

THE COMPLETE GUIDE



HOW TO CREATE EMPLOYEE INFLUENCERS



What is an employee influencer?

An employee influencer is someone within your organization that can impact the way external or internal audiences view, interact, or form opinions about your brand, product, or services.

Creating employee influencers really comes down to empowering your workforce to become brand champions. And great news! You can create brand advocates entirely from scratch and leverage a lot of the things that you are probably already doing! For example, a lot of employees are already on social media. There are ways for you to dive into LinkedIn and your internal sources and develop these brand champions in a really organic and quick way. But before we dive into how to create employee influencers, let's first talk about a few definitions when it comes to employee advocacy!



Thought leaders

Someone within your organization who, based on their expertise and industry perspective, offers unique guidance, inspires innovation, and influences others

Employee influencers

Someone within your organization who can impact the way external or internal audiences view, interact, or form opinions about your brand, product, or services

Employee advocates

Employees who engage in the public promotion of a company's mission, values, brand, and offerings (as themselves)

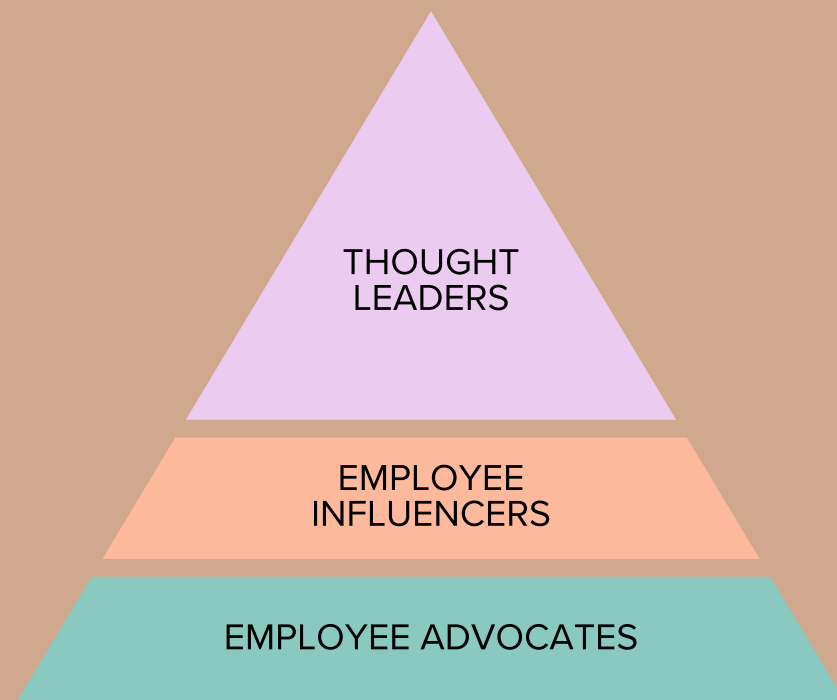
Think of employee advocacy as a dynamic triangle, with three distinct tiers shaping the narrative of your organization.

At the top, we find the **thought leaders**, a select few who really embody the vision and expertise of your company. Thought leaders may be employees who have significant influence over others internally and externally. When a thought leader posts on LinkedIn, for example, you may think, "Wow, I've never thought of it that way." Thought leaders offer new and unique perspectives.

Moving down, we encounter **employee influencers**. These are individuals with a substantial audience impact and have a lot of pull. Employee influencers are probably scattered across various departments within your organization, and there are probably a few within each department.

Finally, you have your employee **advocates**. This will be your biggest base. Employee advocates are made up of anyone who is posting about your organization on social media.

When establishing a comprehensive program embracing these tiers, remember the importance of subtlety. Instead of directly labeling individuals as influencers or advocates, introduce a brand ambassador program. This approach not only avoids potential awkwardness but also reinforces a warm and practical connection between your employees and the organization they passionately represent!



3 keys to creating an employee influencer

To create an employee influencer within your company, you'll need three things:

An encouraging social media policy: If we're going to actively encourage our employees to use social media to promote work-related content, it's always a good idea to give them some guidelines and best practices.

A natural fit and format: We want to work with individuals on our team, whether they're the CEO or frontline employee, to figure out where their natural talents lie and utilize those talents to create great content for the company.

A consistent feedback loop: Encourage more of what's working and then be honest about what isn't. It's important to set clear goals from the beginning, schedule regular check-ins, review the analytics on each post, and, most importantly, celebrate successes along the way.

Let's dive into each of these a bit further.



A social media policy

A social media policy

Employees might not be sharing about the company on social media, not because they don't want to, but maybe because they're uncertain of what they can or cannot share. If you're going to encourage your team to promote work-related content, a social media policy is an absolute must-have. It's great to have that set of guidelines all written out so that your team feels confident in creating their own content and your leadership team feels comfortable with giving them a bit of creative license.

What is a social media policy?

Social media can be an incredible tool for employees to both share their experiences and insights and engage with customers and prospects! An employee social media policy should include recommendations, best practices, and tips to ensure social media usage aligns with company values, supports the overall mission, and reflects positively on the company. An employee social media policy is generally meant for public profiles that reference an employee's name, title, and/or place of employment.

