



SNP

COMMUNICATION

TRENDS REPORT

2023 - 24

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ④ **INTRODUCTION**
- ④ **TRENDS IN THE WORKPLACE**
- ④ **TRENDS FOR LEADERS**
- ④ **TRENDS IN DESIGN**
- ④ **TRENDS IN CONTENT**
- ④ **PREDICTIONS FOR 2024 - A LEADER'S POV**



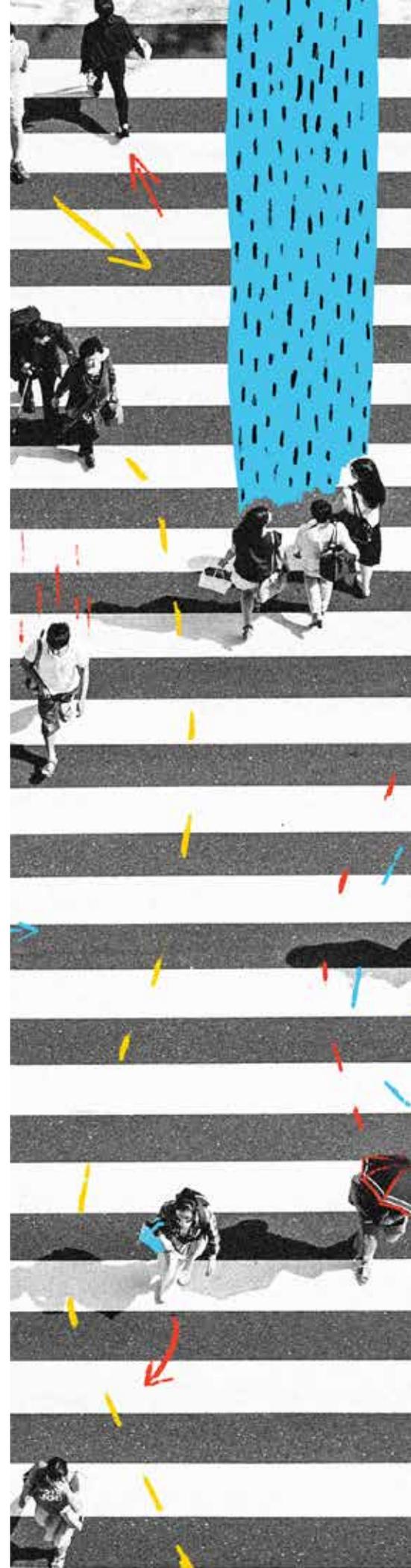
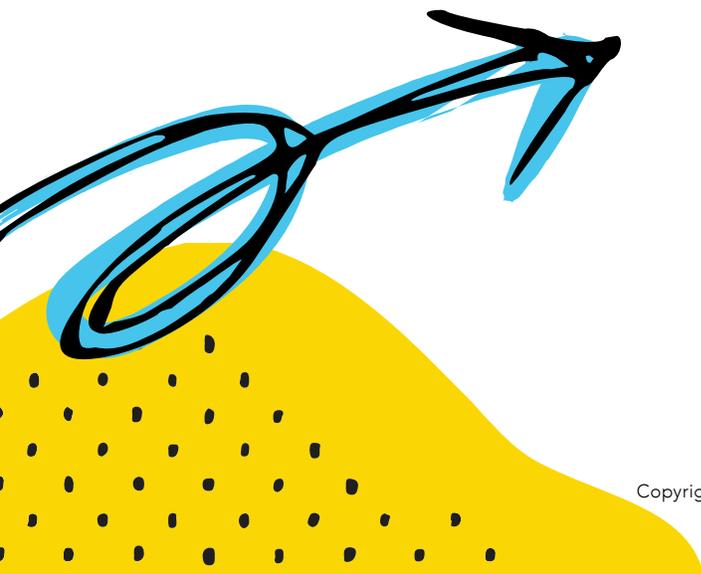
INTRODUCTION

Welcome to SNP's first Communication Trends report!

This isn't your average trends analysis—it's the distilled wisdom of three decades of leadership communication experience, honed by continuous engagement with our global customer base.

Every year, we're posed with the same question: "What trends have you been seeing?" While confidentiality is in our DNA (and NDAs), we're excited to share broad trends that have shaped the past year, and that promise to impact the one to come.

From conversations shared across boardrooms to strategies enabling success, these key trends, validated by hard stats, will equip you in your journey through 2024.





SUMMARY

TRENDS IN THE WORKPLACE

- Take a programmatic approach to development.
- Connect, collaborate, and be curious in the face of change.
- Make self-care a visible part of your day-to-day.

