CHECKLIST 2

Announcing Changes or Decisions

PURPOSE: *Plan, structure and follow through on any message that announces an organizational change, policy update, or major decision.*

Change or decision: *What is being announced*	**Audience:** *Who will receive this*	**Send date:** *MM/DD/YYYY*

WHEN TO USE

Use this for emails announcing organizational changes, policy updates, or major decisions. Work the four phases in order: before you write, structure, tone, after sending.

BEFORE YOU WRITE

- ☐ Understand the change completely yourself
- ☐ Know what you can and can't share
- ☐ Anticipate concerns and questions
- ☐ Plan timing (when will people see this?)
- ☐ Coordinate with other communicators if needed

STRUCTURE YOUR MESSAGE

- ☐ Start with the "what" clearly and directly
- ☐ Explain the "why": purpose and reasoning
- ☐ Describe the impact: "What this means for you"
- ☐ Provide timeline and key dates
- ☐ Clarify what stays the same (reduce anxiety)
- ☐ Outline next steps
- ☐ Provide ways to ask questions

TONE AND APPROACH

- ☐ Acknowledge that change creates uncertainty
- ☐ Be empathetic to concerns
- ☐ Be honest about what you don't know
- ☐ Show confidence without dismissing difficulty
- ☐ Be authentic: don't oversell or sugarcoat
- ☐ Your words match reality (no false promises)

AFTER SENDING

- ☐ Be available for questions
- ☐ Follow up with one-on-one conversations
- ☐ Create space for concerns to surface
- ☐ Monitor team reactions
- ☐ Provide updates as you learn more

DRAFT YOUR MESSAGE

What is changing	*Clear and direct*
Why we're making this change	*The reasoning and purpose: start with why*
What this means for you	*Specific impacts on the team*
Timeline	*Key dates and milestones*
What's NOT changing	*Provide stability and reassurance*
What I know and don't know	*Be authentic about uncertainty*
Questions and next steps	*How people can engage*

EXAMPLE STRUCTURE

> "I'm writing to share an important update about *[change]*.
> *[What is changing: clear and direct]*
> Why we're making this change: *[the reasoning and purpose]*
> What this means for you: *[specific impacts on the team]*
> Timeline: *[key dates and milestones]*
> What's NOT changing: *[stability and reassurance]*
> I know change creates uncertainty. Here's what I know and don't know: *[be authentic about uncertainty]*
> Questions and next steps: *[how people can engage]*"

Pro Tip: People can handle hard news. What they can't handle is not knowing why, what it means for them, and what stays the same. Answer those three and the rest of the message takes care of itself.