should it be quantified? What are the relevant data points? How do you bring them all together and make sense out of them? And how do you convert that into a business case for the function?

We'll hear from a leading global organization on their new approach, the tools they use, and the learnings from their impact measurement journey.

**Liana Sucar-Hamel**, Vice President of Communications, Americas, **Airbus**

Moderator: **Shahar Silbershatz**, Co-founder and CEO, **Caliber**

*Audience questions and reflections*

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm **Concurrent Session**

## The Importance of Omnichannel Communications in a Distributed World

In an era in which workforces are more distributed than ever, the significance of omnichannel communications and engagement strategy has reached new heights. Squarespace's Dea Fischer, Bloomberg's Alexandra Joseph, and Pagaya's Marci Lowney will explore how organizations can navigate this digital landscape with finesse. Discover the latest approaches and best practices that can empower businesses to take advantage of diverse channels to connect with hybrid audiences around the world. From remote collaboration tools to traditional communication avenues, learn how to tailor your omnichannel approach for maximum impact. Don't miss out on the chance to join an essential conversation at the intersection of technology, communication, and the modern workforce.

**Dea Fischer**, Global Head of Culture & Communications, **Squarespace**

**Alexandra Joseph**, Global Head of Internal Communications, **Bloomberg**

**Marci Lowney**, Head of Internal Communications, **Pagaya**

Moderator: **Jan Botz**, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy and Internal Communications II Councils, **The Conference Board**

*Audience questions and reflections*

1:40 pm – 2:10 pm **Concurrent Session**

## Embedding Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging into Communications Strategies

When diversity, inclusion, and belonging are considered as afterthoughts or add-ons to employee communications, their people can tell. Learn how to embed DEI into communications strategies from the start and evaluate the impact those strategies can have.

**Mandy Mooney**, Director of Internal Communications, **Prologis**

*Audience questions and reflections*

1:40 pm – 2:10 pm **Concurrent Session**

## Coming Together While Working Apart: Fostering Culture and Talent in the Hybrid Workplace

The debate around remote work rages on. While some fear that company culture and cohesion will suffer, others have harnessed flexibility as a means of enhancing their talent and culture. Hear from a communications leader and flexibility advocate who has helped navigate her company's transition into the hybrid/remote world of work. She'll share how a flexible approach fast-forwarded the company's cultural evolution while supporting diversity and inclusion, providing a business advantage in the process. Learn tips for communicating with and engaging a distributed workforce to build cohesion even while working apart.

**Kimberlee Pepple**, Vice President & Chief Inclusion, Diversity & Equity Officer, **Altria**

**Megan Witherspoon**, Vice President, Communications, **Altria**

*Audience questions and reflections*

2:15 pm – 2:30 pm

## Networking Break

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

## Focusing on the "True North" While Facing Polarized Audiences

We have had some striking reminders in the last year that the already-fluid boundaries between what is and what is not considered "controversial" can take some large and sudden shifts. How can communications leaders keep conversations focused on their core mission and values when facing increasingly polarized audiences? In this conversation, gain insights on navigating culture wars that show no signs of dissipating any time soon.

This conversation will touch on all three of these dynamics and will provide actionable advice for businesses to strengthen their strategy in the process.

**John McGrath**, Chief Communications & Marketing Officer, **The College Board**

**Shawn Roberts**, Head of Corporate Communications, **Rakuten International**

Moderator: **Danielle Badler**, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy II and Internal Communications Councils, **The Conference Board**

3:05 pm – 3:35 pm **General Session**

## How to Strategically Invest in Internal Communications in 2024

With a historically contentious presidential election scheduled to take place amid a turbulent and unpredictable economy all while artificial intelligence continues to take deeper root in business and society, Axios HQ's Roy Schwartz and Hasbro's Bertie Thomson will lead an insightful conversation on the ways top brands are strengthening their approach to internal communications to prepare to navigate an eventful year ahead. Those that are best positioned to weather such disruptions recognize three key realities. First, positive brand and executive perception begin with internal communications. Second, effective execution not only requires a smart mix of channels and tools but also a dedicated eye on ROI. And finally, scaling the function lies in the capacity to measure success and to advocate for the right resources.

This conversation will touch on all three of these dynamics and will provide actionable advice for businesses to strengthen their strategy in the process.