By using an employee social media policy, you'll be able to establish a clear set of guidelines that empower your employees to be brand ambassadors.



Your social media policy should include:

- Social media defined
- Guidelines for social media usage
- What to post and what not to post
- Using social media at work
- Social media monitoring
- Company profiles
- Employee social media training
- Press interviews
- Legal considerations
- Consequences for policy violations

If you're looking for a social media policy template to get you started, we have one you can download [here!](#)

Employee Social Media Policy

At [COMPANY NAME], we believe that social media can be an incredible tool for employees to both share their experiences and insights and engage with customers and prospects. We encourage our employees to use social media in a way that promotes our brand, supports our mission, and reflects positively on our company.

Social media defined

For the purposes of this Policy, "social media" encompasses all forms of communicating or posting information or content of any sort on the Internet, such as communication posts or other activity on your own or someone else's social media profile (including, but not limited to Instagram, Snapchat, Tik Tok, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.), an online blog, any personal website, an online bulletin board or a chat room or any other electronic medium.

Guidelines for social media usage

To ensure that social media usage aligns with our values and promotes our brand, we recommend the following guidelines:

Tone: Use a professional, respectful, and positive tone in all social media interactions.

Frequency: Post regularly, but avoid overloading your followers with too many updates at once.

Length: Keep your posts concise and engaging. Use images or videos where appropriate.

Engagement: Respond to comments and inquiries in a timely and courteous manner.

Negativity: Avoid negative or divisive topics that could harm the company's reputation or alienate followers.

These guidelines are truly just guidelines. We understand that the views expressed on any individual's social media account may not represent the views of the company; that being said, in many instances, you and your social media profile may be representing the company in some capacity.

that reference your name, title, and/or place of work that you set it as 'private'

A natural fit & format

Try a pilot! Select a small group of team members (maybe 5 or so) who would be great influencers. They can be from any part of the organization, from the CEO to a frontline worker. Work with those employees individually to figure out where their natural talents lie and come up with a creative strategy for how they could promote a specific part of the company's culture.

For example:

Are they comfortable on video?

Maybe they should post short clips to LinkedIn or create a YouTube tutorial.

Are they an incredible designer?

Perhaps they should create an Instagram account for the design team.

Are they short on time but big on personality?

Maybe you could encourage them to speak at an upcoming local event or help the marketing team create content for a TikTok or Instagram account.



Create a feedback loop

Don't launch an employee influencer program or campaign and forget about it. Feedback should be ongoing!

- **Encourage more of what's working and be honest about what isn't.** This can be an incredibly rewarding effort for the employee (it's a pseudo-leadership role in a lot of ways).
- **Measure the results! Monitor traffic and conversions.** Ask your top influencers to share their post metrics with you.
- **Highlight posts that are working really well** in your upcoming employee newsletter.
- **Gather feedback from employee influencers** by sending out a quick pulse survey so you can gauge how they are feeling about the program (and tweak the program as needed).



What about when leadership is really nervous?

It's inspiring to see that the vast majority of employees, a whopping 98%, utilize social media for personal use! Even more exciting is the fact that half of these employees have shared information about their jobs or employers online (source: [Zippia](#)).

But sometimes, leadership is nervous about the total freedom of expression that social media brings. Your goal as a champion of brand ambassadors is to show leaders how empowering and encouraging employee enthusiasm can be impactful while upholding boundaries that allay their fears.

Here are a few tips to try:

- **Encourage your leadership team to post more often.** After all, your leadership team is often your first set of influencers!
- **Try a “hub and spoke” model with your company's LinkedIn page.** A really easy lift is to have employees share the company's social media posts and add their own thoughts or additional comments to them. (After all, the content has already been approved!)
- **Address concerns directly, including security, privacy, time-wasting, and more.** You could even include all of these points *in* your social media policy so the leadership team knows that their concerns are being addressed.
- **Show great examples of your employees getting it right** (or how it's benefitted other companies). Share examples of employee posts that are getting good engagement in your employee newsletter.
- **Highlight that it's free press.** ;) Employee posts will always outperform company posts.



How to launch a campaign with employee influencers

Adapted from: Jason Oakley

Step 1: Define your message

- What is the campaign, product, or feature called?
- Who is it for?
- How does it work?
- What problem does it solve?
- Why is it better, exciting, or unique?
- What value does it create for our customer, prospect, or organization?

Step 2: Draft your personal post

Start by drafting your own post, as an example. This will help you fine-tune your messaging and set the tone for everyone else.

Step 3: Create visuals

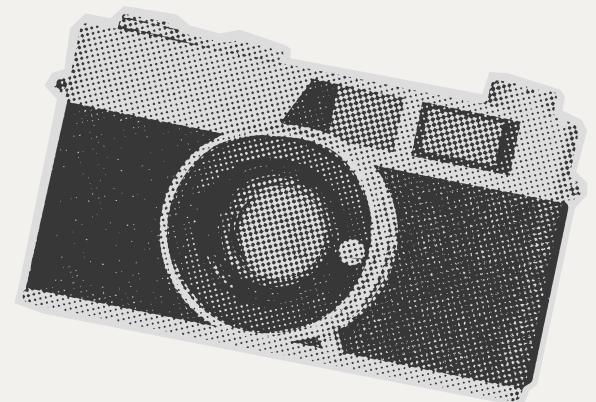
Consider using gifs or videos instead of static images. Use visuals that speak for themselves and focus on the “aha” moment. Keep ‘em short (30-60 seconds).