TRENDS FOR LEADERS

- Be aware of how you show up—words, body language, and presence carry weight.
- Manage uncertainty with transparency and involvement.
- Communicate from a place of empathy.

TRENDS IN DESIGN

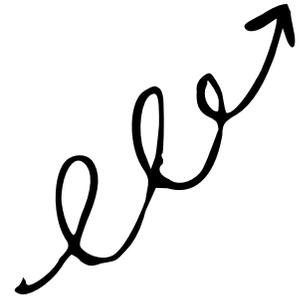
- Tik Tok, jump cuts, AI. 'Nuff said.

TRENDS IN CONTENT

- You're the vehicle for your message. How you present can elevate or damage it. Practice, people.
- Be concise. It's a gift to your audience.
- Read these three books: *Smart Brevity*, *The Art of Gathering*, *Designing Your Life*

PSA: DEFINING LEADERSHIP

Throughout this report you may notice us use the word “leader” in places you don’t expect. And that’s because to us leadership is a quality not a title. Here’s our definition...



lead·er·ship
 /'lēdər,SHip/
 noun

Leadership is the ability of an individual or a group of people to influence. It’s getting people to listen, pay attention, and be motivated to action. This is a skill, an intentional approach, and the medium depends on the audience.

It is often believed that leadership is tied to a person’s title or seniority. While that is true, the power to lead—to be influential and compelling—is an attribute anyone can have or attain. It’s a developable skill that can be improved over time.





TRENDS IN THE WORKPLACE

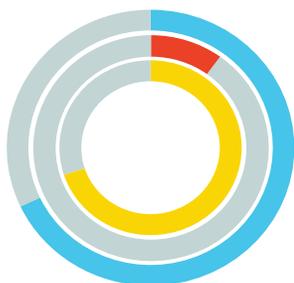
HIGH PERFORMERS AREN'T BORN, THEY'RE MADE

In 2023, many companies restructured. Whether it was due to growth or the need to downsize, new teams have been created, new responsibilities have been delegated, and new leaders are stepping up.

The problem is navigating the newness can feel like finding a needle in a haystack. There's a lot of trial and error with a low return. Frenzy replaces strategy. Our team has some takeaways on how to better train, collaborate, and adapt in 2024.

OUR TAKEAWAYS:

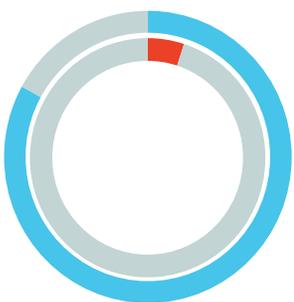
- Get with the program!
- Success starts with the self.
- Get back to reality (and the future).



68% of employees prefer to have formal training in the workplace.¹

10% of employee learning happens from formal training sessions.²

70% of employee learning happens informally on the job.²



83% of organizations believe the importance of developing leaders at every level of the company.³

5% of businesses have implemented leadership development at all levels.³

1. Bouchrika, Imed. "68 Training Industry Statistics: 2024 Data, Trends & Predictions." Research.com, January 18, 2024, <https://research.com/careers/training-industry-statistics>.

2. Kathleen Davey, "What Is the 70:20:10 Model? Pros, Cons, Implementation & More," Docebo, August 31, 2023, <https://www.docebo.com/glossary/70-20-10>.

3. Kristin Kizer, "35+ Powerful Leadership Statistics [2023]: Things All Aspiring Leaders Should Know," Zippia, June 30, 2023, <https://www.zippia.com/advice/leadership-statistics>.

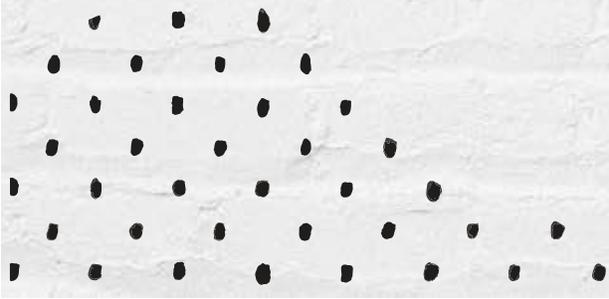
GET WITH THE PROGRAM!

