

There's still six weeks to go before CiB officially becomes the Institute of Internal Communication but work has already started on the first piece of research which will carry the IoIC brand. **Louise Birkett** reports

*Financial services is first target for new partnership studies*

# INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES RESEARCH BREAKTHROUGH



CiB has entered into a research partnership with employee communication, engagement and change specialist Gatehouse, which covers its next two State of the Sector reports and possibly more besides.

"We identified research as a vital element of IoIC very early on," says national chairman Dominic Walters, "so I'm delighted that the base data from this research will coincide with the Institute's launch."

The results of Gatehouse's first State of the Sector survey – which looked at professional services firms – were featured in November's edition of *communicators* magazine and the response was overwhelming.

Gatehouse co-founder Simon Wright explains: "We had a lot of people saying 'why don't you do my sector?' The more sectors we do, the more comprehensive our coverage and, ultimately, we shall be able to pay each of them return visits. Eventually we shall have a library of research that will provide a basis for sector comparison and show how internal communication is maturing."

Work is already under way on a survey of the financial services sector, which includes activities such as insurance as well as retail and investment banking. It will be followed up by a public services sector study – including government, local government, civil service and the NHS – later this year.

And where the first State of the Sector survey relied on quantitative research, this time round Simon and fellow Gatehouse co-founder Lee Smith are planning to add qualitative research to the mix via face-to-face and telephone interviews with senior internal communication practitioners.



Results from the first State of the Sector survey as seen in *communicators* in November

"Quantitative results are extremely useful for providing a snapshot of what is happening," explains Lee, "but they don't allow you to explore why something is being done. By bringing in the qualitative research we shall be able to provide even more depth and uncover some really rich insights."

**timetable**

- »Mid-April: survey opens
- »April 26 – May 5: qualitative survey interviews take place
- »12/13 May: headline figures revealed
- »June: publication of full results.

*A donation from each completed survey will be made to I CAN, a charity which works to support the development of children's speech, language and communication skills.*

Gatehouse's first State of the Sector survey was backed by the Managing Partners' Forum so why the new partnership with CiB?

"One of the lessons we learned from the first survey was that demand for this type of research is far greater than we anticipated," says Simon. "We realised we needed a partner which spanned all sectors and which carried authority within the communication industry overall, rather than a particular sector. Once it was agreed that CiB was to become the Institute of Internal Communication, it became our number one choice despite a lot of interest from other organizations."

The partnership was backed unanimously by the CiB Board and there is an option to extend it for a further year if both parties are happy. Although the research itself will be conducted by Gatehouse, a team from CiB collaborates with them in setting the questions. ➡