Step 4: Find your influencers

Identify employees who have large followings among your target audience. Get them involved early and collaborate with them on content so they’re ready to post and buy into the campaign.

Step 5: Develop a story

Create a summary of your messaging that is no longer than 100 words. This will help stakeholders tell a compelling story about your launch.



Step 6: Share examples

Provide 1-2 examples of posts for inspiration. (Encourage stakeholders to use them as a guide, not to copy them word for word!)

Step 7: Give instructions

Tell stakeholders exactly what you need from them, including:

- Which posts to engage with and when
- A direct ask for them to post
- A folder where they can find examples and pre-approved graphics
- What call-to-action or link to share in the comments

Step 8: Send reminders

The day before the launch, send a reminder with clear instructions. Send a 15-minute calendar invite to ensure everyone engages at the ideal time. (This can make it feel like a mini-launch party on social media!)

Step 9: Launch!

As posts go live, update your guide with live links. Let everyone know it's "go time!" And engage with every post you see.

Step 10: Measure results

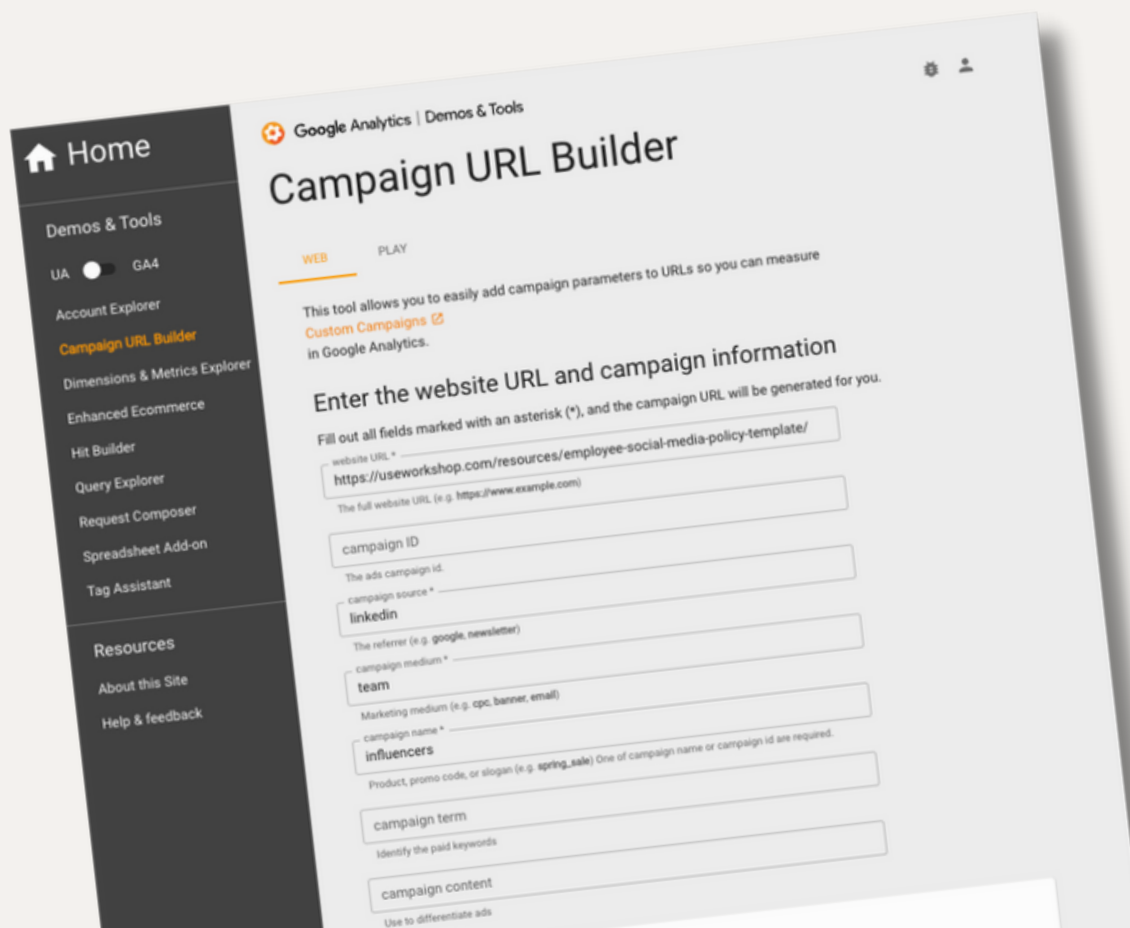
Monitor traffic and conversions from LinkedIn, landing page, blog post, etc. Ask your top influencers for their post metrics. These are largely vanity metrics, but they can help you learn what works. And don't forget to share qualitative feedback! It can be really impactful to highlight meaningful comments or posts that just have great energy!



