

# Communicating a challenging reorganisation

A Megaphone & Quill Case Study



# Launching a new CEO at a turbulent time

## Megaphone & Quill Case Study

**A global edtech company in a fight for survival appointed a new CEO to turn the company around and position it for growth. The first few months of his tenure would be make-or-break for the company's fortunes.**

### Background

When a company needs radical change to stay afloat, employees naturally feel uneasy. But with the right message, delivered in the right way, corporate leaders can calm nerves and inspire the workforce to persevere.

Faced with massive disruption in its sector, a global education technology company needed to pivot—and fast.

The company's survival depended on swift and sweeping changes to its product portfolio, its operating model, and its internal structure. To realize these tough changes, the board hired a new CEO, a turnaround specialist drawn from outside the company.

### Challenge

Internally, the CEO would have to present the necessary change of direction with clarity, conviction, and compassion.

In so doing, he had his work cut out for him.

- + Amid a longstanding company culture that was more academic than agile, the workforce had grown used to the status quo.
- + Unlike his predecessors, the new CEO had not spent any of his career at the company, and his background was less technical and more commercial than those of previous leaders.
- + Almost everyone on the payroll was still working remotely, meaning that the CEO's first all-staff presentation would have to be delivered via video.

The company hired Megaphone & Quill's A.J. Wilson, a seasoned speechwriter, to help the new CEO present himself and his vision to sceptical internal audiences, thereby increasing the odds of a successful reorganisation.

*(A.J. also helped transform the company's external image, paving the way for its entry into new markets. See our case study Transforming a global company's image from fusty to future-focused.)*

# Accelerating buy-in

**Megaphone & Quill's A.J. Wilson developed a bespoke, story-forward approach for the CEO.**

**They saw him as a compassionate individual who understood the company and its workforce.**

**This smoothed the way for big changes to come.**

A.J. began by interviewing the new CEO to understand his communication style, gauge his preferences, and learn about his background.

He also sat down with a range of employees to find out about the company's business model and get a feel for how the workforce would view the impending changes.

A.J. discovered a CEO with a compelling personal journey, a visionary approach, and a fundamentally optimistic outlook; and a workforce whose main motivation was not the bottom line but the company's mission.

Finally, he found that, under the hood, the company was in fact highly innovative; it just hadn't been positioning itself as such.

Based on these insights, A.J. set about developing a range of written comms assets, including speech texts, briefings for live Q&A sessions, scripts for pre-recorded videos, and blog posts to go out under the CEO's byline.

These assets sought to connect the CEO's style and vision with the workforce's needs.

- + By telling personal stories showcasing the new CEO's passion for the industry, they humanised him and generated goodwill for him personally.
- + By highlighting the learners who were the ultimate beneficiaries of the company's mission, they set the stakes in an emotionally resonant way.
- + By emphasizing the company's previously unsung innovations, they showed how it could be well placed to thrive—provided it could reorganise to put R&D first.

The resulting assets could not have been applied to just any CEO implementing any turnaround at any company. Instead, they were tailored and unique. This would not have been possible without the extensive preparatory work A.J. put in to understand both the CEO and his audience.

**“A.J.’s work was crucial in helping the new CEO present a clear and empathetic vision early on. It was really powerful.”**

# A successful launch

## Paving the way for changes to come

A bespoke, storytelling-led approach turned out to be worth the extra effort.

Within a few weeks of the transition, the new CEO was receiving rave reviews from employees, who saw him as a compassionate individual who understood the company and its workforce.

One senior executive praised A.J. for his work, describing it as crucial to “getting out early and communicating with empathy for what the organisation had been through and what the people had been through.”

According to the same executive, A.J. helped the new CEO present “a vision that there is something bright and powerful and important inside this organisation, even though it had struggled. It was really powerful in the early days.”

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## Key results

1. Prepared the workforce to understand and accept a major reorganisation.
2. Built goodwill for the new CEO at a difficult time, increasing his influence.
3. Developed a clear, coherent vision for the future of the company.
4. Inspired the workforce to persevere through one of the toughest times in the company's history.

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## An approach that was worth the effort.

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# About us





# We help leaders communicate with clarity and confidence.

A.J. Wilson is a *New York Times* bestselling ghostwriter who has written for leaders in both the UK Parliament and the U.S. Congress. He knows a thing or two about cutting through the noise.

Rachel Madan's 25-year comms career has seen her advising everyone from big banks to world-famous art galleries. She's built a reputation for turning even the most technical concepts into inspiring messages.

**We'd love to work with you.**  
**Drop us a note at**  
**[hello@megaphone-quill.com](mailto:hello@megaphone-quill.com)**

# What we offer

## What to say

We help you craft a consistent corporate narrative that will resonate with your target audience.

- + Narrative & message development
- + Briefings & talking points
- + Speechwriting
- + Op-eds, articles, & books

## How to say it

We help you sound like the best version of yourself: Confident, polished, authentic, and persuasive.

- + Speech & presentation coaching
- + Influence & persuasion training
- + Executive presence workshops
- + Comms strategy

**What you say matters. So does how you say it.**

**We take care of both.**

**Our executive communications expertise combines writing, coaching, and strategy.**

**Thank you!**

