



Six Ways to Improve Resident Communication

Communication: we can't get a thing done without it. And we've each had our entire lives—thousands upon thousands of interactions—to practice getting messages across to others, yet few of us have mastered this vital skill.

Communicating with a resident is hard enough. But when you need to get a message across to all of your residents, things get even tougher. What's the best way to reach a them? How can you ensure everyone gets the message?

No matter whom you need to reach, try these tips for communicating with your residents.

one

COMMUNICATE ACROSS MULTIPLE CHANNELS.

You may think you have your bases covered if you send out a mass email announcing next week's opening pool party. Don't be surprised if some people fail to show.

Research shows that people process information differently. That means that some of your residents may respond to the email blast, while others may need a text message, a phone call, or an in person reminder for a message to stick. Use this information to your advantage: the more channels you can use to communicate, the more people you're likely to reach.

two

MAKE YOUR MESSAGE CONSISTENT.

Ever play the game "Telephone"? Players sit in a row or a circle, while a secret message is whispered from one person to the next. Once the message reaches the last person, he or she reveals the message received.

What makes the game fun is that the message, without fail, gets distorted along the way. Players accidentally omit or change words. Listeners mishear speakers' whispers. Often, the final "message" has no resemblance to the original at all.

"Telephone" is all fun and games, but it illustrates the need for consistent communications. When it comes to communicating with residents, this means making sure messages

are standardized. That could mean distributing a written memo instead of relying on word-of-mouth communication to pass on details. Implementing automated phone calls rather than using a manual phone tree. Make sure everyone gets the same message, and you won't have a "Telephone" situation on your hands.

three

KNOW WHAT TO DO IN AN EMERGENCY.

An everyday communications plan is great. You have time to carefully plan messages, notify residents of upcoming events, and check in to ensure messages are received. But what will you do in times of crisis?

Develop a communications strategy your residents can use in an emergency. Determine who will be responsible for sending messages, and how they will be transmitted. (And come up with a backup plan in case certain methods become unavailable—a loss of Internet access, for example.)

Hold "drills" to ensure others know what to expect, too. For instance, you could send a test text message to all residents on your property, the kind of message that could be sent in the event of severe weather.

These preparatory drills are a great opportunity to ensure you have correct contact information and ensure that everyone involved knows how to use your chosen system. With a tested system in place, communications will be one less thing for you to worry about if a crisis strikes.



four

COMMUNICATE REGULARLY.

You don't only want to communicate in times of emergency, however. Depending on your property's structure and needs, you may want to check in monthly, weekly, or even daily to ensure everyone is on track. You may even consider developing a communications calendar to help make communications as automatic as possible. For example, if your property holds monthly events to engage residents, you could schedule an automated phone call the night before the event, an email message with time and location information, and a variety of check-in methods to remind residents of exciting prizes and games. When people get in the habit of hearing from you, they'll always know where to turn for the latest updates.



five

ASK FOR AND RESPOND TO FEEDBACK.

If you want residents to listen to—and possibly act on—the messages you’re sending, you need to keep their preferences in mind. So don’t be afraid to ask for feedback on communication channels, frequency, and content.

Ask residents what works—and what doesn’t—with your communications strategy. You can do this through face-to-face conversations, web surveys, or online profiles or mobile apps where users can modify their preferences. Make it easy for recipients to select the communications method (and if possible, the language) that they prefer. If users have control over the communications they receive, they’ll be much more likely to listen to what you have to say.

six

MAKE SURE RESIDENTS KNOW WHERE TO TURN TO FOR HELP.

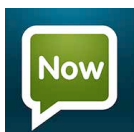
You try your best to include all important information in each message you send—but sometimes, things fall through the cracks. If residents have questions, need clarification, or want to confirm their attendance at an event, provide a clear point of contact for them to call.

It may be helpful for all of your property’s communications to originate from a single sender, say, your assistant property manager or leasing coordinator. If you’re sending emails, make sure recipients add your address to their accounts’ “safe senders” lists. And don’t forget to include a contact name, email address, or phone number at the end of each message. Making it as easy for people to reach you as it is for you to reach them makes the communications cycle complete.

Implementing one or all of these tips will improve the way your team communicates with the people it needs to reach. And when everyone feels informed, they’re more likely to stay involved.

To further streamline your communications, consider using messaging services offered by notification provider One Call Now. One Call Now offers routine and emergency messaging services to businesses, property managers, healthcare providers, religious organizations, schools, and more. Automated voice, text, and email messages can be recorded and released at any time, reaching listeners within minutes. Integration tools make it easy to import an existing contact list or supplement an information management system. Best of all, real-time reporting lets you track who’s received your messages—ensuring your residents stay safe and informed.

To learn more about the services offered by One Call Now, visit onecallnow.com.



DOWNLOAD OUR APP:
onecallnow.com/features/mobile-app

877.698.3262 | onecallnow.com