How to measure the results of your employee influencer program

Measuring the results of your program can really help you see what is working well and what might need to be adjusted. It will help you adjust the strategy of your program over time. Here are a few specific ways you can measure results:

- **Traffic from UTM codes:** You can create a UTM code for each employee who wants to participate in the program and track traffic from them individually.
- **Growth of individual social media accounts:** Each of your participants can provide you with data on their follower growth, reach, and engagement
- **Website traffic from social media:** You can easily track this in Google Analytics to see a general lift and increase in traffic from social media channels in general.
- **Top contributors and posts:** Who are the employees who share the most often? What posts are receiving the most engagement?



2 channels you can use for your influencer program today!

People > Brands

The days of seeing huge success with the company's social media account are dwindling. In fact, according to a study by [Cisco](#), employee posts on social media can generate 8X more engagement than when that exact content is shared through a brand handle. And for most companies, their employees' networks are far greater than their brand handles (upwards of 10x in some cases).

The trends are clear: customers and prospects want to engage with experts and with people, not with the brand's social media accounts. **The two channels you can start using today to build your employee influencer program are LinkedIn and email!**

LinkedIn

The first is LinkedIn! It's basically already a hub for employee advocacy, right? LinkedIn is generally just people (your employees) posting about work, which makes it an excellent place to start! Especially if you're not exactly sure who your influencers are and what's out there and available for you.



If you are an admin on your company's LinkedIn page

If you are an admin on your company's LinkedIn page, you can view trending content from employees! It's a really clean way to see every mention of your company by employees.

You can also recommend curated content for employees to use and reshare with their own network! When you recommend content to employees on LinkedIn, it will *only* be shown to employees who are associated with your company page.

The screenshot displays the LinkedIn interface for the 'Workshop' company page. On the left is a navigation sidebar with options: Feed, Activity, Analytics, Inbox, Edit page, Events, and Settings. The main content area is titled 'Feed' and includes a 'Recommend to employees' toggle. Below this is a 'Start a post' input field with options for Media, Poll, and Write article. A 'Post ideas' section features a prompt: 'Can you share updates about the company's internet publishing initiatives?'. At the bottom, a filter bar shows 'Employee posts' selected and circled in black. Below the filter, a 'Trending post from an employee' is shown, featuring a post by Jamie Bell (VP of Marketing @ Workshop) celebrating 3 years at the company.

Workshop
3,603 followers

+ Create

View as member

Feed

Activity

Analytics

Inbox

Edit page

Events

Settings

Feed

Posts Recommend to employees

Start a post

Media Poll Write article

Post ideas

Latest at your organization

Can you share updates about the company's internet publishing initiatives?

Page posts Following **Employee posts** Sponsored

Trending post from an employee

Jamie Bell (She/Her) · 1st
VP of Marketing @ Workshop | Internal Marketing & Communication...
1d · 🌐

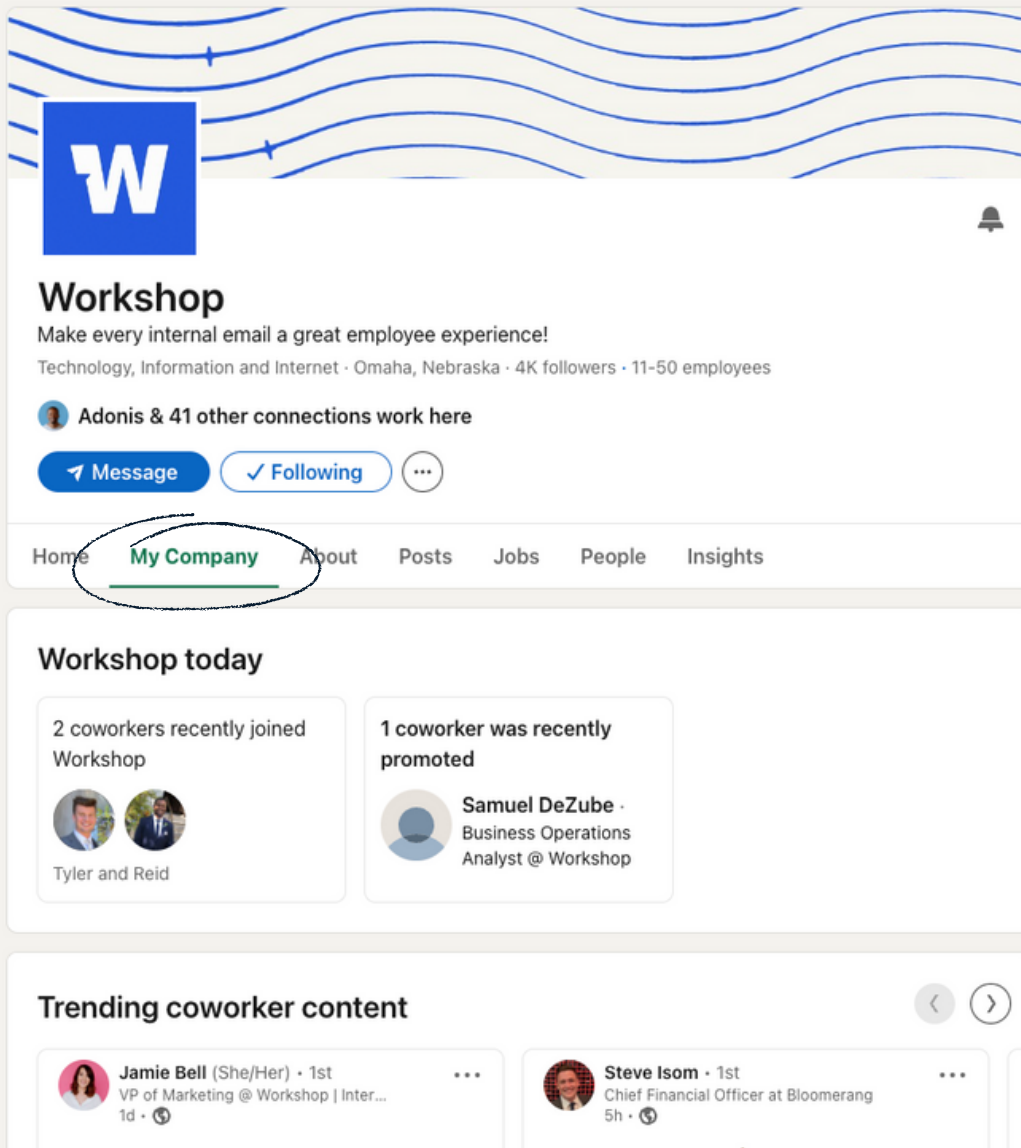
Celebrated 3 years at **Workshop** last week (and my little boy is now 18 months old)!
...see more

