



Transcript for S16, E2 - 2026: AI and the future of internal communication, with Frank Dias

Intro: Welcome to the future of internal communication podcast. I'm Jen Sproul, CEO of the Institute of Internal Communication.

Since we launched this series in 2021, the world of work has been disrupted by event after event. A pandemic, geopolitics, AI, extreme weather events, remote and hybrid working, generational shifts, inclusion, diversity - the entire nature of how we work needs transformation.

This podcast explores opportunities for internal communication in the future of work. Internal comms is a critical function that helps organisations achieve lasting change, building trust and relationship between people, in pursuit of shared goals.

Please, join me, Dominic Walters and Cat Barnard as we dissect what this means for internal communication.

With relentless change the new norm, it's time to reimagine our profession.

Cat Barnard (01:01)

Hello and welcome to a brand new episode of the Future of Internal Communication podcast. I am Cat Barnard joined today by Dominic Walters. Unfortunately, Jen Sproul can't be with us today, which is a real shame because actually we are going to be discussing a topic that is on most people's agendas. I think you'd pretty much have to be working in an immune industry or sector not to be thinking about AI.

And we are delighted to welcome our guest today, Frank Dias. For those of you who attended the festival earlier this month, you might recognise Frank's name as he is an AI adoption and change consultant at the wealth management company, Quilter. And he and his colleague came and talked through a case study of how they're using AI within Quilter.

So alongside the work he does there, he's also the founder of AI by comms lab and he works in an advisory capacity to help organisations build sustainable AI capability through a human first lens, which I think most of us will agree is quite a novel approach in many instances. So Frank's been working for more than 15 years in communication and he has a very grounded



practical perspective to AI transformation, having led earlier AI integrations across four complex global organisations. So dare I say, I think, and I hope that you're here, Frank, to cut through some of the marketing froth that most social media platforms seem handicapped by at the moment. I like the fact that when we were talking about your background to that exact point, you told us your work focuses on cutting through vendor promises. So I'm looking forward to a very earthy conversation about the real organisational conditions needed for successful adoption of AI aligned to relevant use cases. Without further ado, thank you and welcome, Frank.

Frank Dias (03:24)

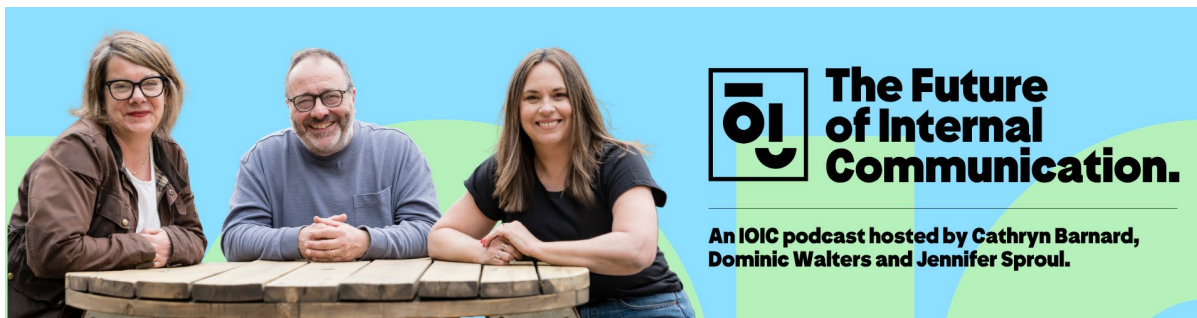
Lovely to be here with yourself Cat and Dom. Yeah and I hope to cover a bit of practical shares and insights as well in this conversation.

Cat Barnard (03:33)

And I think that is absolutely apposite and needed. There's not a day that goes by when there's not some attention grabbing headline about very dystopian, AI-fuelled futures. And part of that, I can't help but feel, must be driven by the eye-watering sums that have been so far invested into generative AI in particular. But I think that the media is quite confusing and uses lots of interchangeable terms inappropriately in a lot of instances. And it fills me with joy to think that we're going to have a conversation that actually just cuts through some of the nonsense. So first question. I know that you've been integrating AI into your internal communication workflows since late 2022, and you are now helping other comms, pros and teams fast track their AI knowledge. What is your take on where internal communicators are at in their AI adoption journey?

Frank Dias (04:43)

It's a really fascinating space at the moment in where our internal comms focus. Over my last three years, I think I've landed on that all of us are part of a spectrum. So it's not really around milestones, but actually a spectrum. And some of that will move left or right on that spectrum. And there's no right or wrong on this spectrum as much as the media as you mentioned and also from the AI labs and AI companies put a lot of hype up there for people which confuses. And the reality is when we start to work within an organisation, there's a treacle effect whereby things slow down, which is great. But for me, it's definitely the



spectrum. So if you're a comms professional and you're not moving yourself into at least a confident tier this year and next year, then you need to ask yourself, why aren't I doing that?

