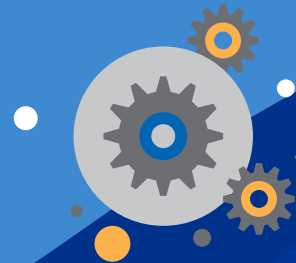


Build performance through your communication of Strategy.

How well do you do it?



2nd article in our
Performance Series.

Build Performance through your Communication of Strategy.

Keep the organisation Strategy Focused

What can make or break a customer or supplier partnership? Sink a potentially successful relationship? Cause confusion amongst stakeholders?

Answer: employee behaviour.

Your front-line employees are the key to your successful strategy execution. Strong organisations know that the key to strategy is the engagement, skill and focus of their staff. They put effort into communicating strategy to employees – over and over and over again, in different formats and through different channels.

How do you rate as a Strategic Communicator? Many organisations are nervous about communicating strategy. But **use these four steps** and you are on the way to success.

Strategy is executed by your people. Employees interact with customers and peers – senior execs do not have the same access. A strategy-focused organisation understands that strategy is everyone's job. Reflect for a moment. Is your culture reflective of your strategy? If not, how is your strategy executed? Would it be possible to build performance by changing the approach to a strategy focused organisation?

It is said that 95% of staff do not understand their organisation's strategy. Employees are not informed,



do not understand how it relates to them, and are not incentivised to find out. Execs often treat their strategy with a level of secrecy, afraid that revealing it to employees will also reveal it to their competitors. However, if communication is structured and designed carefully, following the four steps below, your workforce will be engaged and focused on achieving strategic goals.

Employees of companies that invest in strategy communication say that they see value in understanding it and the overall performance requirements. This knowledge, they claim, helps them perform their jobs better and support other aspects of the strategy that they are not directly involved in.

Strategy Communication requires a comprehensive approach.

Understanding the strategy is a prerequisite to **executing the strategy**. When employees understand strategy and their role in it, they make better decisions when dealing with customers, partners, peers and volunteers.

Creating this understanding is not easy or quick. Educating staff about the strategy and progress towards achieving it takes more than a brochure, pep talk or report. It requires a comprehensive approach that makes strategy the central agenda around which all internal communication is organised.



Follow these four steps to maximise strategy execution success.

An effective strategic communication program contains four steps.

Step 1

Define the Target Audience and Key Communication Objectives

Each part of an organisation has different information goals and needs. The first step is to identify each distinct audience and assess its particular needs.

Step 2

Identify the Message Streams

The next step is to identify the message streams that will accomplish your communication objectives. For example, four streams might be: "About the Strategy"; "About the Numbers" (financial results); "Reporting Results" (progress on strategy); "Impact of the Individual on Performance" (how everyone's efforts helped strategy – e.g. faster turnarounds).

Step 3

Select and Design the Channels

For a message to be retained, it must be reinforced. For a culture shift, a message must be reinforced again and again. Design messages to change behaviour. 7*7 Communication is a phrase that promotes saying the same message, seven different ways and seven different times. Select the right array of media and appropriate frequency for your messages and audiences, so that it is understood and people are moved to act on it.

Step 4

Measure, Solicit Feedback, and Foster Learning

Gathering employee feedback on your program is vital to verify that the message is being received, understood and acted on by the target audience. It will also indicate whether your message needs modification or the channels need to be redirected. Email surveys, short workshops and e-suggestion boxes are good mechanisms.

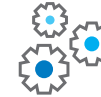
Employee surveys are a great source of statistical data on whether your program is on track. Ask substantive questions, and responses will indicate whether the message is getting through. Also observe the quality of dialogue with your employees. What questions do they ask?

If you want to build performance, create a viable and sustainable business, strengthen confidence in your organisation, and outperform your competitors, communicate clear strategies and values, reinforce those values and strategies in everything the company does, and allow people to act, trusting they will execute consistent with the values and strategy.

Indra Process and Performance Consulting works with you to achieve change and build performance.



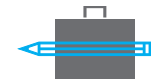
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