



# CREATING A CULTURE OF OPEN COMMUNICATIONS IS KEY TO WIDESPREAD SUCCESS

In order to be an effective franchisor with a successful franchise system, one has to make strategic moves that push the brand forward and keep a growing system thriving.

What's more, how these moves are communicated internally to the franchise system is crucial. From the top down, it is critical to maintain an open flow of communication where the team feels

comfortable sharing new ideas and best practices. Establishing a culture of openness will ultimately benefit operations and franchisee satisfaction and prepare the franchise for continued growth.

Being the CEO and co-founder of KLA Schools, it is my responsibility to establish a culture of communication while taking the entire system into account. No matter the size of the franchise it is essential that everyone understands the company's main goals and initiatives and how it is looking to achieve them. It is up to the franchisor to find the best way to communicate that message so that everyone involved knows what the company stands for and what the system is working toward.

*Establish a Culture of Open Communication Early and Keep it Thriving*

Communication among the KLA Schools franchise system evolved quickly due to national expansion and a shift in focus. Initially operating only in Florida, face-to-face interaction helped our young brand and group of franchisees aim in on our overall goal to expand into other states. Once we achieved this, the need for effective communication stayed constant while our operational methods changed.

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problem or creative feedback, the doors of communication need to remain open from start to finish. For instance, when it comes time to fine tune some items that impact the brand as a whole – such as the website or information brochures – invite your franchisees to the discussion table. Franchisees offer a perspective that comes from first-hand experience.

Another strategy that is helpful in creating a “win-win” relationship between franchisee and franchisor is creating a Franchise Advisory Council made up of select franchisees system wide. As the system grows, franchisees are selected by their peers to serve as their representative. KLA Schools is small enough that I am able to stay in communication with our franchises individually, but as the brand grows, establishing an advisory council will ensure that the relationship stays robust.

### Support One Another for Widespread Success

When an entrepreneur considers a franchise opportunity, it's important to prospective franchisees that they are investing in a brand that strives for collateral success and franchisee satisfaction. Access to the founder, executives or senior management and support should be easy and communication should be constant. Franchisees should not be handed a box of instructions and told to build without the proper tools and resources. Rather, on a regular basis, franchisees should have communication with the corporate team

to discuss best practices, new initiatives, etc. When franchisors and the franchisees work closely together as a team, it will ultimately lead to increased satisfaction among the system that can be passed onto prospective investors. Franchisors often forget that communication can flow outside of the company. Whether that message flowing out is positive or negative can have larger implications for widespread success.

### Communication Should Permeate All Aspects of Franchise

Many franchises pride themselves on having strong lines of communication but oftentimes that line of communication is a one-way street. This is often truer for larger franchise systems where a disconnected executive team has likely mastered effective modes of transferring information throughout their system. Yet, any discussion that originates from the franchisee toward the franchisor often gets lost in the shuffle or must pass through multiple channels, where the message can be misinterpreted. My franchisees have my cell phone number, and they know that communication won't be lost in transmission.

Communication within the company doesn't always have to be work-related. Franchisees may feel more open to express their thoughts when the personal connection is established. Therefore, encouraging personal interactions may prove more fruitful than guided discussions. I try to convey my true



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interest in the lives of the people as a part of my daily interactions.

### Show Support and Guidance Surrounding Franchisees

A traditional approach to franchising isn't the only approach and can even be a disadvantage when attracting the next generation of franchisees. There are different ways of running a promising franchise that doesn't include churning out worksheets and strict guidelines and then expecting every franchisee to fall in line or fail. It is important for franchisees to see and experience the support and guidance they have surrounding them.

A prosperous franchisor calculates every move and seeks to minimize risks while strengthening rewards for everyone who has invested in their brand. With this in mind, showing franchisees that their voice matters will go a long way. It is also vital for them to see that there are multiple people on the corporate team who are rooting for their success and that resources are available at their discretion. When the system succeeds, the brand thrives and that success will be passed on to all.

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<http://klaschoolsfranchise.com>