How do you help your organisation communicate about AI, and in particular through the different changes that AI is going to bring if you haven't built the competence yourself? So that's the uncomfortable truth or question I want every comms leader to sit with is around your level or experience working with AI needs to be almost greater than the lay employee out there.

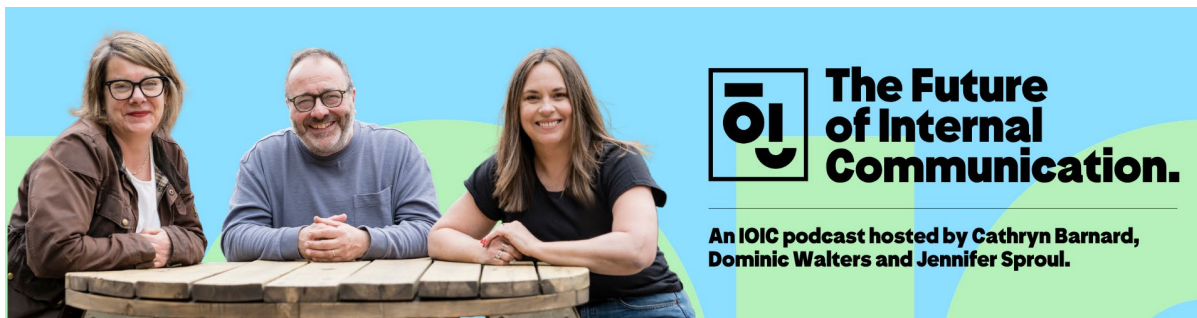
And I've in all my time so far with working with AI and training people on AI, I've got golden ratio, 20, 60, 20. And the 20 is the sort of low end, low to no use, low usage or no usage even, where either comms folk who have a really sort of good conscientious objectors, either with very high values, high morals, good conscience whereby they're led by the impact of AI in the world and the people and our craft, they are naturally inclined not to engage with this tool too much. And that can put a lot of challenges then in terms of you wanting and being motivated to be curious about that. There's also an impact in terms of the different groups of people who are either included or excluded because of this particularly around intergenerations and also intersectional groups as well. So there's quite a bit of a mix within that low end. And then the 60%, which is what I see mostly is that sort of high curious middle. So most of the profession is clustered in the middle. And I think we are starting to see and hear more from comms people sharing and working out loud, which is great. However, it's probably on a sort of low to medium level usage of just the approved AI tools that they're allowed to use. And a lot of times it's because they have to figure it out for themselves. And we also have this sort of shadow AI usage where if your workplace slows you down in terms of the AI tools they've given you, which might not be up to spec with what you've got on your phone, people might be naturally using their own personal access to AI as opposed to their improved AI and this is no different to shadow IT. So it's always been out there. However, this is all a comms challenge, so it really introduces and opens up governance and responsible AI usage risks of which comms people should be helping their different teams communicate about that within their own organisation. And then the final 20 % is really around this expanding practitioners at that top level.

So comms people who get it, they are building the habit, they're experimenting, they're getting to know the whole tool, not just the chat bot. They are doing more than just experimenting, which experiments are leading to real things. And so they're regularly using the right tools, have prompt libraries, identified user cases, creating tools with AI to help them automate and build consistency. So this sort of ratio 20-60-20 I think is realistic in terms of my view of where internal comms people are at with their AI adoption journey.



Cat Barnard (09:04)

Yeah, and I think that that chimes with anecdotal insights that we've heard at the IOIC and certainly broader desk research that we've uncovered in the last 12 to 24 months. And I it's a funny one, isn't it? It's a particular conundrum for internal communication, because actually one of the main inhibitors to successful AI adoption is fear. And fear comes from a lack of communication, bluntly. And so it does kind of behoove any internal communicator to get immersed in the topic, not only to identify how these tools can be used and harnessed to accelerate the I guess the pace and quality of internal communication, but also to your point, and I love the fact that you use the expression working out loud, leading by example, you can show colleagues outside of internal communication how you are using those tools and then provide those sensible guardrails for company-wide safe adoption which is one of the reasons why the IOIC produced its AI ethics charter. Gosh, when was that? I think that was early 2025. So there's kind of several bits to this, isn't there? There's the producing the information that the entire organisation needs to make sure that it is using these tools safely and within ethical guardrails that minimise the risk of proprietary information getting leaked outside the organisation or confidential information getting leaked into areas of the business that it shouldn't do and all the usual stuff. But then also working out how to use it efficiently and effectively. And one of the things that I think about in terms of this AI adoption conundrum, which I don't singularly narrow down to internal comms, I think it's a universal problem actually, is that nobody knows. And actually that for me does take some of the sting out of the tail because in as much as we do hear stories in the media about companies that are going to wipe out all of their headcount, their employee headcount and replace it with AI, those are stories written and published to titillate and foster fear, right? Whereas most organisations, I think, are looking at AI as an enabler rather than a replacement. I personally look forward to the stories that I think we are going to encounter when the companies that are confident and bolshy enough to think that AI will replace human expertise actually fall over. There is anecdotal data to show that that's already happened in certain instances, but it's a really thorny topic to unpack, isn't it? Because there's so much kind of caught up in it. But actually, you to come back to the beginning, we have to have clear and coherent messages about how we are going to use these tools. And those messages bluntly aren't going to come from IT. They're not going to come from HR. They're not necessarily going to come from the boardroom because the fact of the matter is everybody is a beginner.



