How to Communicate Through Change and Uncertainty

Presented by Trapani Communications

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About Trapani Communications

- Founded in 1993
- Range of communications offerings: strategic communications, project implementation, public relations, marketing and social media support
- Municipal projets:

BANK INTERCOUNTY DRAIN

Public Safety Millage 2023

Four Lakes Task Force

COUNTY OF MIDLAND MICHIGAN

FOREST LAKE

ROSCOMMON COUNTY MI

Bay City Michigan

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CHANGE COMMUNICATIONS:

The strategic process of informing and engaging employees about organizational shifts.

- Explains *what* is changing, *why* it's necessary, *how* it affects them, and what they need to *do*
- Builds understanding, reduces resistance, and drives successful adoption of new processes, technologies, or goals
- Involves ongoing, two-way dialogue
- Addresses emotions
- Provides clear direction to help people move from their current state to the desired future state

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REGULAR COMMUNICATION

- Can be one-way messages
- End goal can vary – generally it's to inform

vs.

CHANGE COMMUNICATION

- Two-way dialogue
- Focuses more on emotions rather than intellect
- End goal is to change a behavior, practice, process, etc.

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POSSIBLE SCENARIOS

Technology/ software change

Layoffs

Leadership transition

Restructuring/ reorganization

Budget constraints

Building move

New policy/rule

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32% of leaders globally actually get employees to adopt changes in a healthy way

34% of all change initiatives pursued by businesses end in clear success and **16%** yield mixed results

= 50% of all change initiatives fail

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“The announcement of the changes really went well.”

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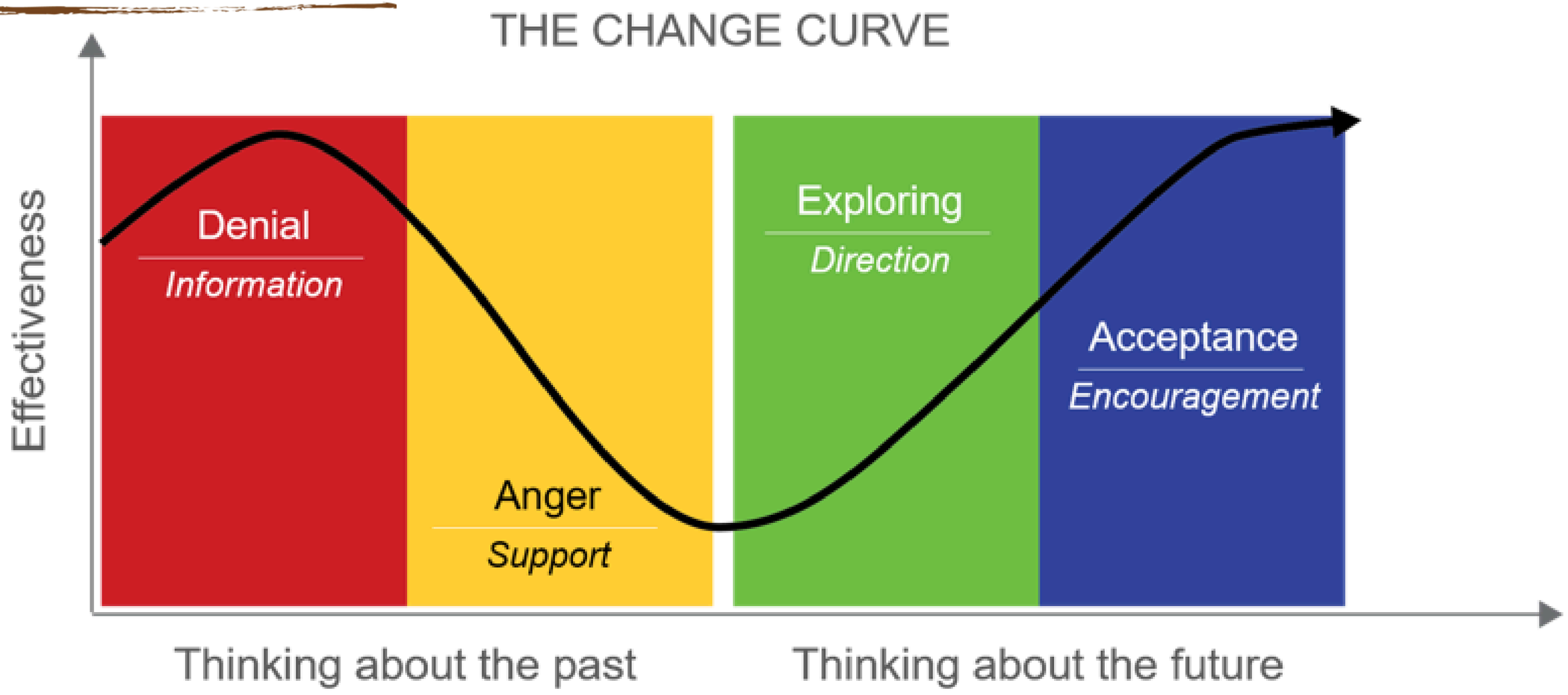
How People Process Change