“ *Scaling culture and success is not accidental. It comes down to consistency. We're seeing our customers take a more programmatic approach to build a high-performing culture. They consistently reinforce what the team is trying to accomplish and encourage the competencies to get them there. They may start with an informational event or video that speaks to the vision. Then deliver trainings that teach the communication or technical skills to bring it to life. And then offer 1:1 coaching to go even deeper. It's an intentional approach from start to finish.* ”

DANNY SCHULTZ
VICE PRESIDENT, TRAINING

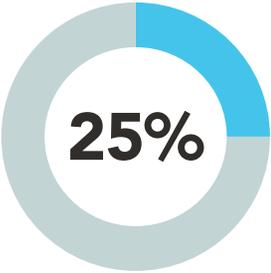
RECOMMENDATION

- When taking a programmatic approach, don't start with the solution.
- Start by clarifying the challenge or desired outcome.
- Then assess what's needed together as a team and make sure you're all aligned before starting to execute.



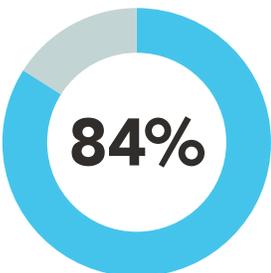
DOUBLE DOWN ON

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT



25%

Skill sets for jobs have changed by around 25% since 2015. By 2027, this number is expected to double.⁴



84%

of employees expect their employer to provide the training they need to stay up-to-date with changing skill sets in their industry.⁴

TOP SKILLS EMPLOYEES WANT TO DEVELOP⁵

- Communication Styles and Techniques
- Presentation Skills
- Content Development
- Influencing
- Management Skills
- Feedback and Difficult Conversations
- Selling Skills

4. 1. "Building the Agile Future," 2023 Workplace Learning Report, February 14, 2023, https://learning.linkedin.com/content/dam/me/learning/en-us/pdfs/workplace-learning-report/LinkedIn-Learning_Workplace-Learning-Report-2023-EN.pdf

5. SNP Communications participant data 2023



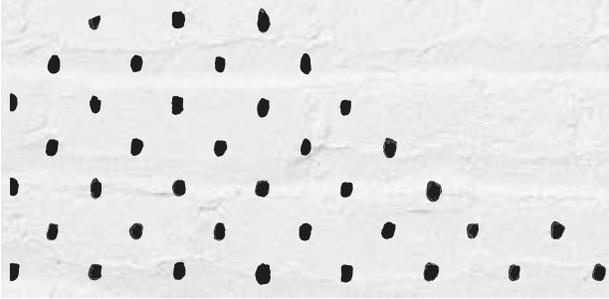
BACK TO REALITY (AND THE FUTURE)

“ Our coaches shared that 2023 was a year of change for our customers. People had to transition, adapt, and step up whether that was taking on new roles or going back to the office. Basic conversational skills (or putting clothes on three times a week) were new for some. And layoffs had a tremendous impact on morale and workloads. People were doing more with less. The lessons that we learned this year [2023] were critical in coaching—patience, feedback, and curiosity. ”

AMALIA KYRIAZIS
VICE PRESIDENT, COACHING

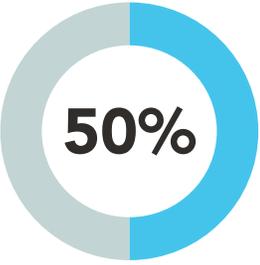
RECOMMENDATION

- Focus on where your feet are. Recognize what you can and can't control.
- Give, ask for, and receive feedback. Make sure it's specific and timeless.
- Ask questions and check all assumptions. Assuming the worst is easy, but often not accurate.

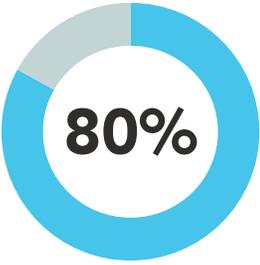


COLLABORATION MAKES THE

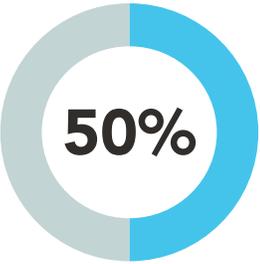
WATER COOLER GO 'ROUND



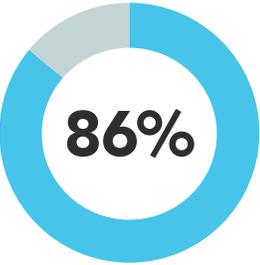
People now spend about 50% more time engaged in collaborative work than they did five years ago.⁶



80% of the average employee's day is collaborative work.⁶



Companies that promote collaboration and communication have been linked to reducing employee turnover rates by 50%.⁷



86% of employees and executives cite lack of collaboration or ineffective communication for workplace failures.⁷



