

The future belongs to the strategic communication department

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Previously, communication tasks mainly covered press contact and employee magazines. Today, communication is also about management and organisation. In addition to a sharp pen, skills in strategic communication are key. In short, understanding of the business.

Company communication departments should learn how to brand themselves internally in the organisation as strategic business partners. They should serve as a strategic lever for the company, and more or less represent the missing link to the stakeholders. However, this requires that the company is aware of the new skills of the communication departments.

The company foundation of *mission, vision, values* forms the frame in which any professional communication work is based. Communication departments should recruit colleagues from marketing and HR, and include them as professional sparring partners. This allows the communication department to take on a strategic role in the company and become a driver of the business. However, it is necessary to show the colleagues the benefits of strategic communication.

Strategic communication covers three areas: integrating communication into the business strategy, ensuring commitment, motivation and efficiency by communication, and strengthening the company brand by communication. The instrument is a communication strategy that maps out the overall communication drive in relation to news, target groups, and internal and external media.

In particular for companies with less known products, communication should play a strategic role in the efforts to promote the company's employer brand.

Internally, the success criterion for the communication managers is to ensure that both management and employees think of the communication department as a strategic sparring partner instead of a group of text reviewers. However, this also puts the communication department to work.

The communication department should get out of the starting block and proactively propose both analytical and practical communication tools that make the employees and management aware of the value of the communication people's efforts.

For external communication, a press plan is a good starting point for the branding of the company and to signal the employees' capability of knowledge sharing and thought leadership.

Integrated communication, where the communication department cooperates with both marketing and HR, is the answer in 2008+ for communication managers wishing to penetrate the business to promote the core messages to the appropriate stakeholders in the surrounding community.

The trick for the three functions is to join into branded integrated communication without losing track when launching cross-disciplinary projects in the company. All good intentions on efficient communication will fail if the communication people of the company do not lead the way.