

Critical Communication Readiness Self-Assessment

Seven checkpoints that determine whether an urgent message reaches every relevant employee, and whether you can prove it afterward. Score each one honestly. It takes about 15 minutes and gives you a clearer view of where your reach actually breaks.

This works whichever channels you use today: email, SMS, an app, signage, radio or a call tree.

How to use this

1. Score each checkpoint green, amber or red. Green means it is fully in place today, across every site, without relying on ad hoc workarounds.
2. Be strict. If it works at headquarters but not at your smallest site, it is amber.
3. If three or more checkpoints are red, your reach still depends more on luck than design. That is common, and it is fixable in a quarter.
4. Take the red checkpoints into the 90-day plan on page 2.

CHECKPOINT	THE QUESTION TO ANSWER HONESTLY	RED FLAG	G / A / R
1. Employee data accuracy	Are recipient records kept current from your HR, payroll or workforce system of record, ideally automatically, and when were they last reconciled?	Records are reconciled manually, inconsistently or not at all. No one clearly owns the data.	G A R
2. Audience targeting	Can you reach one building, one shift or one role without notifying everyone else?	Everything goes to everyone, so urgent messages stop feeling urgent.	G A R
3. Language coverage	Does each critical message reach every recipient in a language they understand, without relying on a last-minute translation queue?	Translation requires a manual queue, and in an emergency that queue becomes the delay.	G A R
4. Confirmation	Can you tell who has confirmed and who has not while the incident is still unfolding?	You only find out afterward, or not at all.	G A R
5. Local responsibilities	Is there a named owner at every site responsible for following up with people who did not acknowledge, and do they know this?	No one owns the follow-up, or it disappears into a central inbox.	G A R
6. Fallback channels	Is there a defined and tested fallback channel for life-safety situations that does not depend on a single app or digital channel?	The fallback exists only in a document and has not been tested with a named owner.	G A R
7. Testing frequency	When did you last test the process end-to-end, and what changed as a result?	No test has taken place in the last 12 months, or the test resulted in no follow-up.	G A R

Green: fully in place across every site. Amber: partly in place or dependent on manual effort. Red: not in place.

Red checkpoints: _____ / 7

First priority: _____

The 10-minute reach test

Scoring tells you what you believe. This test tells you what is true. The drill itself takes 10 minutes; allow about an hour to prepare and review it. You can run it without any new tooling.

1. Pick one site and one shift. Tell the site leader the drill is happening, but not exactly when.
2. Send a clearly labeled test message with one required action and a simple way to confirm receipt: a tap, a reply, or a check-in with the supervisor.
3. Start the clock. At 10 minutes, record the acknowledgment rate. Also record the time required to reach 50%, 80% and 95%, where applicable.
4. List everyone you did not reach by name. That list is the most useful output of the exercise.
5. Fix the data and process, not the people. First check for missing records, outdated numbers, access problems and unclear ownership.
6. Repeat the test next quarter at a different site. Track the trend, not just one result.

Your first 90 days

Days 1 to 30: see the truth

Map every channel you rely on for urgent messages. Reconcile contact data against your workforce system of record for one region. Count how many employees have no direct channel at all.

Days 31 to 60: define the protocol

Define your critical-message standard: what qualifies as critical, who can send it, which messages require acknowledgment, who owns the remaining unconfirmed employees at each site, and which fallback channel should be used.

Days 61 to 90: test and report

Run the 10-minute reach test at one site. Report the acknowledgment rate, the list of people who were not reached, and the resulting fixes. Put the next three drills on the calendar.

First test site: _____
Local owner: _____

Drill date: _____

The question worth asking your leadership team

Could we reach every relevant employee in the next 10 minutes, and prove that we did?

If the honest answer is no, or not yet, do not wait for a crisis. Start with one site, one test and one list of people you could not reach.

A note on the five conditions

The seven checkpoints support five conditions for critical communication readiness: reach every worker, target the right people, deliver without waiting on a human relay, confirm critical messages, and maintain a tested fallback. Local ownership underpins all five. Central strategy only works when every site has a named owner for anyone the message did not reach.

This worksheet supports communication planning and does not replace an emergency response plan or dedicated life-safety systems.



Companion handout to the Ragan Communications webinar "When It's Urgent, Does Your Message Reach the Frontline?" with Erwin van der Vlist, CEO and Founder, and Tobi Anderson, Head of Customer Experience, Speakap.

[Webinar page](#) · speakap.com