



## What If There's No Plan?

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What if you've been given the job of creating an internal communications strategy for an organisation, but the organisation hasn't actually articulated what it wants to achieve?

There's no business strategy, no business plan, no articulation of its strategic direction at all.

I know what you're thinking: why be in business if you don't know what you are working towards, right? But it happens. In fact, I was coaching a woman recently who had exactly that problem to deal with in her new role.

Okay, so there was a fairly general purpose statement about why the organisation existed, but she needed a little more than that.

So. What to do?

In the absence of clear business objectives to tie the internal communications strategy to, I suggested looking for any significant investments recently made to the organisation's operations. If she could help realise a return on that investment through her strategic internal communications planning, that would make a valuable contribution to the organisation, and cement her reputation as a strategic operator.

For instance, considerable amounts of money had recently been spent on an organisational

restructure. Someone, somewhere, will have articulated the rationale for that spend. Even the least business savvy organisations have to have some way to justify what they spend their money on.

Her challenge was to find the rationale and decipher the objectives or success criteria for the organisational restructure. The internal communications strategy should be developed around those objectives, and should incorporate the culture and behaviour change interventions that will be needed to realise the benefits of the structural changes. Of course, that purpose statement – about what the organisation exists to achieve – should not be forgotten. Everything the organisation does needs to tie back to that.

It would be fairly safe to assume that a useful intervention would be to provide strategic communications training for the organisation's leaders. After all, if it was that difficult to find out what the organisation wanted to achieve, then the leaders quite clearly could do with some support to articulate and communicate that to the rest of the organisation's employees.

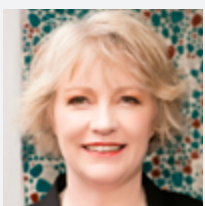
### The Opportunity

If you are an internal communications professional wanting to know where to focus employee communications, you'll know that, apart for the purpose and vision, one of the first things you need to lay your hands on is the organisation's business strategy or plan – so that you can ensure employee communication is

focused on helping people understand what the organisation aims to achieve and how they can contribute.

But if you are in the unfortunate position of working for an organisation in which the leadership team provides few clues or direction about its business objectives, then find out where the money is being spent, and why. Align your employee communications to the objectives of that investment.

A well developed and well written internal communications strategy that clearly outlines the business case and rationale for the interventions recommended within it, will also go a long way towards educating the organisation's leaders about the value of strategic communications to the business.



### Lucy Sanderson-Gammon, MBA

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Lucy Sanderson-Gammon, MBA, is a career development coach, trainer and consultant. She helps mid-career professionals who have fallen out of love with their jobs to find work that is meaningful. Find out more about Lucy's coaching services [here](#).