Understanding how people work through change is incredibly important

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Considerations that Impact Communicatons

Everyone progresses through each stage at their own pace

Some may skip stages all together

Some may be in acceptance and then something happens – they may revert back to stage one

We have to realize everyone is different

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How to Know if You Have Been Successful

There is no magic way to determine where people are in terms of accepting change, so you will be using your judgment and remembering to:

- Tap into what you already know about each person
- Communicate often
- Create feedback loops
- Give people ways to express their concerns
- Be an active listener
- Be open to feedback
- Stay in touch

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County Mainframe Moderinization Project

- Upgraded mainframe software – impacted all employees, departments and citizens who used county services
- 3 different software platforms; New systems for six departments
- 3-year project
- Our role: develop and implement communications to help manage the pressures associated with the change; ensure employees and the community-at-large understood the benefits; demonstrate the positive impact the new software would have on the county for years to come

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Project Deliverables

- Initial, all-employee launch
- Staggered roll-out plans tailored to each team with focus group sessions to determine needs
- Development of a theme, logo and tagline to give communications immediate recognition and prominence
- An array of methods to expose employees to the messages:

Flyers | Posters | Emails | Games and contests | Messaging and Q&As | Quarterly meetings | Monthly newsletters | Stress relief tips | Frequent updates | All-county events | Individual meetings for people having trouble | Lunches and snacks

Since there was no single good way to communicate to all employees, it was imperative to use many methods to reach the various groups. We were flexible, agile and ready to change if something didn't work.

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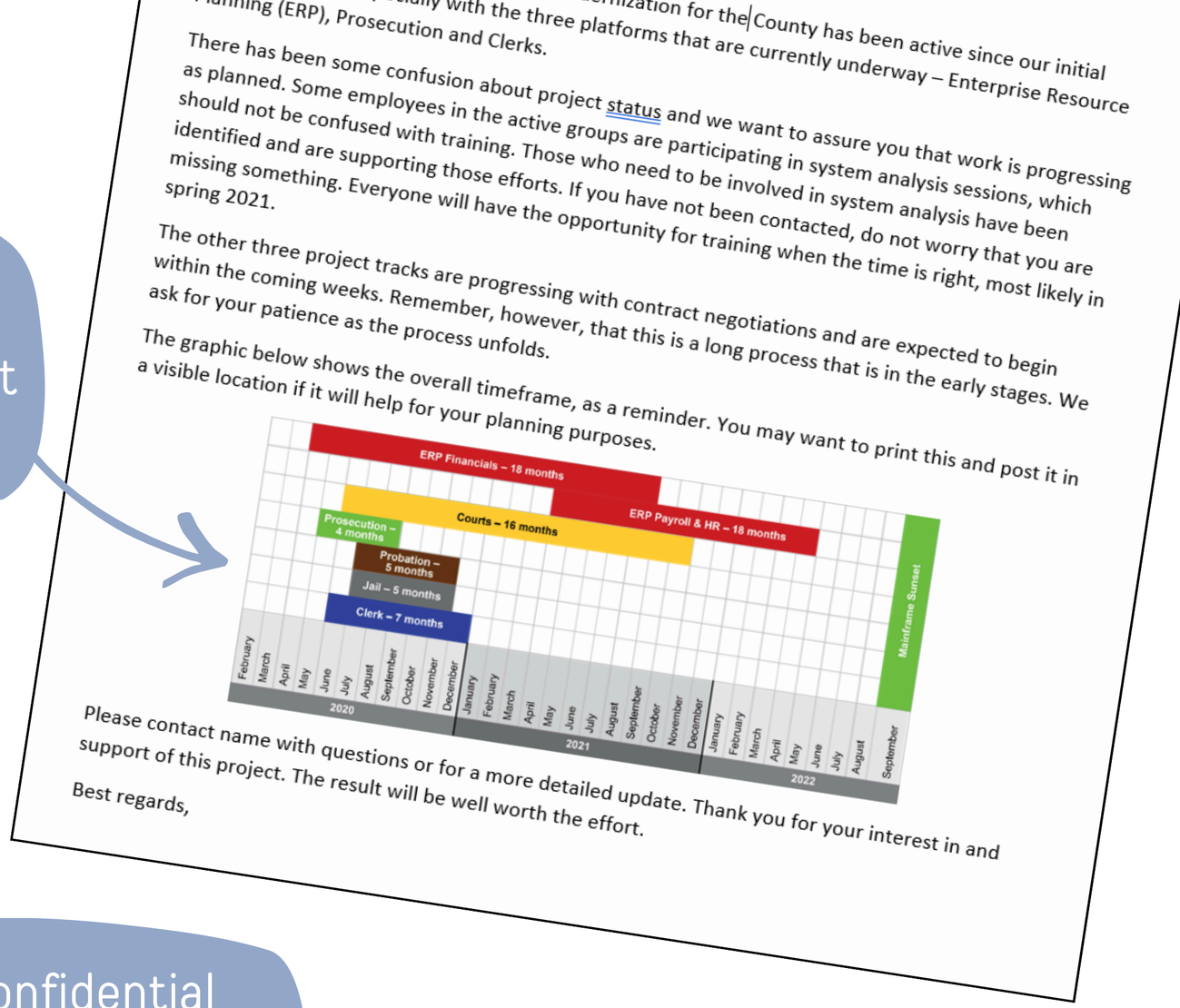
Example: Emails