6. Ryan Daly, "22 Statistics That Reveal the Truth about Teams," AIIR Consulting, November 9, 2020, <https://aiirconsulting.com/resource/22-statistics-that-reveal-the-truth-about-teams/>
 7. Boskamp, Elsie. "35+ Compelling Workplace Collaboration Statistics [2023]: The Importance of Teamwork." Zippia, July 6, 2023. <https://www.zippia.com/advice/workplace-collaboration-statistics/>



SUCCESS STARTS WITH THE SELF

“ Leaders focus. They don’t switch on and off (how exhausting), but they can focus on where they are and who they’re with in the moment, whether with colleagues, family, customers, friends. They integrate and share a lot of their life, with a lot of their life. School pick-ups and workouts are as visible as all-hands and budget meetings. Leaders are dimensional and dynamic, and they plan and prioritize their time to ensure they continue growing. ”

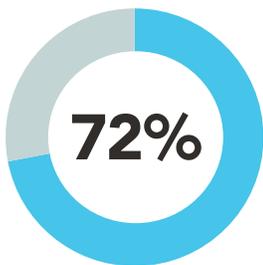
JESSICA THRASHER
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT,
PRODUCTS & SERVICES

RECOMMENDATION

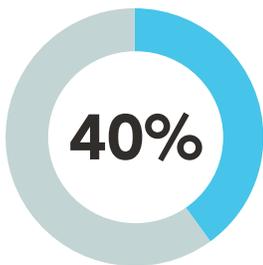
- Plan your day, your week, your month as a whole person. Maybe go as far as managing one calendar.
- Intentionally shake things up (and make time for it). Do stand-up. Train for a 5k (or ultra-marathon). Read the book your colleague recommended. Add to your own dynamic perspective.
- Normalize self-health by talking about it with your team. High-performing individuals are a part of high-performing teams. Together, you can invest in yourselves, your organization, and your customers.

SELF-CARE SHOULDN'T

BE A SHORTCOMING

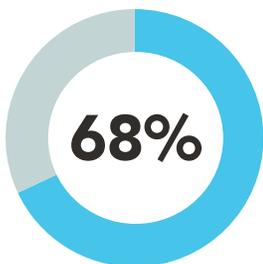


of Gen Zers want to talk about mental health openly at work.



of employees who are parents or guardians want training for managers to be more self aware, better able to regulate their emotions, and able to create a less stressful work environment.

AND YET...



of employers don't offer mental health tools to manage stress, anxiousness, and sleep.⁸

8. "2023 Workplace Mental Health Trends Report: The Future of Work." Calm.com, January 19, 2023. <https://info.calm.com/rs/541-LYF-023/images/Calm-Business-2023-Workplace-Mental-Health-Trends-Report.pdf>.





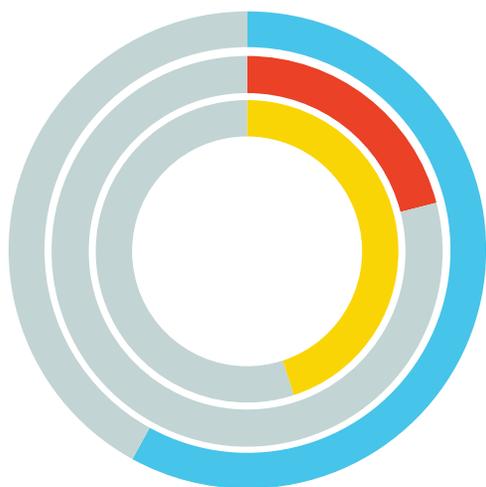
LEADING THROUGH UNCERTAINTY

Each year since the pandemic, uncertainty seems to be the thing that's most certain. That is to say, we will always encounter uncertainty, no matter how many times it feels like a surprise. However, that's where the issue lies—in the surprise. Last year, the market surprised companies, the political climate surprised everyone, and the actions employers took surprised employees.

And unfortunately, these kinds of surprises (layoffs, resource cuts, reprioritization) left employees feeling distrustful. Here's the thing. We can't control for uncertainty and we can't control for surprise—they're both subjective, but we can control for trust. It comes down to effective and consistent communication.

OUR TAKEAWAYS:

- Own it.
- Ignorance is bliss ignorance.
- It's what you say and how you say it.



