

# Get the answers you need to improve safety and security



When you send out an urgent notification, do you sometimes feel like the tree in the forest when no one is around? If there's no response, it's hard to know if your message was received, if direction is being followed or if your people are in danger. In short, it puts your organization at risk. Fortunately, by wisely using a variety of initiatives and techniques, you can measurably improve response rates to urgent notifications.

Here are ten ways you can increase response:

- 1 Construct messages consistently** – By following a consistent construction with all messages, you'll make the job easier for yourself (less chance of forgetting a critical piece of the message, like call to action). At the same time, you'll train your recipients and reinforce with them how to listen or read and respond to your message.
- 2 Identify notifications by purpose and source** – Use a meaningful subject line or introduction for all communications. Be clear and concise; state the issue and the action required. It's better to identify the sender by function, rather than name. If you use an ANI (automatic number identifier) to identify where the message is coming from, use it consistently.
- 3 Coordinate messaging during broad events** – Too many similar messages overwhelm recipients, particularly when they come from a variety of sources. Plan ahead who will take responsibility for launching the different notifications you may be faced with. Ask who will prepare and launch notifications for each department and who should receive the responses to the notification.
- 4 Keep content consistent** – Consistency counts in both message construction as well as content. Follow the same pattern when constructing notifications, even though your messages may be very different. Use consistent introductions; if you elect to validate recipients before delivering the message, then always do so. If the direction in one team is to *"press one to hear your message"*, every team should use that direction.
- 5 Enable the right number of initiators** – Too few, and you may find you don't have someone available when needed; too many, and you run the risk of overlapping notifications, over communicating and providing recipients with inconsistent information. Consider whether there should be an initiator at each location or if a regional initiator would work better. When the right person with the right authority launches an alert, you're more likely to avoid mixed messages.

- 6 **Train your team** – A key element is training. Most recipients want to know what is in the message for them, so focus on their needs, whether that is safety, convenience or something else. If you explain the purpose and value of notification before you send the first message, recipients will respond more favorably. Explain why a notification solution is being implemented, what the value is, how to recognize a notification from your system and how to respond.
- 7 **Announce tests in the beginning** – Testing your solution is important and is a part of training. Don't hesitate to announce tests in early stages. This sets expectations for recipients, encouraging them to practice answering and responding to see how the system works. Don't give specific times, but do tell them to be aware and that a response is expected. When a real alert is initiated, they'll know how to react.
- 8 **Run campaigns on your notification program** – When testing, develop campaigns or initiatives to engage everyone in the process. A light-hearted competition between executives or departments to kick up response rates works great as an unofficial training mechanism. Share the results to encourage improvements. Measure campaigns over time for recognition of noted improvements.
- 9 **Report and measure** – This is critical to both your campaigns and the long-term success of your solution. Sharing reports with other teams can drive greater response, and if you keep the results you can track improvement over time. Watch for specific patterns of participation; some people may never answer, or only before or after a certain time. This may be because they are unavailable or may indicate they don't feel comfortable with the system.
- 10 **Use your notification system** – By using your notification system regularly, you'll be instilling a valuable pattern. Response rates will grow as you broaden the variety of use cases and expand your communication modes (phone, SMS, etc.). Over time, useful patterns in response will emerge that will make your system more efficient and more valuable to your enterprise.

Use your notification system wisely and often to gain the maximum engagement from your teams. Learn more about how you can keep your business running smoothly with the help of notification at [www.mir3.com](http://www.mir3.com).

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