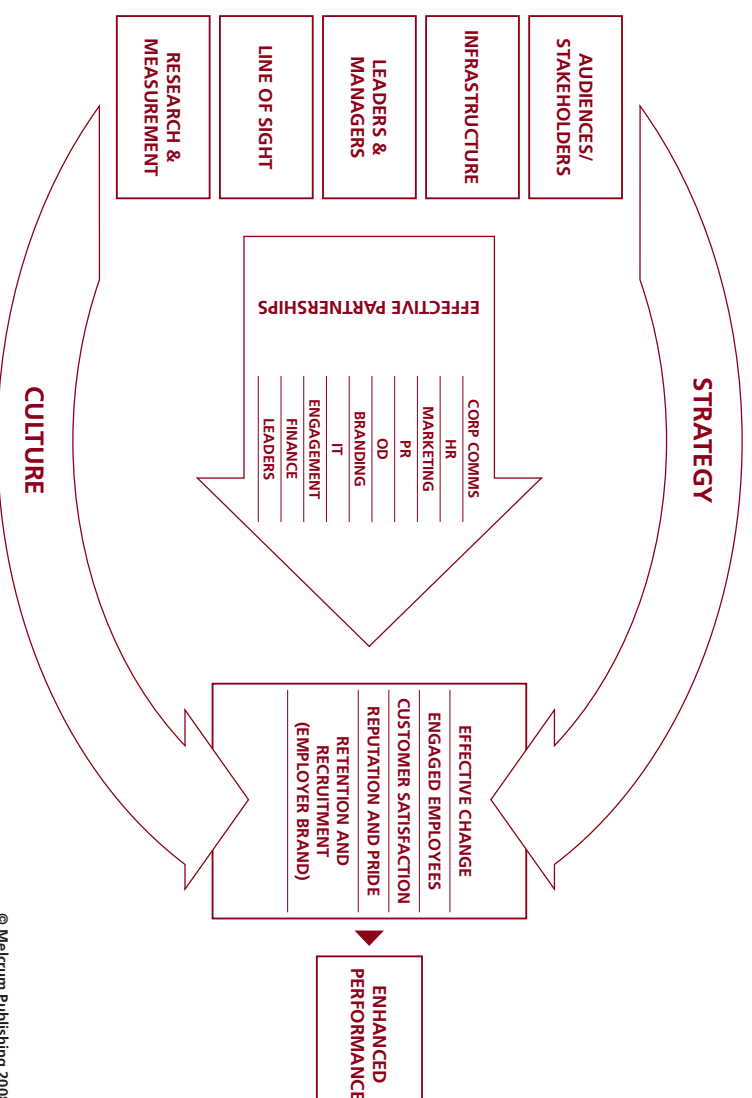


Framework for an effective Internal Communication function

This framework sets out the components for an effective Internal Communication function. While roles and responsibilities vary by organization, successful functions typically focus on five areas of activity. Their success also depends on effective partnerships with key stakeholders. Their work shapes, and is shaped by, the organization's strategy and culture. These factors combine to influence five key business success factors and ultimately contribute to enhanced financial performance.



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NOTES

AUDIENCES/STAKEHOLDERS

An effective Communication function:

- Has access to valid insight about its stakeholders, drawn from evidence
- Uses this insight to guide communication strategies, tactics and decisions that support the business strategy
- Ensures communication meets the needs of specific employee segments
- Designs channels and materials which appeal to stakeholders, speaking their language and using appropriate media
- Facilitates dialogue, to enable the organization to listen and act
- Listens carefully to stakeholders, to gain an excellent understanding of their issues, concerns, and “water cooler conversations”
- Chooses communication strategies and tactics which actively engage and involve stakeholders
- Fosters cross-functional collaboration and dialogue by helping to connect people across the organization

INFRASTRUCTURE

An effective Communication function:

- Has a defined communication strategy that has been discussed and agreed with key senior stakeholders
- Uses a communication planning process which ensures all communication activity is focused on business outcomes
- Has an integrated communication plan which sets out planned activity across the organization and is used to guide timing and messaging
- Clearly defines its range of channels, setting out the purpose, target stakeholder groups, uses and measures for each. Ensures this is the appropriate range of channels to deliver business objectives
- Has a team structure and reporting line that supports the organization's structure and goals
- Recruits and develops practitioners with the skills, knowledge and experience to perform their roles professionally, competently and with influence
- Has a culture and processes which encourage the sharing of best practice and embed consistent ways of working across the internal communication network
- Anticipates and prioritises where it can use its resources to add most value to the organization, is proactive in approach and prepared to push back when necessary
- Has the appropriate funding to support its planned activity and manages its budget effectively

LEADERS AND MANAGERS

An effective Communication function:

- Defines communication competencies and standards for leaders and managers, ensuring they understand communication is about behaviour, not just words
- Provides effective communication channels for leaders, ensuring leaders understand and support business activities before they are asked to communicate them to others
- Supports managers and leaders to be better communicators by providing them with timely, relevant and accessible training and materials
- Helps leaders and managers to be accountable for communication through formal objectives and/or measures
- Provides inclusive, effective and influential counsel to the senior leadership team

LINE OF SIGHT FOR BUSINESS STRATEGY

An effective Communication function:

- Ensures the business strategy is clearly defined and will stand up to questions and scrutiny
- Translates the strategy into language managers can understand and translate onwards to others
- Ensures the strategy is made meaningful to every part of the organization
- Helps employees understand how the strategy links to their team and personal goals
- Uses tactics that enable managers and employees to discuss, engage with and internalise the strategy so they can translate it into everyday actions and behaviours
- Regularly reminds people of the strategy and updates them on organizational performance

RESEARCH AND MEASUREMENT

An effective Communication function:

- Uses research and measurement with judgement, to guide and prioritise communication decisions, strategies and tactics that support organizational objectives
- Is clear about its measurement objectives
- Has a research and measurement framework in place, which sets out what should be measured and the most appropriate tools and tactics in each case
- Ensures key findings from research and measurement are followed up with a clear action-planning process
- Shares employee insight, research and measurement data with stakeholders as appropriate, providing input to business decision making and continuous improvement
- Benchmarks with other organizations to identify opportunities for continuous improvement

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