58% of employees trust a complete stranger more than their own boss.⁹

21% of U.S. employees strongly agree that they trust the leadership of their organization.¹⁰

45% of employees said lack of trust in leadership was the biggest issue impacting their work performance.⁹

⁹ Jennifer Aaker and Naomi Bagdonas, "Why We Teach a Class on Humor at the Stanford Business School," FastCompany.com, January 26, 2021, <https://www.fastcompany.com/90597762/humor-is-such-an-important-leadership-trait-we-teach-it-at-the-stanford-b-school>.

¹⁰ McLain, Denise, and Ryan Pendell. "Why Trust in Leaders Is Faltering and How to Gain It Back." Gallup.com, April 17, 2023. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/473738/why-trust-leaders-faltering-gain-back.aspx>.

OWN IT.

“

Our customers are dealing with a lot of uncertainty. Uncertainty about their business, their industry, and the marketplace. As a result, they're struggling to stay bullish about the business. How do they stay fiscally healthy and make the tough decisions while instilling confidence in their employees? It comes down to owning the problem and being transparent.

”

**JOE MULLEN
PARTNER**

RECOMMENDATION

- Include employees. Be honest with them and seek to understand them. Listen, listen, listen, and let them get involved in the solution.
- Tell an authentic story when explaining 'the why.' Leverage the [Story of Self, Story of Us, and Story of Now](#) to align, motivate, and drive action.
- And, find the fun!



SEEING YOUR TEAM

THROUGH UNCERTAINTY—

START WITH TRANSPARENCY

80%

of workers want to know more about how decisions are made in their organization.

AND

87%

of workers want their future company to be transparent.¹¹

11. Slack. "Trust, Tools and Teamwork: What Workers Want." Slack, October 3, 2018. <https://slack.com/blog/transformation/trust-tools-and-teamwork-what-workers-want>.

IGNORANCE IS BLISS IGNORANCE

“

Good leaders are aware of how they show up...the number of eyes on them...the shadow that they cast. They know that their words have meaning. That their body language has meaning. They exude calm and confidence, and are vulnerable enough to say, 'I messed that up,' or 'I don't know.'

”

**JESSICA THRASHER
EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT,
PRODUCTS & SERVICES**

RECOMMENDATION

Define your practice for shaking off what happened in one meeting and moving to the next. The people in that meeting are looking to you as a leader. It's a mental and physical discipline.



LEAD WITH VULNERABILITY

& EMPATHY

24%

of senior leaders say they allow themselves to be vulnerable with others at work. And 48% say they accept their personal failures and shortcomings.

DIRECT REPORTS DISAGREE

13%

of leaders who report to senior executives say those executives are willing to be vulnerable, and 26% say those senior executives genuinely acknowledge their own failures and shortcomings.¹²

12. Fourmy, Richmond. "Why Executives Need to Practice Vulnerable Leadership—and How to Do It." DDI, August 24, 2023. <https://www.ddiworld.com/blog/vulnerable-leadership>.

IT'S WHAT YOU SAY AND HOW YOU SAY IT

“ Don't be a flamethrower. There's always something happening politically, economically, and socially that will weigh on you and your team. Acknowledge that, but know you'll never say the perfect thing. Instead, focus on empathy and humanity.

And, of course, know that when so much is happening and the whole world feels unsolvable, the best thing to do is to tend your garden, as Voltaire's *Candide* shows us. Do that which you can do. Be diligent in this and ignore the rest.

”

RENN VARA
CO-FOUNDER

RECOMMENDATION

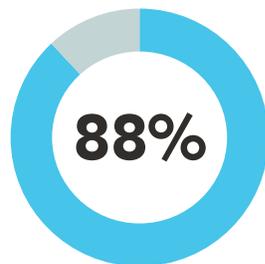
- Focus on empathy with your communication.
- Do what you can do.
- Let go of the rest.



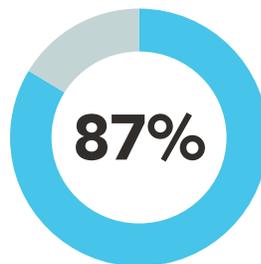
COMMUNICATE WITH

BOTH HEAD AND HEART

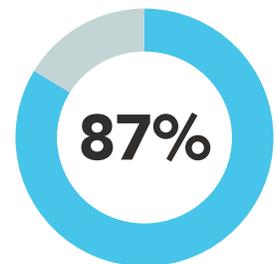
Workers feel that mutual empathy between company leaders and employees leads to...