If you are a member of your company's LinkedIn page

If you are not an admin, you can still see trending coworker content! From the company's page, click on the "My Company" tab at the top of the profile. From here, you can see all of the trending content that has been associated with a specific hashtag and posted by members who are associated with the organization as an employee.

Hashtags aren't dead!

- You can use them as built-in "permission to share"
- Makes it easy to pull employee-generated content across multiple platforms
- Hashtags like, #LifeAtCompany, #IWorkAtCompany, #CompanyCareers, #EmployeeNickname are all great hashtags to start with!



The image shows a screenshot of a LinkedIn company page for 'Workshop'. The page features a blue and white wavy header with a blue square logo containing a white 'W'. Below the logo, the company name 'Workshop' is displayed, along with the tagline 'Make every internal email a great employee experience!' and details: 'Technology, Information and Internet · Omaha, Nebraska · 4K followers · 11-50 employees'. A notification bell icon is in the top right. Below the company name, it says 'Adonis & 41 other connections work here'. There are buttons for 'Message', 'Following', and a three-dot menu. A navigation bar at the bottom of the profile section includes 'Home', 'My Company' (circled in red), 'About', 'Posts', 'Jobs', 'People', and 'Insights'. Below this, a section titled 'Workshop today' shows two updates: '2 coworkers recently joined Workshop' (with photos of Tyler and Reid) and '1 coworker was recently promoted' (for Samuel DeZube, Business Operations Analyst). The bottom section is titled 'Trending coworker content' and shows two posts: one by Jamie Bell (VP of Marketing) and one by Steve Isom (Chief Financial Officer).

How to get employees to post more on LinkedIn

- A group of multiple employees actively engaging in thought leadership on LinkedIn. In other words, show, don't tell! (If your leadership team is not active on LinkedIn, then asking everyone else to be won't really work)
- An employee-only event, conference, retreat, or offsite
- Highlight employee posts anywhere you can (newsletters, all-hands meetings, Slack, etc.)
- Employee-specific celebrations and gifts (like for anniversaries, promotions, or new product launches)