Updates always included a project tracker timeline



...nization for the County has been active since our initial ...ally with the three platforms that are currently underway – Enterprise Resource ...nning (ERP), Prosecution and Clerks.

There has been some confusion about project status and we want to assure you that work is progressing as planned. Some employees in the active groups are participating in system analysis sessions, which should not be confused with training. Those who need to be involved in system analysis have been identified and are supporting those efforts. If you have not been contacted, do not worry that you are missing something. Everyone will have the opportunity for training when the time is right, most likely in spring 2021.

The other three project tracks are progressing with contract negotiations and are expected to begin within the coming weeks. Remember, however, that this is a long process that is in the early stages. We ask for your patience as the process unfolds.

The graphic below shows the overall timeframe, as a reminder. You may want to print this and post it in a visible location if it will help for your planning purposes.

Please contact name with questions or for a more detailed update. Thank you for your interest in and support of this project. The result will be well worth the effort.

Best regards,

Technology Modernization Project

Can We Talk?

SIS

For those who are a little bit shy, you now have another way to share your thoughts about the SIS implementation. Email them to

strapani@[illegible]

This mailbox is seen and answered only by SIS Change Management Leader Stacey Trapani. She will get answers to questions, share information and help address any concerns.

Questions. Concerns. Comments. Share them now rather than let issues build. You are important to our success.