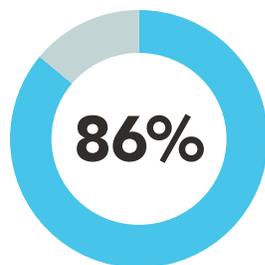
Increased efficiency



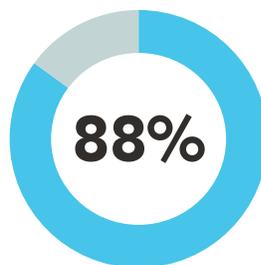
Creativity



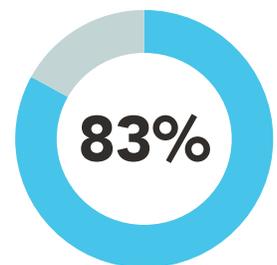
Job satisfaction



Idea sharing



Innovation



Even company revenue¹³

13. Jennifer Hemmerdinger, "New EY US Consulting Study: Employees Overwhelmingly Expect Empathy in the Workplace, but Many Say It Feels Disingenuous," EY, March 30, 2023, https://www.ey.com/en_us/news/2023/03/new-ey-us-consulting-study.



TRENDS IN DESIGN

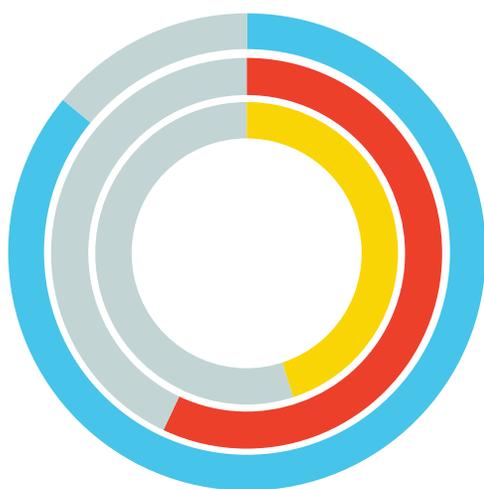
BRANDS NEED TO BE

THEMSELVES TOO

Brand is the name of the game. If you're not creating content with a clear identity, it can be hard to connect with your customers—B2B, B2C, ABC, 123—you get it. And identity, while a foundation, needs to be open to iteration. Because iteration is the core of authenticity. Your brand needs to grow and change just like your customers do. With that, we saw our customers try new things in 2023 like creating TikTok style videos, testing the waters with jump cuts, leveraging AI, and more. But at the end of the day each smart nice person we work with uses new tools to showcase or support their people—both employees and customers.

OUR TAKEAWAYS:

- TikTok...need we say more.
- Take the leap—use jump cuts.
- Augmented intelligence.



86% of consumers take a brand's authenticity into account when making a purchasing decision.

57% However, 57% of those same consumers say that less than half of brands' content comes across as authentic.

45% of people would unfollow a brand on social media because of too much self-promotion.¹⁴

TIKTOK...

NEED WE SAY MORE

TikTok continues to be a key influence for trends around the internet. People want bite-sized, fast-paced content. And when it comes to branding, nothing beats having a sense of humor. Shout out Duolingo.

#TRENDING

Top Corporate TikTok Accounts:

- Duolingo | @duolingo
- Chipotle | @chipotle
- NBA | @nba
- Red Bull | @redbull
- The Washington Post | @washingtonpost
- Crocs | @crocs

People can only pay attention to one screen for an average of **47 seconds**.¹⁵

Ideal Video Length by Platform¹⁶

- TikTok: 10–15 seconds
- Pinterest: 15–30 seconds
- Twitter: 20–45 seconds
- YouTube: 5–15 minutes
- Facebook: 30–90 seconds
- Instagram: 30–45 seconds
- LinkedIn: 30 seconds–5 minutes

15. Sandee LaMotte, "Your Attention Span Is Shrinking, Studies Say. Here's How to Stay Focused," CNN, May 30, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/01/11/health/short-attention-span-wellness/index.html>.

16. Hitesh Hitesh, "The Ideal Video Length for Each Platform: A Quick Guide," Piktochart, July 14, 2023, <https://piktochart.com/blog/ideal-video-length/#social-media>.



RECOMMENDATION

Take creative inspiration from TikTok. But stay in your brand lane. Know that what works on TikTok doesn't always translate to your corporate Instagram.



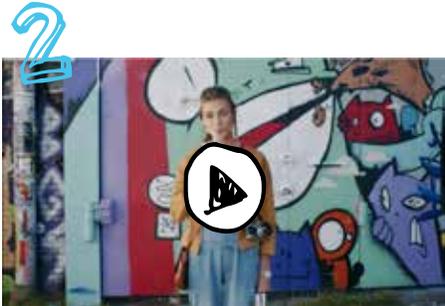
TAKE THE LEAP—USE JUMP CUTS

Jump cuts: what once was deemed outdated is now in vogue. When a single shot (think throwing a water balloon) is broken up with other cuts that makes the subject appear to move forward in time (think the person covered in water), that's a jump cut. We've used them in a number of videos this year and continue to see them all around the internet.