Frank Dias (12:50)

You're spot on Cat and one of the reasons I ended up setting up my consultancy was to do with the implementation gap. And the reality is when we start to use AI within our workplace and our work, that really slows it down whereby we hopefully have time to think and also time to plan for what we're doing with it.

And I was just in a conversation with someone in our industry this week and they raised the point that they're starting to see our HR cousins be more on it with AI and being more strategic. And I said, I think I see that too. And my conclusion was that HR has always been more strategically placed in terms of its value within an organisation more than comms say. So from recruitment of talent to workforce planning to retention being in constant conversation with leaders about their priorities and talent needs. And I think I see a lot more advanced HR plus AI content on LinkedIn than comms plus AI content. And I think there's an opportunity here for us to try and build the destination that we want to realise whereby those companies that you've mentioned who are shedding head count, which are mostly tech companies by the way because they're throwing money at the AI and hence they need to recoup. Whereas the majority of companies are not doing that knee-jerk reaction because I think you're right, the majority of companies want to value human creativity and the expertise that we bring because that's our unique selling point more than a general AI tool which would just introduce AI slop to your customers and clients at the end of the day.

Cat Barnard (14:35)

Yeah, yeah, for sure. And I think the other thing to point out is that, at Working the Future, we're not singularly tapped into the internal communication community. So we're having lots of conversations about AI adoption through the sales marketing stack or what it might mean, in HR, as you pointed to even what does AI adoption mean for people that work in technology, right? What does that mean? Because, I think we're probably all aware of concerns arising from the software development community where actually software development can now be undertaken by AI. So all those people that thought that computer science was going to be a safe career aren't necessarily feeling quite as confident of that position now. But the thing that is coming through loud and clear for me is that any profession that has traditionally focused on human relationships of which communication is one, right? Actually, the onset, the arrival of AI is necessitating a doubling down on human relationship because stakeholders, whether they're internal or external, want authenticity and transparency and real interaction with real human beings and that presents such a profound opportunity for internal communicators I think.



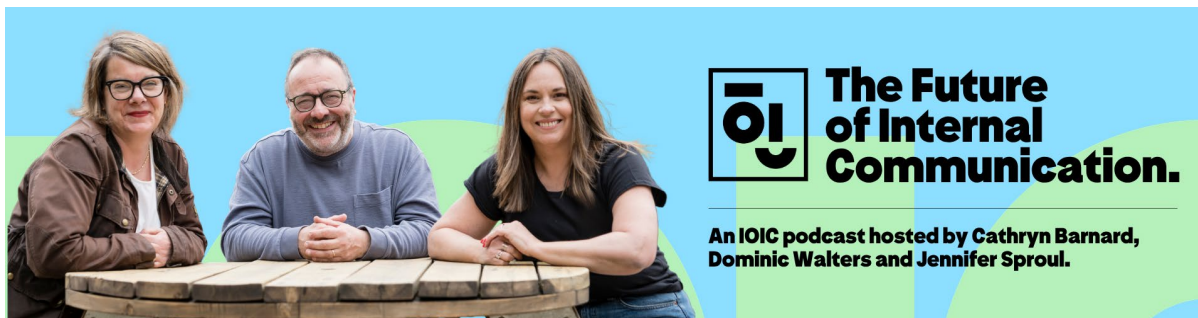
Frank Dias (16:09)

You definitely want to dial that up because that's how you stand out. And when we start to look at our profession, we've always said in many a comm server I've seen that our greatest value is being more strategic with comms. However, we always have the block of we don't have enough time to do it. And then when this tool comes along to have the potential to free up time because of all the things that you don't want to be doing so that you can spend your time on strategic value added comms, whatever that is, then why aren't we jumping at that? Why aren't we really embracing that and being hyper curious and doing more experimentation? And the challenge is we've always got such a heavy to-do list. And I see it and hear it from different comms people that to make the time to learn, do the experiments, evaluate, because you've got to evaluate and test before you can get to a fine-tuned approach. And to learn all the tips and hints and techniques takes time. Unfortunately, comms people, we don't have enough time. So how do we carve that out? It's a real challenge.

Cat Barnard (17:18)

It is a real challenge and it's a conversation that I was having with a client yesterday. It's a funny time, isn't it? Because a decade ago, as an example, Google used to talk about the time that it allowed all employees to allocate to non-work related projects. I think it was like 20 % of their work week and I don't know what happened to that project, that initiative, I don't think it runs today.