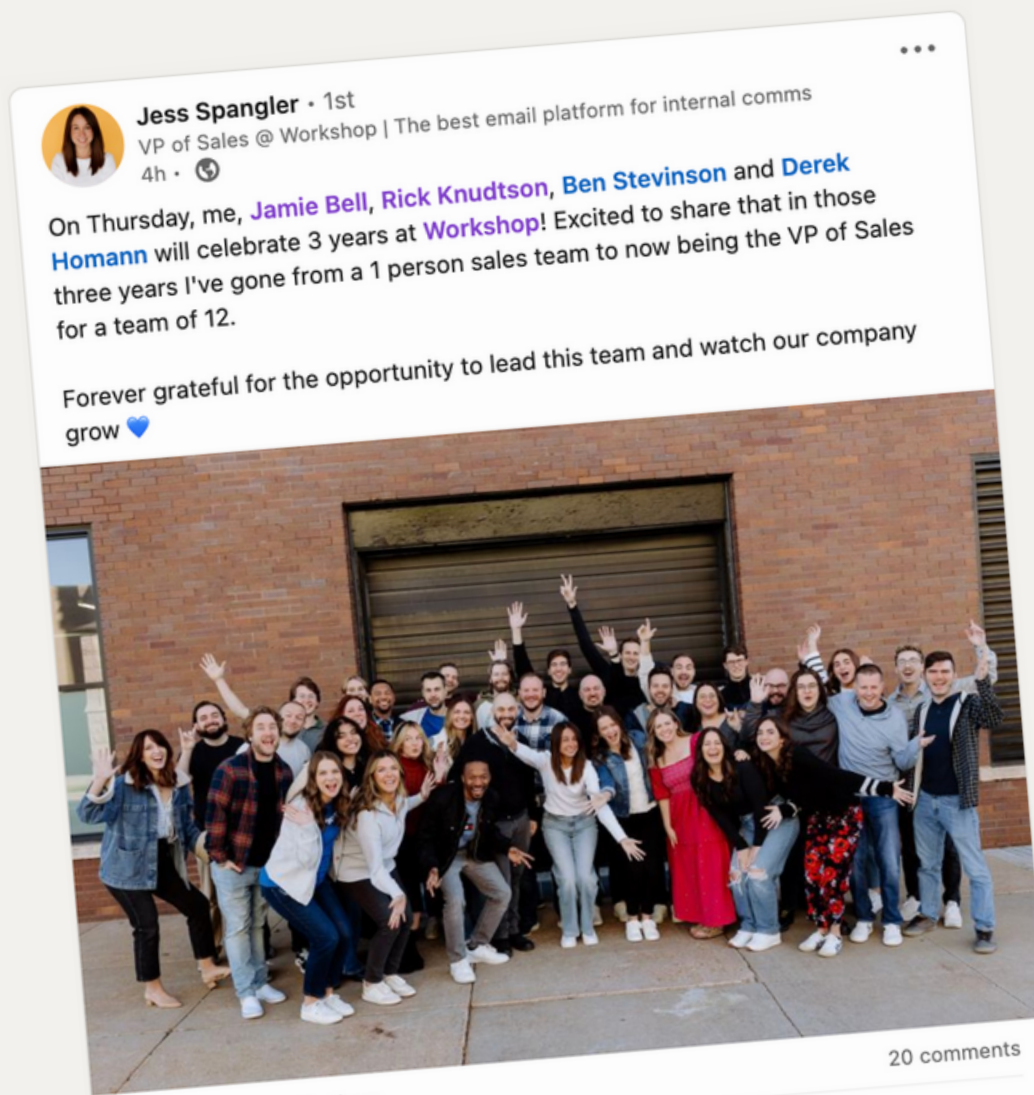
When we launched our new **Happy Monday Club** branding, we gave all of our employees a new Happy Monday Club mug, which ultimately led to our customers and prospects wanting that exact same mug because the entire team posted about it on LinkedIn. So employee-specific celebrations, like new product launches, are a great way to get people to post organically, too.



Other topics for employee-generated content

Here are a few other ways you can inspire more people to generate that content for you:

- Industry insights & opinions
- Advice in their own areas of expertise
- Personal & professional experiences
- Introducing new colleagues or hiring open roles
- Highlighting great policies & perks
- Client stories
- New marketing content or product launches
- Celebrations of any sort (whether you can share the goal or not!)
- Press mentions and/or awards



Email

The second channel you can start using today for your employee influencer program is...email! It's a unique opportunity to give someone a platform and a voice within the organization. Here at Workshop, we've had so much fun developing an email as an internal influencer channel. If you have people within the organization who are really great personalities, or they have a lot of expertise, or honestly, they're in any kind of position where they might need to communicate with the company a lot, setting them up with their own sort of email campaign has been such a delightful experience. (And, you will see your open rates increase when you send an email from an individual (rather than department@company.com).

Your CEO is a great place to start! We encourage every single company to at least do CEO communications this way. You could try a weekly or bi-weekly CEO email to the team with a warm introduction, a place to celebrate your customers or your company culture, an overview of the company's progress towards goals & key metrics, and a quick signoff. Now, you are able to send those CEO letters and see the analytics across the entire campaign.

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The best compliment

Twenty years ago, I was sitting in post-game film with my high school football team. My coach narrowed in on one of my teammates. The kid was visibly uncomfortable while being used as an example. My coach noticed and stopped to say: "This is how you get better. When I stop coaching you is when you should start to worry."

