



Guidelines “Strategic Communication” session

Theme and subthemes

Strategic Communication is not a new word to define Corporate Communication, nor is it an umbrella term for any communication activity that occurs in organizations. Strategic Communication encompasses all communication that is substantial for the survival and sustained success of an organization and, more specifically, the purposeful use of communication by an organization to engage all of its publics in conversations of strategic significance to its goals (Zerfass, Verčič, Nothhaft, & Werder, 2018; Hallahan et al, 2007).

In this sense, strategic communication deals with the intended and emergent use of communication for building, supporting, and presenting strategies for organizations to enhance overall performance and to reach specific goals. This includes defining and re-defining organizational goals and positioning, and supporting the management of organizations and their business functions and departments. It has emerged as a fundamental component of effective organizational management.

In academia, strategic communication has emerged as an interdisciplinary field on the nexus of communication science and management research during the last decade. Scholars from public relations, corporate communication, organizational and internal communication, advertising, marketing, and management have merged efforts to build a body of knowledge that focuses on the use of communication to support the overarching goals of organizations. Universities have introduced programs that combine insights from some of these fields with specific knowledge on strategic thinking, planning, and alignment.

Several questions can be asked to inform the complex and intriguing concept of strategic communication, including:

- How can strategic communication contribute to effectiveness and sustained success on the levels of corporations, business units, and corporate functions (e.g. HR, IT, compliance)?
- How does strategic communication interact with other functions in the company?
- What can marketers gain from adopting an interdisciplinary strategic communication perspective?
- How are outputs and impacts of strategic communication measured?
- How can strategic communication improve employee relations, corporate goodwill, corporate sustainability initiatives, organizational reputation, or crisis resilience?
- What are the differences between strategic and operational communication, and how can they be linked to business models and processes?
- What are the specifics of strategic communication in startup companies or small and medium enterprises (SMEs)?
- What is the role of strategic communication in reflecting and readjusting corporate goals?