But actually, the literature tells us that some of Google's most prolific and profitable endeavors came from that 20 % time allocation. I can't think of any of them off the top of my head, but I know I'm right in that data point. And actually, if we were to do the same thing again within organisations, I say we, as in if our leaders, if those leading the organisations were to allow people to just play in sandboxed, safe, containerised ways, I think the leaps and bounds of progress would happen far more quickly. But instead, unfortunately, due to a whole host of external market forces that have got nothing really to do with any lay person, because what impacts can we possibly have, us mere mortals, on, I don't know, conflict in the Middle East or the crazy rantings of world leaders and so on. But the fact is that all of those external parameters lead us into this place where we think, oh my God, we must be working harder and demonstrating more impact, et cetera. And yet the polar opposite is required right now. It's that slow down to speed up thing, isn't it, that absolutely needs to happen.



Frank Dias (19:06)

Yeah, there's definitely some very important points there. And unfortunately, where we then start to look at AI, helping with efficiency and time back, we then immediately default to fill it with more stuff, because we're also trying to prove our value and show our value within the business. It definitely takes leadership, I think, of comms teams to really start to unpack these challenges and try and bake in innovation moments for your team because the AI is innovating every day and the more you start to develop a future comms team that bakes in innovation then you're starting to build intention into the purpose of your team and you're starting to always question why are we doing the status quo, is there new ways that we can experiment and bring in, do pilots, start to treat the organisation like a lab and really trying to design modern future comms teams, almost like mini scientists within the communication architecture of an organisation.

Cat Barnard (20:17)

I love that. And I feel seen and validated because those were exactly the topics that we discussed in February at our Internal Communication Leaders Forum in London. And you also just reminded me of a thing, and I'm going to use this opportunity both to pass the baton to Dom and as our in-house historian, potentially throw him under the bus. Because Dom, I think it was John Maynard Keynes who said in the 1930s that technology would come on so thick and fast that there would be a point in the future where we literally were working, I don't know, eight, ten hour work weeks. I'm fairly sure it was him that said that. But our human condition exactly to Frank's point is to see this, I don't know, this time opportunity laid out in front of us and to fill it with vacuous tasks.

Dom (21:10)

Yes, I think you're right. I think it was Keynes. Didn't he also say that in the long run we're all dead, which I think was a fantastic quotation. When we start to think about how quickly we need to apply stuff.

Frank Dias (21:23)

Taxes and death, Dom. There two guaranteed things in life, taxes and death.



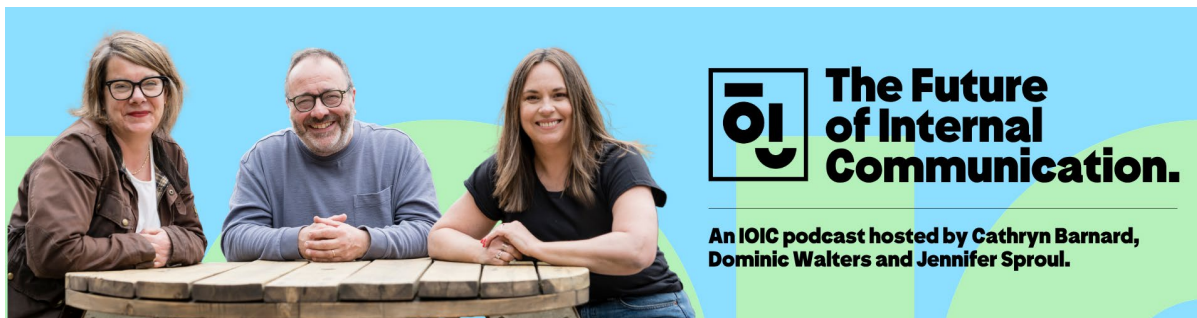
Dom (21:24)

That's true, yes. I've really enjoyed the conversation you and Cat have just had. And I've got some supplementary questions, one of which is an historical thing, to be honest. Because when we have conversations with communicators about the adoption of AI, the whole fear thing, which we've already talked about, is a big issue. And people try to draw analogies with previous ways of technology, previous innovations. So I've heard people say when rail first started in the 19th century, lots of people said that if you go above 15 miles an hour, the human being couldn't breathe. I think people said when cars started that people would be so reckless they couldn't possibly control a huge high speed machine. That's why we had the Red Flag Act where people walked in front of the red flags. So I've heard lots of analogies.

A couple of questions. The worst is, is there a good analogy that you can use to help people start to mentally frame AI, or is it so new and radical and different that analogies don't really work?