**Bertie Thomson**, Executive Vice President and Chief Communications Officer, **Hasbro**

Moderator: **Roy Schwartz**, Chief Executive Officer, **Axios HQ** and Co-Founder, **Axios**

*Audience questions and reflections*

3:40 pm – 3:55 pm

## Networking Break

3:55 pm – 4:35 pm **General Session**

## Interactive Exercise: Adapting AI Into Your Communications Organization Responsibly and Securely

As artificial intelligence continues to dominate headlines, the data shows that the opportunities surrounding this revolutionary technology are huge. The decision to invest in generative AI is just the beginning. Organizations must not only be prepared to leverage AI to drive efficiencies and to reinvent their business models while protecting their organization's data, they must also equip their employees with the knowledge and skills to become savvy and responsible users.

This exercise will provide communicators with practical guidance and insight on ways to responsibly and securely adapt AI tools to their company's needs in ways that help create new impact for their communications teams and for their organizations at large.

**Christopher Hannegan**, Principal, Workforce Transformation, **PwC**

**Scott Likens**, Global AI and Innovation Technology Leader, **PwC**

4:35 pm – 5:05 pm **General Session**

## The State of the Function: The Next Job for Corporate Communicators in 2024

For corporate communicators today, upheaval has become daily fare. How has the function evolved in response, and what's on the horizon for 2024? In this discussion with communications leaders spanning sectors, we'll discuss some of the biggest changes they have seen throughout the evolution of the function, the biggest challenges and opportunities ahead, and the strategies and tools they'll need to employ to address them.

**Jano Cabrera**, Chief Communications Officer, **General Mills**

**Megan DiSciullo**, US & Mexico Communications Leader, **PwC**

Moderator: **Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

*Audience questions and reflections*

5:10 pm – 5:15 pm

## Day One Recap and Day Two Preview

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

5:15 pm – 6:15 pm

## Reception

6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

## New York City Underground Subway Tour

Beginning at the World Trade Center Oculus to uncover the adaptive reuse of the original World Trade Center infrastructure into one of the most complex transportation hubs in the world, our tour will include a view of one of the most moving memorials to the Twin Towers built into the NJ Path Terminal platforms. We'll then take the connecting tunnel over to the Fulton Center, New York City's second busiest transit hub, to examine a post-9/11 transportation project designed to bring residents, workers, and tourists back to the area. Highlights will feature the largest pieces of functional art in the subway system and a unique foundation view of the city's first skyscrapers. From there we'll jump one stop on the subway to the Manhattan Municipal Building to examine the first subway terminal ever to be built in the foundation of a building, a museum to subway transit onto itself. We'll conclude with a fun ride through the city's first and arguably most beautiful subway station, City Hall.

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## DAY TWO Friday, March 1, 2024

8:00 am – 9:00 am

### Breakfast

8:30 am – 9:10 am **General Session**

### What if...? Roundtables

Meet new people and learn from their varied perspectives while discussing how corporate communicators should respond to hypothetical scenarios, including:

1. *What if... your company becomes the target of an online misinformation campaign?*, facilitated by **Michelle Gerevas**, Senior Director, Employee Communications, **Qualcomm** and **Eleanor Hawkins**, Communications Strategist & Writer, **Axios**
2. *What if... your company is publicly criticized over its ESG and DEI statements and activities?*, facilitated by **Lisa Davis**, Senior Fellow, Marketing & Communications Center, **The Conference Board** and **Cheryl Dixon**, Adjunct Professor, M.S. Strategic Communication, **Columbia University**
3. *What if... a senior leader of your organization is accused of sexual assault by a non-employee?*, facilitated by **Kelsey Agostinelli**, Senior Director, Business and Change Communications, **Mars** and **Danielle Badler**, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy II and Internal Communications Councils, **The Conference Board**
4. *What if... your CEO demands you develop a comprehensive crisis management plan for the year ahead?*, facilitated by **Annie Burt**, Vice Chair, Enterprise Strategic Communications, **Mayo Clinic** and **Trina Hoppin Lee**, Assistant Vice President, Communications & Community Affairs, **CarMax**
5. *What if... your CEO wants you to escalate how you measure your organization's communications performance through KPIs?*, facilitated by **Amit Mohindra**, Head of Data Analytics and Insights, Global Corporate Affairs, **Takeda**

6. *What if... your CEO wants you to escalate how you measure your organization's reputation through KPIs?*, facilitated by **Megan Ostrower**, Head, Global Corporate Communications, **Takeda**

9:10 am – 9:25 am

### What if...? Roundtables: Reporting Out

Representatives from each roundtable will summarize their discussion for the rest of the audience.