RECOMMENDATION

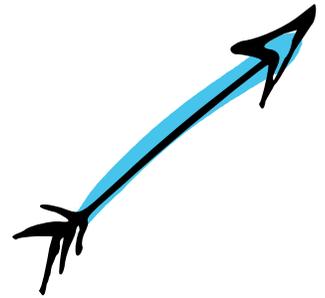
Experiment with jump cuts and other non-traditional editing styles.

EXAMPLES



AUGMENTED INTELLIGENCE

Here at SNP we call it “augmented” intelligence”—not “artificial.” Augmented intelligence is all about enhancing human ingenuity with AI, not replacing it. It’s about using AI as a tool to amplify our skills, not as a substitute for human creativity and decision-making.



It can be used to boost productivity by creating drafts and outlines of initial ideas or automating repetitive tasks, freeing up your time for more strategic projects.

AI still has a way to go. Let’s not forget that most AI image generators depend on the original works of many creators. That said, it is important to start learning now. AI is a reality that’s changing the way we work, innovate, and grow.

RECOMMENDATION

Treat AI like a skill and study it.



AI TOOLS GAINING RECOGNITION

Here are some of the tools to try...

- [Jasper AI](#)
- [Designs AI](#)
- [Midjourney](#)

Stay tuned. Nearly every major company is working on a generative AI tool. Some of our favorites are...

- [Adobe Photoshop Generator](#)
- [Adobe Voice AI Enhancer](#)
- [Google's Gemini](#)

And of course, we can't forget [ChatGPT](#).

LEARN TO WORK WITH AI



17. Monique Solomons, "90 AI Statistics: Applications, Design Principles, and Challenges," Linearity blog, November 27, 2023, <https://www.linearity.io/blog/ai-statistics/>

18. Haan, Katherine. "24 Top AI Statistics and Trends in 2024." Forbes, April 25, 2023. <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/business/ai-statistics>



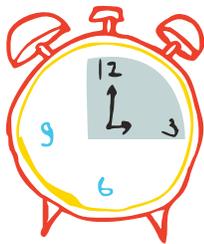
TRENDS IN CONTENT

YOU ARE YOUR MESSAGE

Yes, this section is influenced by trends, but it’s also a reminder on the best practices as we navigate spaces both old and new. For a number of years, it was just the message that mattered. Authenticity was achievable because we saw our co-workers and our leaders in their natural habitats (home). Now, we’re back in person—back on stage. The message and the vehicle of that message (you!) is literally and figuratively under the spotlight. Be thoughtful and empathetic and make sure how you deliver—your body language, your tone—matches the message being said. You have to show and tell.

OUR TAKEAWAYS:

- Ditch the notes.
- Less is more.
- Buy the book.



Most people have an attention span of 10–15 minutes for a standard presentation.¹⁹



3 in 4 employees see effective communication as the number one leadership attribute.



Yet, less than 1 in 3 employees feel like their leaders communicate efficiently.²⁰

19. Top Presentation Statistics for 2023.” Decktopus, February 9, 2023. <https://www.decktopus.com/blog/top-presentation-statistics-for-2021>.
 20. Jouany, Valène, and Kristina Martic. “18 Leadership Communication Trends to Look For in 2024.” Hailo, October 21, 2023. <https://hailo.com/blog/18-leadership-communication-trends-to-look-for-in-2020/>.

DITCH THE NOTES

“

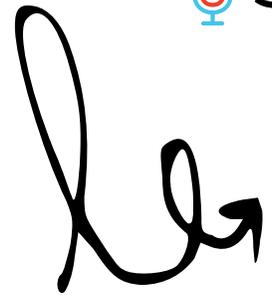
I see a lot of people struggle to present in person. They get tripped up on not having their notes. We've become so used to having a computer in front of us that we end up holding onto this crinkly piece of paper for dear life. It's a luxury to have everything in front of you. Now you have to be present in the room.

