



Measure What Matters

A Practical Toolkit for Communication
Professionals



About the Centre for Strategic Communication Excellence

At the Centre for Strategic Communication Excellence (CSCE), we're confident that communication has the power to be a force for good in society. We're passionate about developing communication professionals, leaders, and organisations. And we're opinionated about what our profession can achieve in society. So, when you join the CSCE, you're joining a movement to create a better world through effective communication.

How do we do what we do?

Learn

With decades of experience in strategic communication management, we've mastered the ability to teach effective communication techniques to working professionals in any industry. We build strategic communication capabilities in individuals, teams, and organisations from the ground up. Our customised training programs empower communication professionals to develop their strategic and leadership capabilities, guide leaders in building high-performing teams, and assist employees to refine their communication and collaboration skills.

Grow

Our memberships provide individuals, executives, and teams with access to a global network of subject matter experts, thought leaders and experienced professionals offering guidance and mentorship to enhance your professional reputation and credibility and showcase your accomplishments.

Thrive

We develop and share exclusive resources in partnership with an extensive worldwide network of faculty and partners. Our comprehensive library of insights and other resources incorporate contemporary and emerging communication practices so you can stay at the forefront of industry innovations and emerging technologies, equipping you with everything you need to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Communication measurement has never been more important – or more misunderstood.

Too often, communication professionals jump straight to analytics and dashboards, hoping the numbers will speak for themselves. But meaningful measurement doesn't start with data. It starts with clarity.

Clarity about what the organisation is trying to achieve. Clarity about the outcomes communication can realistically influence. Clarity about the difference between what we own and what we can *inform, shape or support*.

When that clarity is missing, measurement becomes guesswork. When it's present, measurement becomes one of the most powerful strategic tools you have.

This toolkit is designed to help communication professionals move from "counting activity" to demonstrating influence, contribution and impact. It gives you a practical pathway – from identifying the business need through to interpreting results – with examples, explanations and space to apply the thinking to your own organisation.

You'll find a simple message running throughout:

You can't measure well unless you design well. And you can't design well unless you understand your business.

This toolkit will help you:



Ask better questions about the business need.



Identify communication opportunities.



Define outcomes that matter.



Set measurable objectives.



Select measures that show progress and impact.



Build confidence in reporting, storytelling and dashboards.



Communicate insights leaders can act on.

Use this toolkit as a companion to your work – something you return to whenever you need to plan, reflect, demonstrate value or explain your approach to others.

You'll see that measurement doesn't have to be complicated. It simply needs to be intentional, strategic and grounded in what matters.

1. Understanding the business need

The first and most important step in taking a strategic approach to communication is developing a **clear understanding of the business need**.

This is the foundation of meaningful measurement – and everything else in this toolkit. Communication can only demonstrate value when it is connected to what the organisation is trying to achieve. Otherwise, we end up producing activity that looks good, feels busy and achieves very little.

Understanding the business need requires research, curiosity and discipline. It means stepping back from the immediate request (“we need a video”, “send an all-staff email”, “post this update”) and asking:

01

What problem are we really trying to solve?

02

What opportunity are we trying to realise?

03

Why does this matter to our organisation?

When you anchor your work in business needs, you can trace a clear line between communication activity and business results. That is the shift from tactical support to strategic contribution.

Where to look for business needs

A business need is rarely hidden but it’s often not articulated in communication requests. It’s generally found in the big things that shape your organisation:

→ **Purpose, vision, values and strategic pillars.**

These define what the organisation stands for and where it’s heading.

→ **Key performance indicators and success measures.**

These highlight the outcomes the organisation cares about and is held accountable for.

→ **Major projects, initiatives or transformation programs.**

Organisations invest money and people in these because a need already exists.

→ **Operational pressure points.**

Everything from safety risks to workforce shortages to customer complaints.

→ **External landscape and environmental influences.**

Regulation, media attention, competitor action, political shifts, community sentiment, market conditions.

Your role is to gather these inputs, make sense of what matters most and identify the underlying need driving the request (even if your stakeholder hasn’t expressed it clearly).

INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE?

Check out the full version of this and
other CSCE toolkits at

bit.ly/cscetools