

HOW TO GET YOUR HOUSE IN ORDER

2011 may be the year that you are asked to reorganise the communications department. A big task, but also a strong opportunity to reevaluate the function

by Dafydd Phillips.

To take on responsibility for the reorganisation of your communications department can be equal parts a daunting prospect and an exhilarating challenge. Who doesn't like the opportunity, to arrange the toys according to one's own preferences? But who wants to be burdened with all that hard work and all those tough decisions? The intimidating prospect can be softened if you consider the reorganisation as a chance to broaden the range of available skills within the department, to broach a more strategic role for the function, and to promote a different model for communication within the organisation. In this article, we will look at a few ways in which to explore and exploit the various opportunities presented by the prospect of a departmental restructuring.

There are several indicators that might suggest to you – as head of your department – that the time is due to look again at the team's structure. These indicators could include legitimate complaints from team members that they are overloaded with work (or that they do not have enough work to do during a work day); that their designated tasks overlap with those of other employees, or that they are responsible for wildly dispa-

rate tasks (for example, a complicated and demanding task such as social media strategic planning and a routine or recurring role such as answering enquiries about the website's user interface). Reporting to more than one boss can also be a source of dissatisfaction in need of a remedy, as well as recurring problems such as high staff turnover.

But above and beyond these office problems, the most likely candidate for an opportunity to reorganise your communications department is with the occurrence of significant changes in the company's organisational structure or strategy, or an evolution in the size of the company and growth in its activities.

The link between structure and strategy is a deciding factor in the development of the department. As Laura Illia, professor at the IE School of Business, Spain, explains: "Communications follows structure and strategy. This means that a centralised organisation of a communications department is justified when the structure and strategy of the company is centralised and formalised; similarly, a decentralised structure of the department is justified when the strategy and structure of the company is specialised. If these things do not fit, then the communication department might have little power in the organisation and might not be efficient."

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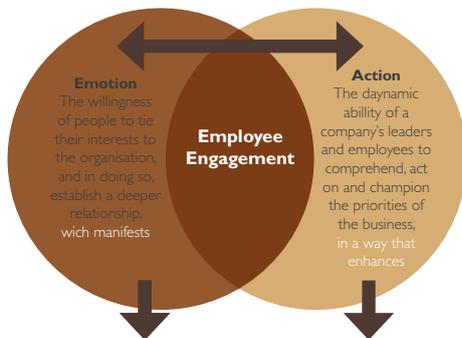
FACTS & FIGURES

Edelman, the public relations agency, has compiled a report on the state of employee engagement based on discussions and interviews with around 30 global organisations from a range of industries. The report's special angle is its focus on engagement in organisations that are undergoing a process of change, and it considers engagement as a function of leadership and not only the remit of human resources. The report is also worth reading as it offers a new or developed definition of successful employee engagement based on the findings. Edelman call their model "the emotion-action dynamic", the linking of the emotions of employees with the collective actions needed to advance the business (see below left). Edelman's case for linking engagement to strong management is persuasively put: it underlines that "an individual employee's motivation to grow beyond a minimal set of performance expectations is directly due to the style,

behaviours, recognition, consistency, and authenticity of his/her leader." It finds that leaving engagement to be driven by human resources and focused on tangible factors like pay and benefits (which the report calls "the traditional model of employee engagement") is insufficient; resources would be better used by investing in opportunities to strengthen and engage leaders. "Simply put", the report states, "engaged leaders create engaged employees, who in turn generate above average performance". Creating brand ambassadors from employees is key, and this short but informative report offers several ideas for doing just that. *Taken from Rethinking Employee Engagement, Edelman 2011. 2011 from Institute for Media and Communications management, University of St. Gallen, and European Association of Communication Directors, Social Media and the Communication Profession, January 31st, 2011.*

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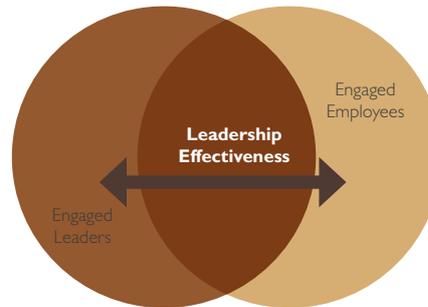
The Emotion-Action dynamic



Increased involvement
Trust in leadership
Belief in the future of the company

Employee ambassadorship and activism
Reputation
Innovation

Engaged leaders create engaged employees



Listen with rational and emotional intelligence
Cultivate a two-way conversation with transparency
Communicate for impact not activity

Go the extra mile for customers
Act on their line of sight to business priorities
Grasp the greater context for company decisions

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PERSONNEL



Burkhard Reuss

(Director, Communications & Public Affairs)

Institution: Total Germany

Start: April 04



Germany: New role for Reuss at oil group Total

BURKHARD REUSS is the new director of communications and public affairs at oil group Total Germany. Based in Berlin, he succeeds Delphine Saucier, who is now communications director for Total Petrochemicals in Brussels. Reuss' most recent position was as vice president of communications at Total Petrochemicals. From 2001 to 2006 he led the corporate communications at the oil group in Germany.



Esra Erkal Paler

(Head, Global Media Relations)

Institution: AstraZeneca

Start: April 01



UK: Esra Erkal Paler joins AstraZeneca from the ASA

ESRA ERKAL PALER heads the worldwide media relations activities of AstraZeneca. Joining from the Advertising Standards Authority, she leads the company's London-based global media relations team and is responsible for enhancing and protecting the company's reputation worldwide by driving media coverage and managing media-related issues. She reports to Neil McCrae, vice president of group corporate communications.



Pedro Janeiro Martins

(Head, Leadership, Staff & Change Communication)

Institution: Allianz SE Start: July 01



Germany: July appointment for Janeiro Martins

Later this year, PEDRO JANEIRO MARTINS will become head of the leadership, staff and change communications at financial services group Allianz SE. Currently, he heads the international corporate communications at Generali Holding in Trieste, Italy. In his new position, Janeiro Martins will succeed Claudia Reichmuth, who changes to director of change management of the internal group, Alliance Global Assistance.

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EVENTS



14.04.2011

Measurement: The death of the AVE

Following the adoption of the Barcelona Principles of measurement in June 2010, campaign successes are increasingly based on outcomes, not just outputs. Sandra Macleod of Echo Research advises on objectives-based, business-focused measurement.

► PRofessionals/CIPR, London

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10.05.2011

Social Media in a Corporate Context

Social media tools are increasingly used by those who need to communicate to audiences who are not necessarily their customers. This event will explore how social media forges dialogues with stakeholders.

► Communicate magazine, TrouwAmsterdam, Amsterdam

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24.05.2011

The Big Idea: What are the BIG ideas in PR and Communications Right Now?

Frank Klaas, global head of communications at Jaguar Land Rover is one of the speakers at this event; subjects up for debate include social media, measurement and evaluation, effective budgeting and others.

► PRWeek, London

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26.05.2011

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Attracting and retaining talent is the number one issue facing companies of all sizes across all industries in Europe. A global collection of speakers speak and advise on this subject.

► Employer Brand International, Milan

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