Confidential conversations were appreciated

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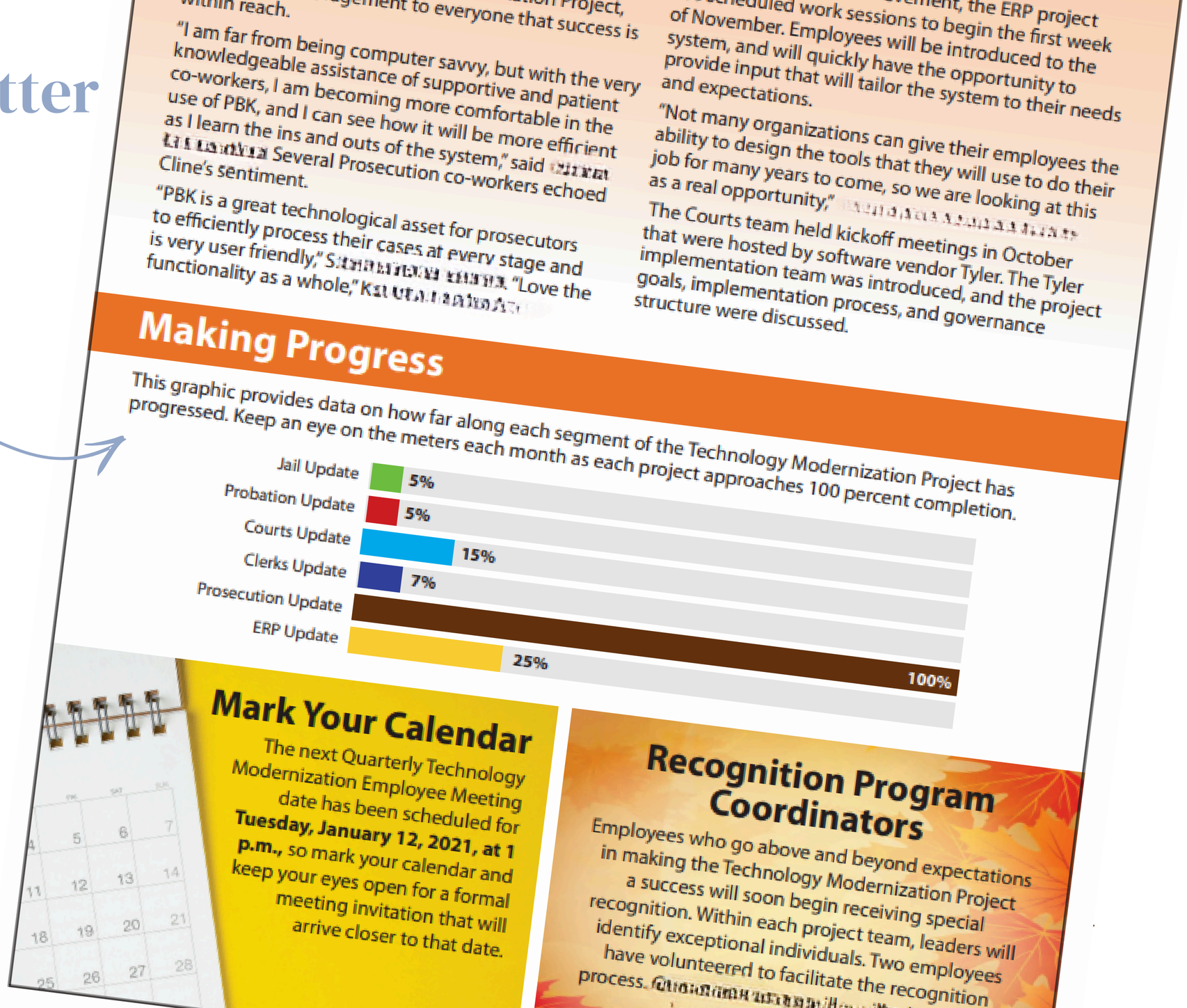
Example: Newsletter

Monthly newsletters were developed for each project track



...ment to everyone that success is within reach.

"I am far from being computer savvy, but with the very knowledgeable assistance of supportive and patient co-workers, I am becoming more comfortable in the use of PBK, and I can see how it will be more efficient as I learn the ins and outs of the system," said [redacted] Several Prosecution co-workers echoed Cline's sentiment.

"PBK is a great technological asset for prosecutors to efficiently process their cases at every stage and is very user friendly," [redacted] "Love the functionality as a whole," [redacted]

...scheduled work sessions to begin the first week of November. Employees will be introduced to the system, and will quickly have the opportunity to provide input that will tailor the system to their needs and expectations.

"Not many organizations can give their employees the ability to design the tools that they will use to do their job for many years to come, so we are looking at this as a real opportunity," [redacted]

The Courts team held kickoff meetings in October that were hosted by software vendor Tyler. The Tyler implementation team was introduced, and the project goals, implementation process, and governance structure were discussed.

Making Progress

This graphic provides data on how far along each segment of the Technology Modernization Project has progressed. Keep an eye on the meters each month as each project approaches 100 percent completion.

Mark Your Calendar

The next Quarterly Technology Modernization Employee Meeting date has been scheduled for **Tuesday, January 12, 2021, at 1 p.m.,** so mark your calendar and keep your eyes open for a formal meeting invitation that will arrive closer to that date.

Recognition Program Coordinators

Employees who go above and beyond expectations in making the Technology Modernization Project a success will soon begin receiving special recognition. Within each project team, leaders will identify exceptional individuals. Two employees have volunteered to facilitate the recognition process. [redacted]

Example: Wellness Campaign

WORKPLACE

Wellness Tips

Things got stressful so we tried to have fun

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SUMMARY

- When facing change, bring in communications early
- Positive outcomes far outweigh the effort and expense:
  - Aligned and informed staff
  - Better morale which leads to higher retention
  - Greater productivity
  - Happier people
- Is it ever too late?
  - No! It’s is always a good time to start communicating effectively

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THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

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