

372 Section Two *Group and Organizational Leadership Communication*

other health maintenance activities will receive additional credit toward health care deductibles.

- Dental/orthodontic insurance is optional and, if elected, is paid for by the employee.
- Vision will not be offered, but would be covered under the flexible spending account.
- The company will match 401K contributions up to 12 percent of salary, and stock options will be offered to high-performing software engineers.

The change team (CT) has managed the major integration of the two companies, and they have asked for your input on a task that has a smaller scope but is essential to the continued success of the company: advising the software engineers of both companies about their new plan. As Mariel Salinas, the former benefits manager at Computer Co., your new position will encompass all the benefits for the two merged companies.

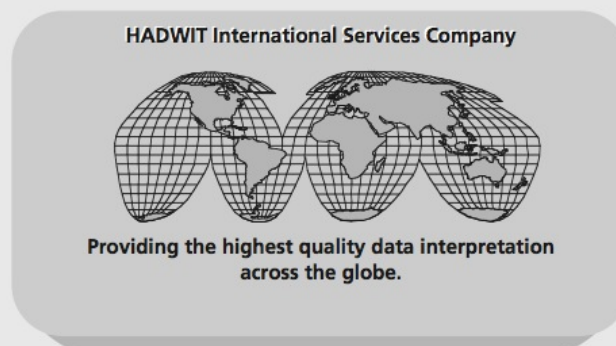
You believe the new plan is consistent with the mission and vision of the merged companies and that it really is the “best of both worlds” in merging the plans from the two companies. The new flexible spending account will be attractive to the software engineers. Most of the other key features of the plans remain fairly similar, with only a few key changes.

The Assignment

You, as Mariel, have been asked by the CT to develop a communication program to roll out the new benefits to the approximately 5,500 software engineers across the company, which still has offices in four countries. You are expecting delivery of the booklets with all the key details of the plan within two weeks, but the information is readily available on their Web sites right now. You must consider the steps you will need to take to convey this information, the media you will use, the sequence of events, and the content of the communications about the new plan. Develop the communication program to submit to the CT. Remember that a key reason for the merger was adding the software engineers from Computer Co. to the Huge Co. team; they need to understand the new plan and to feel that they are valued members of the new team.

Application 13.2 A Case Study: Communicating with Internal Audiences

The Case: The HADWIT International Services Company



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Chapter 13 Transformational Leadership Through Effective Internal Communication 373

In 2000, you decided to open a small oil field services company based in Houston, Texas. Two friends from graduate school agreed to join you as investors, and you agreed to manage the business. Your company, Have Data Will Travel International Services Company (HADWIT), provides geological/geophysical consulting and computerized interpretation of the seismic data collected by surveyors working from boats offshore in the Gulf of Mexico, the North Sea, and the Pacific Rim. HADWIT data are critical to the exploration and production (E&P) companies because they form the basis for decisions on where to invest in oil and gas exploration and development. Many of your clients are major oil companies—such as Shell, Exxon/Mobil, and BP/Amoco—as well as a number of independents operating all over the world.

HADWIT's Initial Success

You began operations with 20 employees and trained them well. You are now up to 200 professionals with very specialized backgrounds in geology or geophysics and E&P data analysis. You wanted to develop a company known for high-quality services, and you wanted a stable, loyal workforce to represent you to the client. Your partners agreed with this philosophy, and you provided above-average salaries, paid vacations, health insurance, and annual bonuses.

As the company expanded, you placed employees overseas in offices in Singapore and Aberdeen, Scotland, to meet clients' on-site needs. Things were going well: Employees were happy, and the investors were satisfied with their return on investment. You credit some of the success to your fairly flat, team-based organization (Exhibit 13.10).

You have been operating on a substantial profit margin. Until recently, you had been billing out your professionals at 2 times their gross salary, but the market will now support only 1.5 times gross salary, which leaves you with no capacity for underutilization of people or resources. You have, however, been very generous in the past with bonuses for completing projects ahead of schedule and just for doing good work. In addition, your benefits package is beyond industry standards, with your picking up 80 percent of the premiums.

EXHIBIT 13.10
The HADWIT Team