Frank Dias (22:24)

There's a whole range of analogies. The one I remember using early was around, we're flying the plane and building it at the same time. And whenever you're going through the beginnings of the emergency procedure, they always say, put on your life jacket first before helping others. And what I take from that is you need to learn this stuff yourself before you can help others and before you can help your team. And the other analogy I like to say, what I'm trying to do with analogies is to try and set your framing, your mindset framing in all of this, because that's something in your control. The other analogy I like to sort of mention is really around just being able to really think about it from the point of view of victim into into architect in terms of the way you think and your mindset. So it's fine at the beginning when you are raising all these points and there is a victim point to this, which is fine because this is just like you mentioned already, count the human condition. And we're seeing this challenge in inverted commas attack our craft and what we do. And we're all in the boat at the same time with everyone because it's not discriminant. However, the shift that I found myself over the last few years is switching my point of view, my framing of how I look at AI into more of an architect's mindset. What am I doing to build success for myself and success for others? And that framing allows you to look at many of the different challenges such as environmental impact is whenever I'm in a conversation with different comms people or other teams, the environmental impact of AI always comes up. And I again, supporter of



trying to be more greener in this planet, victim mindset initially to start with, but then I needed to change my point of view to say, I need to be making informed decisions about this and not just relying on the media promotion of climate impact of AI. And when you start to think what is out there about this information that I can trust, it is all over the shop. And so I ended up creating a guide for myself to just bring it all together. Everything from the supply chain impact to energy, water, being curious about data centers and just really trying to see what are AI companies doing to talk about it. And this allowed me to take control of what I was hearing on the outside to actually be more informed to make decisions whereby I can now pick and choose different models which take up less energy more than thinking models, which means then for certain tasks I will choose lower quality models because I can still add my value to outputs. It can still help me generate a first draft quickly and then I can still iterate and bring in my judgment and my taste of what good effective comms looks like. But it's through being informed and being in control that you can then start to shift and then attach yourself better to it.

Dom (25:42)

There are two things you've said on this conversation which has shifted my mindset on this and stuff I should have thought of already. As communicators, we say our role is to help people make sense of stuff. That's the future for us. It's always been the case, but it's particularly the future for us. I think what you're saying is, first of all, you've got to understand AI in order to help other people understand it. That's a really interesting take on it. I think the second thing is our job is to help the organisation make sense of it. In my dealings with clients and with other people as well. There are lots of senior people who are looking at this, quite a lot of fear as we said before and I think, pick up what you and Cat were saying, there are a number of people who are prepared to feed that fear for their own gain. To be honest I think there's a lot of fog, there's always fog when new stuff comes in and there's a lot of that plus it's starting to clear a little bit. So I think we've got a really important role to play there and I think that's right going from being a victim. I know some of us think we've got this breathing down our neck, but if we shift from being a victim to saying we've got a real role to help the organisation make sense of it, I think that's a really positive thing. And it also links with what you said earlier, **which is our role has always been to help organisations bring strategy into action, bring to life.** That's still the case. We may choose different methods of doing it, but it's still the case. But I was going to ask you, let's look on the flip side. Well, I am going to ask you, having seen organisations and your own organisation and the clients you work with adopting AI, what are some of the big pitfalls



that we need to be aware of as communicators so that when we see them we can anticipate them or work around them?

Frank Dias (27:12)

I'm very connected to this topic. The biggest pitfall is you, is me, is us. We're the roadblock. Because at the end of the day, this juggernaut of impact is happening with us or without us. And so the biggest pitfall really for me is us and our mindset, which is why I stick to mindset as the main thing. And mindset controls behaviour.

And it's really around trying to understand how do we move from that sort of perfection in terms of, I guess, effective communication to try and move us, our behaviour towards more exploration and curiosity. And the most important thing I've seen from our comms industry is we've always been curious people, which is what got us in trouble in the first place to become communicators. And that curiosity should be our USP in actually being able to pick up and learn this type of technology, this tool to really help us. And one of things that I did early was I saw it as a comms tool. When it first arrived in November 22 with ChatGPT, it was all about the written word. It was all about clear articulation of a brief. And then the outputs were all words. And so I always positioned it in my head that this is a communication tool. I'm still the chief editor of this communication tool. So this then helped me to pick it up quicker, learn it a lot more. And in particular, really trying to start to turn it on its head in terms of how can I use it to help me enhance what I do, my knowledge, my judgment, and in particular, really trying to dial up my expertise, dial up my articulation, using AI more as a coach to help with that. So yeah, **I think the biggest pitfalls at the end, they are very much around us. We don't have enough time, we don't have time to learn, we don't understand the capabilities, limitations of these tools.** When really actually if we start to look inward and appreciate our own self-reflections and our own capabilities and limitations and then start to join the dots up whereby a tool like AI can actually pick up on our limitations and the limitations of AI is really the dial-up of our capabilities. So I think all of that really is for me in my three years doing this are the pitfalls of us.

Dom (29:38)

I've got to pass back to Cat in a minute. As you're talking, I'm thinking about the old joke that the most dangerous part of a car is the squidgy bit behind the steering wheel. I think there's a lot in what you're saying. I suppose what's quite reassuring about that is it's something within our capability of shifting because we can control our mindsets, can control



the information we have, can control how we apply stuff, can control what we learn, we can control how we share it. So on the one hand what you say is quite daunting because it's a big responsibility for us, but I also think it's quite reassuring that it's within our capability to do something about. So I think that's a good thing. I'm not saying it's easy to do, but it's something we can approach and we can start to rationalise. I'm going to pass back to Cat now.

