

Erik Fritzsche's Checklist

The Essence of Communication

These initial questions provide conceptual clarity through decisive answers, enabling the strategic and effective development of communication or initiatives. Costly adjustments during the process can thus be avoided.

The checklist is based on the proven Lasswell formula, one of the foundational models of communication, developed by Harold Dwight Lasswell. The formula poses key questions such as "Who says what, in what channel, to whom, with what effect?" I have expanded this methodological approach to account for modern requirements and to include important aspects that Lasswell did not address, such as the purpose and strategic goals of communication.

The right questions will create the path!

Who?

- Who is the **sender**? (Person, organization, role)
- What characteristics or values does the sender associate with the message?

To/With Whom?

- Who is the **target audience**? (Individuals, groups, stakeholders)
- What are the target audience's needs, expectations, or interests?

Why (Purpose)?

- Why is this communication important? (Societal, organizational, individual)
- What values and beliefs underpin it?

For What Goal? With What Effect?

- What is the goal of the communication? (To inform, persuade, activate, or respond)
- What effect is being sought? (e.g., behavioral change, agreement, image building)

What?

- What is the **core message**? (**Content** of the communication)
- What arguments, facts, or emotions support the message?

Through Which Channel?

- Which channels are being used? (e.g., social media, email, print, events)
- Are the channels aligned with the target audience?

When? (On What Occasion?)

- Is there a specific occasion or timing relevance? (e.g., campaign launch, events)
- Does the timing fit the message and target audience?

Where? (Touchpoint?)

- Where does the communication take place? (Physical, digital, hybrid)
- Are there specific touchpoints where the target audience can be engaged?

How?

- **Emphasizing?** (Strengthening the core message)
- **Audience-friendly?** (Tailored to the recipient: framing, perspective, focus, filters)
- **Channel-adaptive?** (Appropriate for the chosen medium)

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