



Building A Successful Corporate Communications Function

How to build a communications function that grows your business and your brand

Why am I doing this?

Get clear on the purpose of the function. What do you want it to achieve? And if your answer is that you want to be better known and have a higher profile and greater visibility, start asking why. Ask “Why?” until you get to an answer that clearly relates to the goals of your business. Your communications function should support your business goals.

What functions do I need?

Having determined the purpose of the function, start to map out what you want it do. That will help clarify the different types of function you need. For example, if you want investors to know about your firm, so that you can attract additional investment in the future, you will need staff that can raise your profile with your target investor community as well as in trade media.

Keep in-house or outsource?

If you are small, you will want to outsource many of the roles. But even a large organization, should be conscious of when to out-source and when to keep things in house. The rule of thumb is to outsource where there is a lot of ebb and flow that is demand driven. For example, design and layout needs can fluctuate around specific events or publication schedules.

What should I do about my website?

Stop comparing your website with the coolest consumer websites out there and go back to purpose. What is the purpose of your website? If it is a delivery vehicle for the products and services of your firm, then treat it as a core operation and invest accordingly. But if it is a credibility statement of what you do and who you are, then treat it as an elaborate marketing brochure, and make sure it's mobile responsive.

Do I have to tweet?

Social media can be a good place to waste time and money. Who are you trying to reach and why? Answer that question first before embarking on social media campaigns. Twitter works best when done by an individual, not by a company name, Twitter is good for firms with large numbers of investors, shareholders, or analysts to keep informed. It's also good for those with advocates and activists to energize.

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Should I change my logo?

Maybe, but first ask yourself how that will help the business. Companies spend a huge amount of time and money arguing over logos and what shade of blue. Keep it simple. If there is brand recognition in the current logo or name of your firm, keep that and build on it. Develop a simple color palette and guidelines to create a suite of materials like a corporate powerpoint, marketing brochures, business cards etc.

Do I have to spend a ton of money?

No. Some large businesses spend millions on corporate communications every year. You don't have to. You do need to be laser focused on the purpose of the function. What you need most of all are committed, professional staff who can represent the company, then equip them with the basic tools to do that well. Your best corporate communications personnel are not in the corporate communications function!