Cat Barnard (30:19)

It is so interesting just listening to the conversation because as you were talking, I was thinking about my own experience of using generative AI and I will not lie. I have been massively concerned about the carbon footprint. I'm massively concerned about the energy, the consumption and water consumption of these gargantuan data centers. And what worries me most is about flippant use of AI. I personally don't think that we should be using generative AI to tell us what we want for dinner or to make an image of the Pope in the puffer jacket, because that was one prolific one like several years ago and all of that stuff. But I just want to share a tiny story with you and listeners, because I hope it's helpful.

Against that backdrop of my own concerns and anxieties, I didn't use AI for a while, which I was beating myself up for because I was advocating for sensible AI adoption without necessarily adopting it, and I was starting to feel somewhat hypocritical. However, I now use Claude, and I really have been blown away by Claude and the extent to which I can now gain access to information at pace and scale in a way that I was never able to before. And as an example, I'm working on a project with a partner at the moment and we were talking about wanting to start business conversations with law firms.

And we literally ran a prompt and said, right, 30 mile radius from where we live, law firms of this size employing this amount of people and this type, da, da, da, da, da. And it just came up with a list. Literally you would have spent five years ago, weeks and weeks scraping the internet. And all of a sudden we had this extensive list that we could then calibrate and so on. So that's one example of, my goodness me, this thing can cut hours out of your life instantaneously. But then another example of how I used it this week, I was prepping for a call and I was slightly jaded. I'd been traveling, I was thinking to myself, my goodness, I haven't done enough preparation for this call. What am I going to do? What are the key points I want to address? I know, I'll ask Claude, right? So I go to Claude and I say, right, I've got this meeting and this is what I want to address. And it came up with six really good discovery questions. And I was like, my response to it was like, my goodness, this is amazing. This is the true embodiment of having an intern doing this work for you. And then Claude



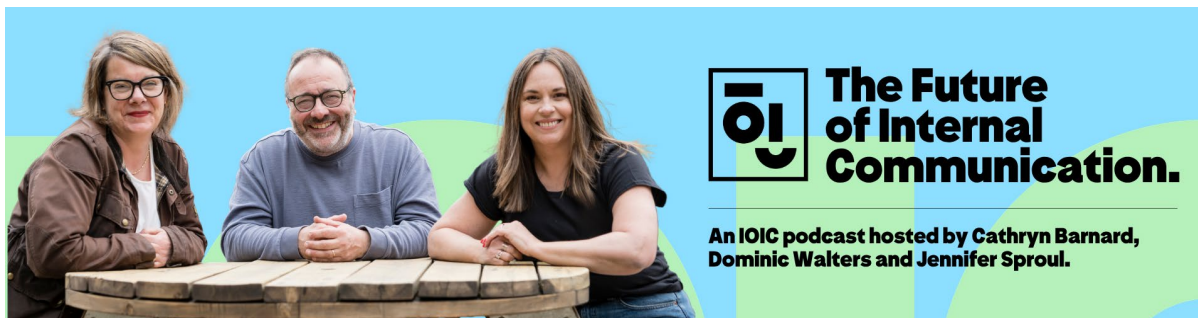
said to me, would you like me to turn this into a document for you, a briefing document? And I said, yes. And then I sat and watched Claude literally grunting and writing line prompts for probably about three and a half, four minutes. And that was the point at which I thought, okay, this is really interesting. I've not noticed that before. I had all the information that I needed before it asked me if I wanted this structured document. I could have cut the points into my own Word doc and saved all of that excessive processing, but I couldn't have learned that, Frank without doing it. I couldn't have learned what is a good use and what is not a good use without having been through the experience of developing quite profound climate anxiety as I watched this thing grunt and churn and moan. You have to learn by doing. That's the only way through, right?

Frank Dias (34:47)

Yeah, it's great example, both in terms of elements of addiction, both in terms of how these models have been built on psychology to give you treats. Severy iteration of prompts that you use, it will always put a question at the end to say, would you like X, Y, Z? And it's great that you notice that point, because it's very easy for us to sometimes just cognitively offload some of the activity and work onto these tools because its initial output is quite mesmerising. And particularly when you think it's done a good job, you think, yeah, continue. Let's see what else you can do. When really, the secret is to slow it down, really dial up human judgment, and take back control of certain tasks and aspects which should be yours to own more so than offloading everything into these tools. And they're built to please at the end of the day, but it's up to us to start to build in some guardrails of ourselves. And being super self-aware of that allows you to then start to build the habit of intentional pauses when you're working so that you can then start to do some thinking around what you do next.

