Question: what are the best practices for identifying the appropriate mode of communication for certain message types?
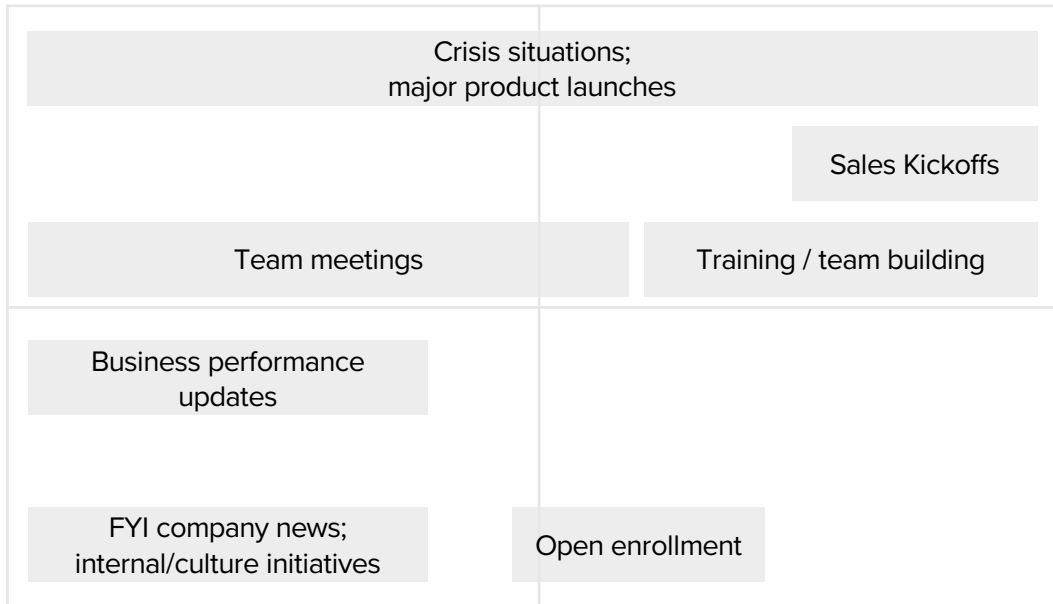
1

Start by considering two core elements of a communication: the urgency with which something needs to be communicated, and the outcome you intend to have — below are a few scenarios to highlight these dynamics

High urgency
Business-critical information that needs to be "consumed" in a specific moment in time

URGENCY

Low urgency
Can be "consumed" within a reasonable time frame / at the leisure of the audience

Crisis situations; major product launches	
	Sales Kickoffs
Team meetings	Training / team building
Business performance updates	
FYI company news; internal/culture initiatives	Open enrollment

DESIRED OUTCOME

Awareness
Information that's "good to know" and can be processed any time; follow-up inquiries are minimal / relatively simple to address

Action
Information that requires action / behavior change; follow-up inquiries are more involved & require preparation

2

Next, think about the tactics you can work with — both their benefits and their drawbacks (and how you might need to use several to achieve your goals)

- **Chat / text channels** are great for sharing small bits of information, but do you want to find out about a company crisis via Slack?

- **Email** is great to communicate information that is both urgent (and not) but it's usually terrible at getting people to *do* something different (beyond following tactical instructions)

- **1:1 meetings** are great at building connecting and sharing sensitive information — though successful interpersonal moments require good advanced planning

- **Workshops / off-sites** are perfect for providing information that requires behavior change, but they can be time consuming and expensive to design and produce

- **All Hands** can flex well based on urgency and desired outcomes — but they take time to produce and consume time on *lots* of calendars

- **"Meeting in a box" (MIB)** (i.e., a scalable way for leaders to run team meetings with common content) is fantastic for getting colleagues to engage with important new information on a team/org level, though MIBs require solid advanced planning to ensure leaders/facilitators are set up for success

- **Dynamic content (e.g., video)** can be a powerful storytelling medium and way to amplify leaders, products and key messages — but it requires time to produce, making it less than ideal to communicate urgent information

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