

PROCOM – PRINCIPLES OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION
Communication drives change! - challenges of 2020's

Though changes in communication are disruptive and unpredictable, many principles of communication remain. Communication enables democracy as well as the functions of communities, organizations, businesses, NGOs and public sector organizations. Every organization has an equal right to present their view and legitimate their operations within the limits of freedom of speech. New opportunities and threats emerge at an increasing speed in the public realm. Communication professionals have to act and react promptly. The need for stakeholder engagement and knowledge sharing is highlighted. Transparency, responsibility and ethics play increasing roles in organizational life.

Corporate communication is building and maintaining relations with stakeholders and publics. The foundations of trust are good organizational operations and communication. Timely communication enables a sense of community and improves workplace wellbeing. Dialogue, interaction and listening become more important.

Communication drives change. Communication directs organizations toward their aims. This makes communication strategic in nature. Communication is involved in top level decision making and operations from the beginning. Predicting and reacting to ever more complex challenges becomes routine work for communication professionals.

MEGATRENDS INFLUENCING COMMUNICATION

Communication is shaped by the following megatrends in the coming years:



PROCOM

NEW PREMISES

The emerging megatrends require broad understanding of the new influence mechanisms, challenges and opportunities. Demand for professionals, analysts and scholars understanding organizations and communication increases.

Expectations and demands toward corporate communication continue to increase. Communication professionals need to understand how megatrends such as globalization and climate change impact society and organizations, resulting in for example, political instability, increased cultural diversity, changes in international laws and agreements. More diverse forms of communication emerge as publics fracture.

These changes call for knowledge based capabilities from the communication professionals. Academic research is needed to understand the societal challenges more broadly, how the new forms of organizing impact communication, how communication is used and information consumed and what new forms of influence and activism are emerging.

The value of communication will increase in all professions in the future, especially in leadership and expert work. Communication will become more entwined with all organizational functions, playing a central role in enabling organizational performance.

Changes in technology, such as the development of AI, create more opportunities and challenges. Information warfare and hybrid forms of influence become more common threats for organizations. New rhizome-like networks emerge. In addition to stakeholders, unexpected activists groups and hateholders affect organizations and their communication.

Communication professionals play a central role for establishing responsible dialogue in society. Engagement of citizens, customers and personnel as well as support of organizational faith-holders become necessary. Fact checking is vital, and communication can be used to establish a sense of safety.

FUNCTIONS OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

Sensemaking and awareness. Through communication organizations establish their aims, functions, products, services, processes and decisions. It is through communication that the organizational story is told, and corporate character and reputation are built.

Strengthening a sense of community and cultivating culture. Communication increases commitment and sense of belonging in organizations. Communication supports the formation of a beneficial organizational culture.

Purpose driven and dialogic strategy. Strategy is formed, activated and evaluated through communication. Chief Communicator is an organizational strategist.

Monitoring, interpreting and reacting. Through monitoring the organization detects and understands weak external and internal signals of changes that will affect the organization in the future. This will enable timely planning and decision making.

Communication content, structure and networks. The communication professional collects, produces, interprets and refines the information relevant for organizational maintenance and development. Professional and dialogic communication enables the formation of a joint direction in an organization and among its stakeholders. Communication professionals help their organizations thrive in the dynamic environment by internal training, tuning and consulting.

PLAYING FIELD

The challenges of 2020's require that

- 1) the chief of communication is part of the executive team to enable strategic partnership, as all decision making will require communication expertise.
- 2) Context and organizational type shape how communication is organized.
- 3) Communication needs the resources necessary to reach its targets.
- 4) Communication professionals need the opportunity to continually improve and develop both their own and their organizations' communication competence.