Cat Barnard (36:01)

That is so, so interesting. And I love what you said. I mean, it was mesmerising. I was like, yeah, sure. I'm going to click yes, because what it just did was so amazing. The next thing will also be amazing. And yet it wasn't. And actually, when I got the output document, which was set up as if I would have sent an agenda to a customer. I looked at it and I thought, I wouldn't send it because it was clearly produced by an AI and it was so out of tone. But yeah, it was the grunt work that had gone into it. So this conversation is entirely fascinating. And I guess we've danced around a lot of what I'm about to ask you, but to pack a full

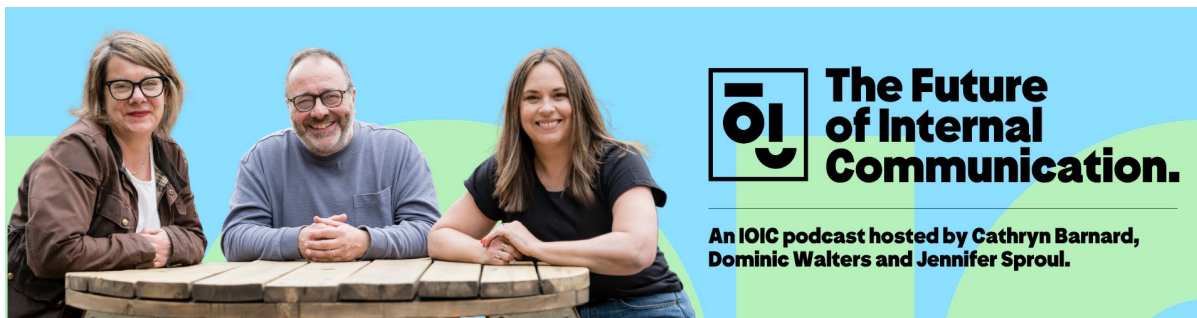


punch. If there's somebody listening who hasn't started using generative AI in earnest yet, what advice would you give for the easiest way to get started?

Frank Dias (37:02)

It's a really important question that I've had to answer in a few different occasions. To your point around the learning is the doing. So based on that, what I would advise to anyone who's either early in this or just starting out is actually to look inward and actually carry out a self assessment first by working with your AI tool of choice. Frame in it that you are going to do a collaboration with it as an insight partner or a coach and then start to tell it that you want to carry out a self assessment of your capabilities and limitations related to your career and aspirations as to what you want to achieve professionally. And then also state that you also have some worries about AI and that you want to list those.

And add that you also want to cover where you think AI could potentially help enhance what you do. But you also want to state that as well what you don't want it to do as well with AI. And it's this sort of work with an AI tool as a coach rather than an answer engine, whereby you're looking for guidance in how best to ensure that your human judgment and decision making remain there as core to your work with AI. And in particular around, you don't want it, as I mentioned, to just be this answer machine. But you don't know how best to set this up with you working with such an AI tool, that you really sort of want some help with it. And where I sort of add to a prompt like this, and I'll be able to share a prompt that you can share with the listeners when they listen to this recording, I'll share the prompt for this. I also add in, keep asking me relevant questions based on all the above until you're about 95 % confident that you have everything that you need to actually answer and work with me in trying to unpick this self-assessment. And using AI as sparring partner rather than always trying to help you do all your work is a great way to actually see the potential of it and in particular to look at value add back to yourself first. And if you can start to do a piece of work like that first, this will start to open your imagination about starting to look at your work in a different way working with a tool like this. So this is a great way of training you through doing action is learning. And then the other thing I would add here is really around that mindset connection back in. Five uses for me around AI is human only work whereby certain work should always stay with you. Example, sensitive leadership conversations, ethical judgments whereby your presence and knowledge and understanding is vital, not the AI's. But then working and choosing certain pieces of work and tasks with AI as a collaborator where you work together like I've just given that example, or AI as an augments whereby you're doing work live and you actually want AI to be with you there doing that work live, or AI as an assistant where you then start to delegate certain regular



repetitive tasks to AI which it can then do where you then bring in your check and verification to approve. And then finally is working with AI as an automation whereby you're actually starting to build out multiple tasks of routines, repeatable work that you want to run through as a loop or as a regular feature that you start to then get the insights from that to then help you continue your work. So those are two spaces around really trying to do the doing to actually help with your learning and that will fast track your speed of that, open your eyes basically.

Cat Barnard (41:04)

Wow. I would never ever in a gazillion years have thought of that and that has blown my mind. So thank you so much. I'm sure that listeners are going to be thinking about AI in an entirely different way now.

Frank Dias (41:18)

Yeah, and so just one more thing to add with that. This is where it's all limited by your imagination. So coming back to the pitfalls, our imagination needs to be reawaken. And when we become adults, we tend to get it closed quite a bit. When we're kids, so open. This, if you start to frame that AI can help unlock some of your imagination, that then opens up the possibilities of so many things. So for example, after you've done that self-assessment work, ask it to then create a learning programme for you based on your entire learning preferences. Add in fun quizzes, but start to design a learning programme that's bespoke for you to help you learn how to use AI better with your work.

Cat Barnard (42:05)

Love that.

