

## **Transforming HII: Communications Response to COVID-19**

### **Voice of Mike Petters, Huntington Ingalls Industries president and CEO**

The other part of the communications story, though, is that we want to make sure, from the very beginning, that with all of the noise that's out there, that you would be able to count on us to be able to tell you the truth and be able to tell you what's happening, when it's happening, how it's happening. We want to be your trusted source of information.

### **Steve Campbell, corporate director, enterprise communications, Huntington Ingalls Industries**

So we started using zoom to do video interviews with not only with our senior leadership and subject matter experts. We've started using zoom also to do media interviews. The other thing we learned is that we didn't need to have necessarily a broadcast quality production put together to produce a video to put out across the enterprise to communicate a certain issue.

### **Jaime Orlando, senior director, communications, Technical Solutions**

As we aligned with our corporate HII approach we immediately set up an internal portal where employees are able to hop online and understand the latest and what we understand as a business. And then about mid-March is when the intensity rose, when employees and everyone was really hearing about the coronavirus from every angle. We are still in the middle of an acquisition, right, so on top of all this we're preparing to welcome hundreds of new employees to HII.

So on day one, instead of having an in-person kickoff and welcome session, we took it virtual -- probably the first-ever virtual "Day One" for any acquisition. Instead of going to Pocasset at their headquarters, we did it online. We had Andy [Green] give an overview of the business and a welcome to our employees, and we had Dwayne [Blake] speak as well. All of our employees were on video, so at least we were still able to see each other and really go through a very extensive and real comprehensive orientation to the business. I think it was very effective, still being able to hear from our leaders and receive questions. We actually had at least an hour of just Q&A.

### **Bryan Moore, director, communications, Newport News Shipbuilding**

So there are tons of tools out there to communicate to our employees, but they have to be effective and we developed effective tools like our COVID-19 411 website, our ideas mailbox through email where you can submit ideas, and our social media pages. The president of our company, Jennifer Boykin, has a Facebook page, and the amount of ideas and feedback that we're getting is incredible to help us communicate the right information to our employees.

So, going forward in this new environment where we're socially distancing and keeping crowds down, one of the things that we also did was just a town hall -- a virtual town hall -- where the president of the company, Jennifer Boykin, talked to shipbuilders about their concerns and about their ideas on ways to handle this pandemic. It's a great way to get feedback, it's a great way to be safe and it's a great way to get new ideas that we need.

**Sheila Kowalewski, digital media specialist, Ingalls Shipbuilding**

Right before the pandemic in February we launched our new IngallsConnect app 2.0. We re-redid our platforms and it was a brand new app. Within two months of the coronavirus hitting and us starting to put more information on the app relating to coronavirus for our employees and their families, downloads had more than doubled that of our previous version of the app before coronavirus.

That kind of feedback told us that this is a great tool for reaching employees and their families. So with that knowledge we put more information, created a hub for coronavirus and made sure that all updates we send have push notifications. It's really become a great source of information or documents and just overall information for employees and their families.

**Steve Campbell**

So while the pandemic has put us all in a difficult situation it has allowed us to leverage the transformation culture that we began several years ago and has made us more agile and adaptive. It's an exciting time for communications it's an exciting time in the company because we are learning new ways to do business. We are learning new ways to communicate with all of our various stakeholders and it's going to be something we will continue as we move forward, even after the pandemic has come and gone. We will continue to adapt. We will continue to be agile. We'll continue to leverage the new tools that are out there to more effectively communicate with all of our audiences.