Facilitator: **Danielle Badler**, Program Director, Corporate Communications Strategy II and Internal Communications Councils, **The Conference Board**

9:25 am – 9:30 am

### Day One Opening Remarks

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

9:30 am – 9:55 am **General Session**

### How Mattel Brought Us All into Barbieland and What's Next

We welcome Mattel's Catherine Frymark to share insights on the company's innovative collaboration with their film partners to support one of the biggest cultural phenomena of 2023. Frymark will discuss highlights from the communications and philanthropic strategy and from telling the story of Mattel's broader corporate transformation and the Barbie brand's multi-year evolution through this milestone moment. We'll examine Mattel's tactics leading up to and following the movie launch and learn what's ahead for Mattel and its many brand communicators for 2024 and beyond.

**Catherine Frymark**, Executive Vice President, Corporate Communications, **Mattel**

Moderator: **Denise Dahlhoff, PhD**, Director, Marketing & Communications Research, **The Conference Board**

*Audience questions and reflections*

10:00 am – 10:25 am **General Session**

### Chief Communications Officers as Strategic Guides Through Turbulent Times

In a world often characterized by volatility and impulsivity, it's critical that communications leaders serve as beacons of clarity and intentionality. Having earned a hard-fought and well-deserved seat at the table, chief communications officers now have the unprecedented opportunity to help strategically guide their companies through turbulent economic, cultural, and geopolitical times.

This fireside chat with Merck's Cristal Downing will explore the must-have aptitudes of communications leaders of tomorrow and the importance of establishing purpose and principle as the primary compasses for decision-making.

**Cristal Downing**, Executive Vice President and Chief Communications & Public Affairs Officer, **Merck**

Moderator: **Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

10:30 am – 10:45 am

### Networking Break

10:45 am – 11:10 am **General Session**

## **Jennifer Skyler, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer of American Express, on Shaping a Social Impact Strategy Aligned with the Business and Stakeholders**

American Express is doubling down on its commitment to back its customers, colleagues, and communities in the ways that matter most to its stakeholders in today's environment. We welcome American Express' Jennifer Skyler for a conversation about how she reshaped the company's social impact strategy to better align with its business priorities and Blue Box values.

Skyler will discuss how her team is building on and communicating about American Express' legacy initiatives such as Shop Small and Small Business Saturday with the creation of a new "Backing Small" grant program to support small business owners during times of need, with the relaunch of the American Express Leadership Academy to help develop the next generation of non-profit leaders to be well equipped to address the needs of their communities today, and with the global expansion of the company's global social impact programs, among other plans for the future.

**Jennifer Skyler**, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer, **American Express**

Moderator: **Eleanor Hawkins**, Communications Strategist & Writer, **Axios**

*Audience questions and reflections*

11:15 am – 11:40 am **General Session**

## **What It Takes to Be a Trusted Voice on Inclusion Today**

Organizations committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion today face both increasingly demanding and skeptical audiences. On the one hand, consumers, current and future talent, and members of the public want to see commitments and progress that go beyond mere "talk." On the other hand, highlighting diversity initiatives can trigger pushback and even threats of boycotts from other segments of the market. What does it take to be a trusted brand voice in such a charged atmosphere? And how should internal commitments be communicated externally?

Learn how an industry leader is meaningfully advancing inclusion goals and communicating those commitments to stakeholders across the political spectrum.

**Torod Neptune**, Senior Vice President and Chief Communications Officer, **Medtronic**

Moderator: **Lisa Davis**, Senior Fellow, Marketing & Communications Center, **The Conference Board**

*Audience questions and reflections*

11:45 am – 12:15 pm **General Session**

## **What We've Learned and What's Ahead for 2025**

In our capstone conversation, we'll consider our takeaways from the last day and a half, offer forecasts on the biggest challenges ahead, and consider the structures and strategies that will best position communicators and their organizations for whatever comes next.

**Aimee Christian, PhD**, Vice President, Global Head of Corporate Communications & Engagement, **Jazz Pharmaceuticals**

**Nancy Cooper**, Global Editor in Chief, **Newsweek**

**Lara McCauley**, Global Vice President, Strategic Business Communications, **Mars**

Moderator: **Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**

*Audience questions and reflections*

12:20 pm – 12:30 pm

## **Concluding Remarks**

**Ivan Pollard**, Chair and Center Leader, Marketing & Communications, **The Conference Board**