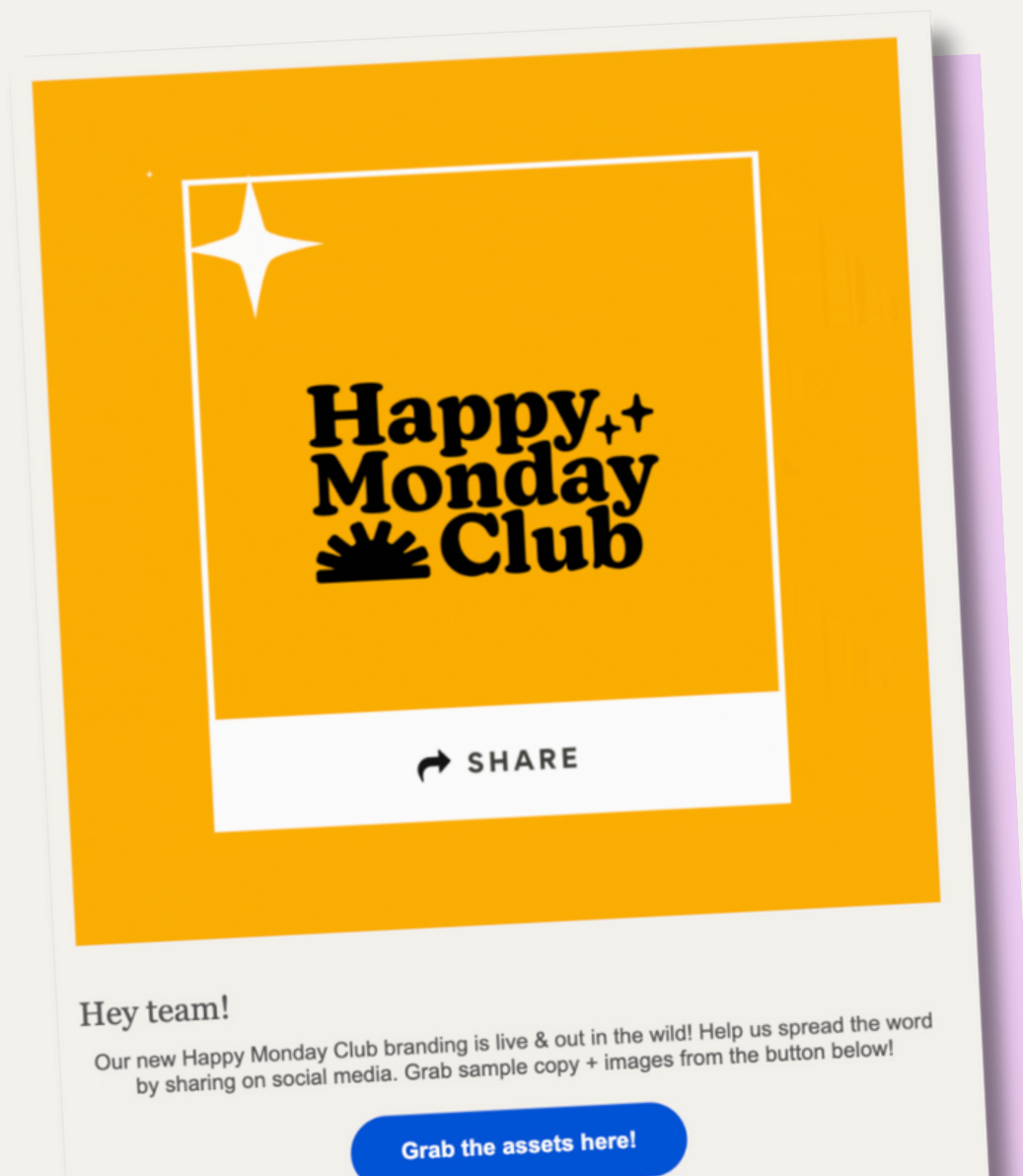
That phrase has stuck with me ever since. And has shaped how I think about providing and receiving feedback. A lot of people view feedback or coaching as a negative signal – and react accordingly. They get defensive. They make excuses. Sometimes they ignore it all together.

Giving feedback is really hard, but receiving feedback is even harder. I'm not good at it either. But those that are great at their craft *embrace* feedback. It's a tool to get better. And applying feedback is one of the easiest ways to keep pace with the company. (I've written about [keeping pace](#) before...)

When someone provides you feedback, it means they believe in you and your potential. They believe you can achieve more. They believe you're still the right person for the job. So, the next time you receive feedback, listen

Use email for influencer program management

For day-of-launch coordination, Slack is a great option, but we prefer to use email for detailed program management so we can see what assets, messaging, and CTAs perform best within the program! Email is a great way to package up all of your assets (approved copy, images, UTM links, etc.) for your employees. And, with an internal email like Workshop, you can see exactly who is engaging with what! **
Reviewing the analytics of your email also helps you adjust and refine your strategy for your employer influencer program, too!



Hey team!

Our new Happy Monday Club branding is live & out in the wild! Help us spread the word by sharing on social media. Grab sample copy + images from the button below!

Grab the assets here!

Highlight employee-generated content in emails

- It's like a modern-day "employee spotlight!" Add it to newsletters or post-event recaps
- *Note:* emails that have real employee photos in them outperform the ones that have stock photography (try it for yourself!)
- This (plus retweets/reposts) automatically provides a feedback loop and sets expectations for the kind of content you want to see



We recommend reframing your messaging in your emails so you're directing employees to celebrate their teammates and friends rather than just a way to increase the company's LinkedIn numbers. If an employee has a big presentation at a conference or has surpassed a milestone, use it as a way to celebrate their achievement and hard work as employees (it will encourage other team members to post, too)!

IABC conference recap!



Jess Spangler · 1st

VP of Sales @ Workshop | The best email platform for inter...