Dom (42:06)

Wow, Frank, I think you've, as Cat said, you've helped change the way I see things around AI. And I think you've covered a huge number of things around how it frees up time. Yes, it does do that, but it also, we should start to think about unleashing our imagination. How it's gonna help us do different things. I love those five different clear ways in which we can use it. I think that's a great template we can use to start thinking about how we do it. I love the



idea about learning more about it because that makes us more confident, but also equips us to do the other thing you said, which is help organisations start to make sense of AI and we used as well. That's been a very, very useful practical conversation. We need to come into land. So can I ask you a final question, which is obviously this series is called the Future of Internal Communication. So bearing in mind your work with AI and particularly within internal comms, in a few sentences, how do you see internal comms looking in say three years time? So what's that? That's 29, isn't it? So 2029, what do you see?

Frank Dias (43:05)

There's too long a horizon. The real window is really this sort of two years, 18 months maybe, particularly if we want to sort of shape where communication is going to land. And which is why I think I said at the beginning around the need for us to start designing the destination that we want to realise. Because when you start to do that, then you can work backwards from there about what you need to do today then get to that destination. And I think so many comms teams, comms leaders are not doing that work to start to work with your team together. You don't need to do that in isolation. Work with your team together so that as a collective team exercise, as a team day, you start to map out a destination whereby your team are leveraging AI and you start to decide on what do we use it for? What's its purpose and what don't we use it for? What do we want AI to do to help our team versus what we don't want it to do to help our team. And when you start to map out, I guess, a mini charter for your team, this allows you to take back control. And then you can start to look at what do I do then as a team? So make this a team sport that I can then start to really set up. And the other flip side to this is not everyone is going to be the same or can afford to do AI, particularly where we've got high large companies who are show in and lead in the way. Not every company can afford to do all this activity. So I see the pace of change relatively in terms of us taking control of ourselves and our destiny. Two years, 18 months. Do something within that two years and 18 months. But there is a longer tail to really see the genuine impact.

Not-for-profit companies can't just immediately switch over to this. Smaller SMEs can't just immediately switch over. Large firms, if they've got the capital, then they'll throw it at it. But the reality, I think, is going to be patchy. And I don't think it would just be an instant obliteration of comms roles. However, we shouldn't stay still. We should and must, for our own selves and our duty to future generations, we need to really make sure that we learn this well so that we are informed and have the knowledge to help the next generation be successful. Because at the moment, it's a really sad state of affairs at the moment, whereby AI is getting all the headlines and the push from companies is to say, everyone use it, just



use it. And we're starting to look at and see the impact on jobs for new starters and early careers and we need to do something about that. We're that generation whereby they need to stand on our shoulders to be successful. We need to really take that by the horns. Therefore, we need to know it now. I'm really in that 18, two years to make something different to help others rise up.

Dom (46:05.09)

Well, that's a fantastic call to action to conclude. I think you have given us some great ideas and tools to help us take back control. That's really important to manage the use of AI and not be scared of it. And I think to plan. And I love the idea. And it's something we as communicators tell in our senior managers. We should start from where we want to be and work backwards from that and that's a really good idea as well. So Frank thank you very much indeed. Perhaps you'll come back in a little while and we'll see how we're doing as a profession and general and review things then. But for now thank you very much indeed. Thanks for all your ideas and thoughts.

Frank Dias (46:44)

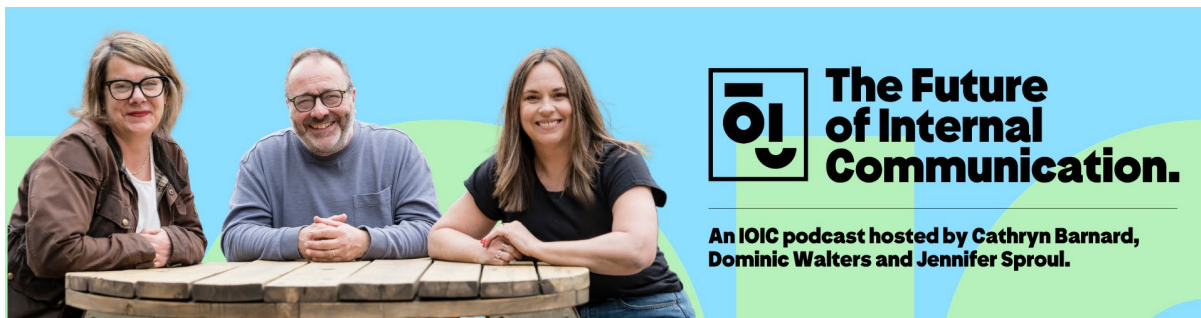
Thank you and I hope to hear about your self assessments as well next time.

Cat Barnard (46:48)

No pressure. Honestly, this has been a game changing, illuminating conversation. And I echo Dom when I say, please do come back at some point and we can dissect some more of it. I feel like we've probably just scratched the surface. Thank you, Frank, for coming. And when the episode goes live, we'll release show notes with the prompt that you promised and also let people know where they can find you in case they want to start a direct conversation with you.

Frank Dias (47:15)

Yeah, super. Yeah, love to.



Cat Barnard (47:18)

Thanks ever so much.

Frank Dias (47:20)

Yeah, thank you both. Have a good weekend. I enjoyed the conversation.