

## Erik Fritzsche's Work Sheet

## A Route to Conceptualizing Communication

These initial questions provide conceptual clarity by delivering key insights to strategically align communication right from the start. Costly adjustments later in the process can thus be avoided. Specifically, roles, responsibilities, existing structures, and future requirements are analyzed. The questions also help assess the added value of the communication strategy for the company's business — for example, regarding strategic goals, brand building, market positioning, or target audience engagement — and ultimately its success and reputation.

***The right questions will create the path!***

### Objectives and Scope

1. What **goals** is the company/organization pursuing?
  - a. Short-term, medium-term, long-term?
  - b. Financial or non-financial?
2. What is the **specific issue** that is the focus of the communication?
3. **Who** within the company/organization is involved? What is their attitude toward the goals and the communication issue?
4. What are the specific **goals of the communication**? What communication goals can be derived from the company's/organization's objectives?

### Analysis

5. Who are the **stakeholders**?
6. What is the stakeholders' **attitude** toward:
  - a. The company/organization in general?
  - b. The communication issue?
  - a. How likely are these attitudes to change?
7. What are the key **issues** (risks and opportunities) that are currently or could become relevant?
8. How important are these issues to the stakeholders? Who are the specific **target audiences** for the communication?
9. Are there already considerations regarding timelines, budgets, and **resource allocation**?

## Concept Development

10. What **positioning** should be developed or utilized? What vision, values, value propositions, attributes, imagery, and tone are essential?
11. Who or what are **competitors**?
12. What **messages** need to be communicated?
  - a. General messages?
  - b. Specific messages for certain stakeholders or themes?
  - c. How can these messages be structured (e.g., story, who, what, why, how)?

Guidance for crafting messages:

- d. How do the above themes connect with stakeholders?
  - e. From what perspective or focus (frame) do stakeholders view these themes?
  - f. What arguments are significant? What does the argumentation framework look like?
  - g. What credible and historically rooted stories can the company tell?
  - h. Who in the company can authentically embody and convincingly present these stories?
13. Can positioning and messages be distilled into a **guiding communication idea** or a core narrative?
14. Who communicates, who is the **sender**?
15. Are there **partners/multipliers** for communication? Are there ambassadors or testimonial providers who increase **credibility**?
16. How should the communication's **dramaturgy** be designed?
  - i. What measures, channels, and tools are suitable for communication?
  - j. What occasions can be utilized or developed to place your messages?
  - k. What is the chronological sequence of communication measures?
17. How will the company/organization recognize that the communication measures were **successful**?
  - l. Input?
  - m. Output?
  - n. Outcome/Value/Benefit/Impact?
18. Ante-mortem question: What needs to be done to ensure certain **failure**? And how can this be prevented?

## Planning and Preparation

19. What constitutes a plausible **communication plan**?

- a. What measures need to be completed and when?
- b. Who within the company will implement these measures, utilize the channels, and apply the tools?
- a. Who is responsible for communication monitoring?

20. What are the repercussions of communication challenges and constraints on the company/organization, especially the **communications department**? How can these be addressed for improvement?

- a. Are there tools currently unavailable that are needed?
- b. Are additional skills required?
- c. Are more personnel, including external assistance, necessary?
- d. Is the company capable of effectively briefing, managing, and controlling external service providers?

21. What are the **next steps** after completing the communication concept?

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