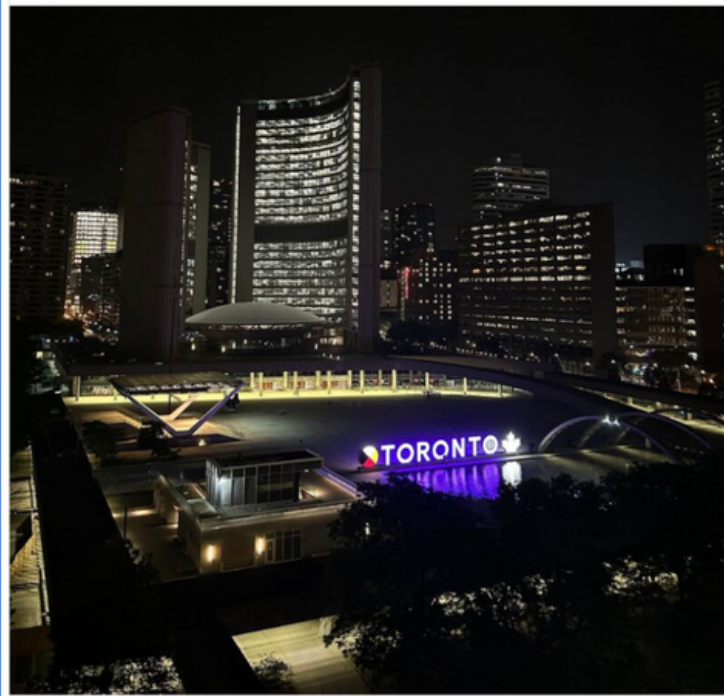
8mo · 🌐

Spent the first half of the week at [#iabc23](#) in Toronto. A lot of people asked me, as a sponsor, what do we hope to get out of a conference like this?

It's obviously great to be able to share [Workshop](#) with people who maybe have never heard of us before but it's also a great opportunity to build community and connections.

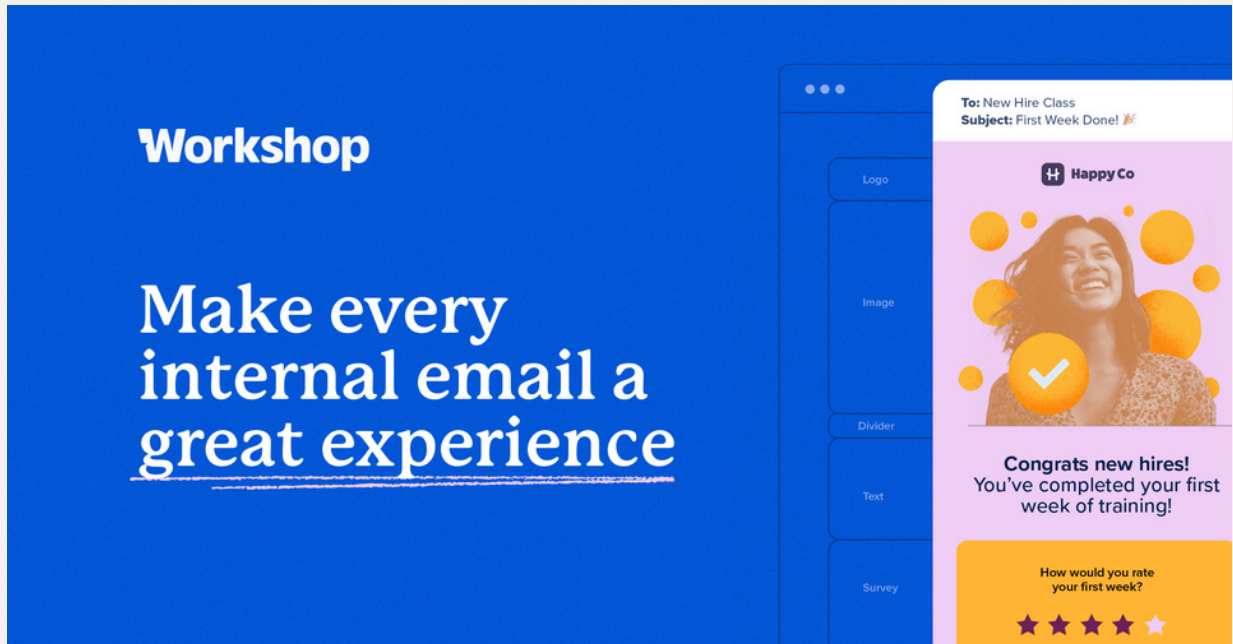
One of our values at Workshop is "We listen to learn" and those that are in [#internalcommunications](#) are the ones we need to listen to in order to understand how to build a product that helps to solve problems and is valuable in their day to day jobs!

I can't take credit for this photo, it was either [Justin Krug](#) or [Jamie Bell](#)
😊 Thanks for the hospitality [#toronto!](#)



A few of our team members were in Toronto last week for the IABC World Conference!
Head over to celebrate Jess' post and see what the team was up to in Toronto!

[Check out the post!](#)



An internal communications tool like Workshop, can help you level up your employee influencer program! With Workshop, you can create engaging, on-brand internal emails in less time than ever with our drag-and-drop editor. Now, you can easily send engaging content to your team to get them bought in and encourage them to start sharing it! We also hook up to your employee data so you always have an up-to-date distribution list, give you all the analytics you need to gauge your success, and offer personalization features like audience segmentation and merge tags (so you can always provide your team with intentional, relevant, and engaging content in every email). [See more in our 1-minute demo video!](#)



Questions? Comments?

Reach out to our VP of Marketing, Jamie Bell, if you have any follow-up questions or want additional advice on how to build an employee influencer for your organization!

[Email](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Twitter](#)

Workshop