”

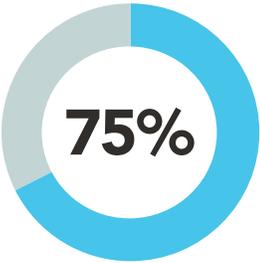
JOHN HUGHES
VICE-PRESIDENT, BROADCAST

RECOMMENDATION

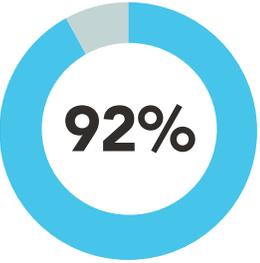
- Practice. Practice. Practice.
- Put down the notes.
- There is no such thing as a natural presenter (they all practiced).



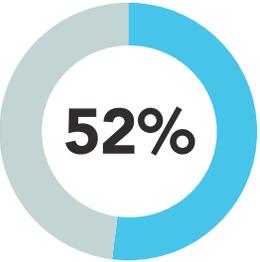
PANIC AT THE PODIUM!



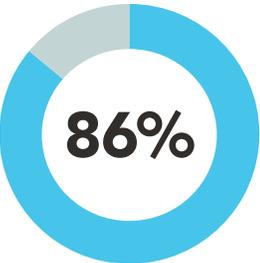
of people suffer from speech anxiety.²¹



of business professionals agree that excellent presentation skills are crucial to work success.²²



of event organizers increased attendance at their B2B in-person conferences in the past year.²³



of event organizers plan to maintain or increase the number of in-person events in 2024 compared to 2023.²³



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LESS IS MORE

“ Whether it’s prepping for a virtual live event or being onsite at a conference, our customers have focused on cutting down content. What was said in five sentences became two. And we loved it. You can always say something shorter. It’s a gift to yourself as the speaker, and more importantly, it’s a gift to your audience. Being concise forces you to be clear and increases the chances that your audience will remember your main points.”

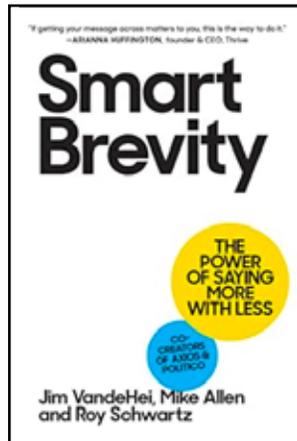
JASELIN DROWN
STRATEGIC ACCOUNT MANAGER, BROADCAST

RECOMMENDATION

- Make content shorter from the start. Instead of a 45 minute session, why not 25 or 30?
- Let the audience be your editor. What do they want to know? What will they find useful in their roles? Cut everything extraneous.
- Take a break between writing and revising. Bake in time to switch your mindset, whether that be a walk around the block or sleeping on it.

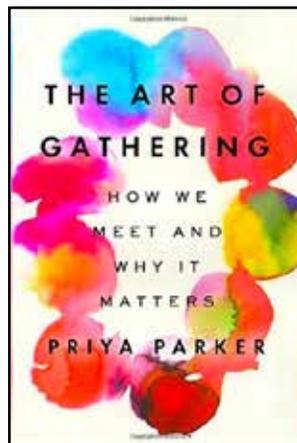
BUY THE BOOK

Our customers could not stop talking about these books.



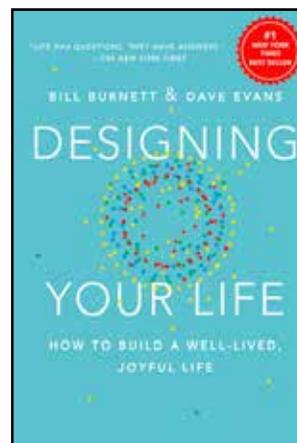
SMART BREVITY

Brevity is confidence.
Length is fear.



THE ART OF GATHERING

Rethink the purpose and
design of get-togethers.



DESIGNING YOUR LIFE

Experiment. Iterate. Prototype.
A fresh use for designed thinking.

PREDICTIONS FOR 2024 -

A LEADER'S POV

We're not in the business of making predictions—but we do see patterns. The trends we saw in 2023 will be just as, if not more, relevant in 2024.

Our CEO and Co-Founder, Maureen Taylor (Mo), has a few final thoughts on how 2024 is shaping up from a leadership perspective. Listen below.



OUR ADVICE TO YOU...

This is not one size fits all. Take these recommendations as a starting point. Be adaptable, flexible, and open to change.

Tailor these insights to your culture and unique team dynamics.

Make them work for you.

Remember, the goal is not to follow trends blindly but to use them as a compass and guide your team through the murky waters of uncertainty toward success.

HERE'S TO THE REST OF 2024

—ONWARD AND UPWARD!

Bring these best practices to life for your team, organization, or career. Reach out to us below for a free consultation.

GET IN TOUCH

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