



Strategic Communications

Preparing the Ground

The Tantalus Group



Strategic Communications: Preparing the Ground

Strategic communications is the selected use of communication tools and techniques in a bespoke way.

That's nicely put, but where to start in preparing for what should become an integrated approach for an impactful pathway that builds reputation and therefore commercial value?

Sound judgment is key in this respect, and so is thorough preparation.

Below are three key areas that function as a practical checklist while helping you develop the basics for a solid analysis and subsequently a good quality decision on the way forward for your organization.

The Tantalus Group is able to advise you professionally on building the road from A to B, but it needs thorough analysis.

The three steps below you can set in motion yourself to lay the groundwork.

1

Moving the business from A to B

This starts with an honest overview of where your organisation currently is, the A. Not only in terms of financials and position in the market, but also the level of trust among your key (institutional) stakeholders, customers and staff. What issues and risks are around the corner and what opportunities lie ahead?

Then turn to the future – your B. If your company wants to move forward, then insist on sitting down with the person in charge and simply have a conversation on where he or she wants to be in three to five years with the organization, in terms of revenues, number of businesses, specific growth areas and product range.

You must discuss how the organisation wants to be perceived and what societal contract should be in place.

Apart from interviews with leadership, you should use some models for your analysis. There are quite some smart ones available, such as the Tecop-model and what is shown here, the Pestel model. This model forces you to describe the situation on various aspects that help you to get a solid overview of the landscape.



2

Friend and 'Friends'

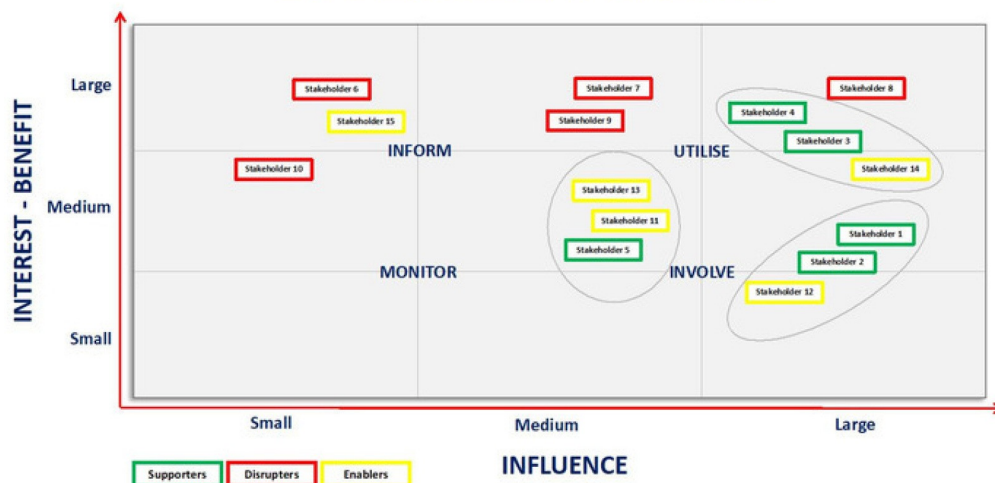
Now we turn to your stakeholders – who are your friends or what new friends do you need in order to move from A to B?

This is not too complicated, it simply needs some effort to:

- **a.** List relevant stakeholders (both positive, neutral or negative ones) who hold a stake in your activities of business.
- **b.** Group them in various categories, such as government, politicians, societal groups etc.
- **c.** Note each stakeholder's professional agenda, level of interest and influence, but also insights on mutual ground in order to select possible win-win situations.
- **d.** Plot the stakeholders as outlined below, to identify a power map but also possible coalitions.

Tantalus Tip: For key stakeholders, try to build an influencer overview to find out via which route you can achieve greater influence.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS



3

Your corporate character

The last bit is an interesting and key task for the Chief Communications Officer (CCO). A good reputation that helps your business move forward depends on a strong, well-integrated and up-to-date corporate character. This is all about the 'sum' of mission, values, brand, business model and strategy.

If an organisation wants to move from A to B this needs to be up-to-date as well, as it helps you get a good sense of why you exist as a company, including your beliefs, but also how you act and what value you add to the organisation and the world. In this respect, it helps to go through the thought of Tantalus expert Bjorn Edlund on www.thetantalusgroup.com.

It is best to form a small team with help from the strategy department and HR to go through all aspects of the corporate character and make clear and crisp descriptions of your own identity as an organisation and how you want to be seen.

“Don’t move too far away from your DNA as you can change your looks but cannot change your soul.”

**Bert Regeer**

Stakeholder Engagement Expert · Senior Consultant, The Hague

As one of Tantalus' most senior management consultants, Bert has more than 25 years of hands-on and leadership experience. He is the former Vice-President Communications for Royal Dutch Shell, leading strategy development and reputation plan implementation with a clear focus to build business value. Bert has extensive experience in change management, including business needs, organizational design, leadership culture, staff competencies, efficient work processes, team behaviors as well as managing the transition. He's also a trusted advisor of senior management in a range of companies.

Put the talented team of Tantalus management and communications consultants to work for you. Our unique networked structure provides our clients access to the latest strategies from around the world and the ability to leverage experience in wide-ranging industries and markets.

Contact us for an introductory conversation. Email info@thetantalusgroup.com



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