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#10

STRATEGY EXECUTION HEROES

Build a professional strategy communication plan

A 'how to' guide

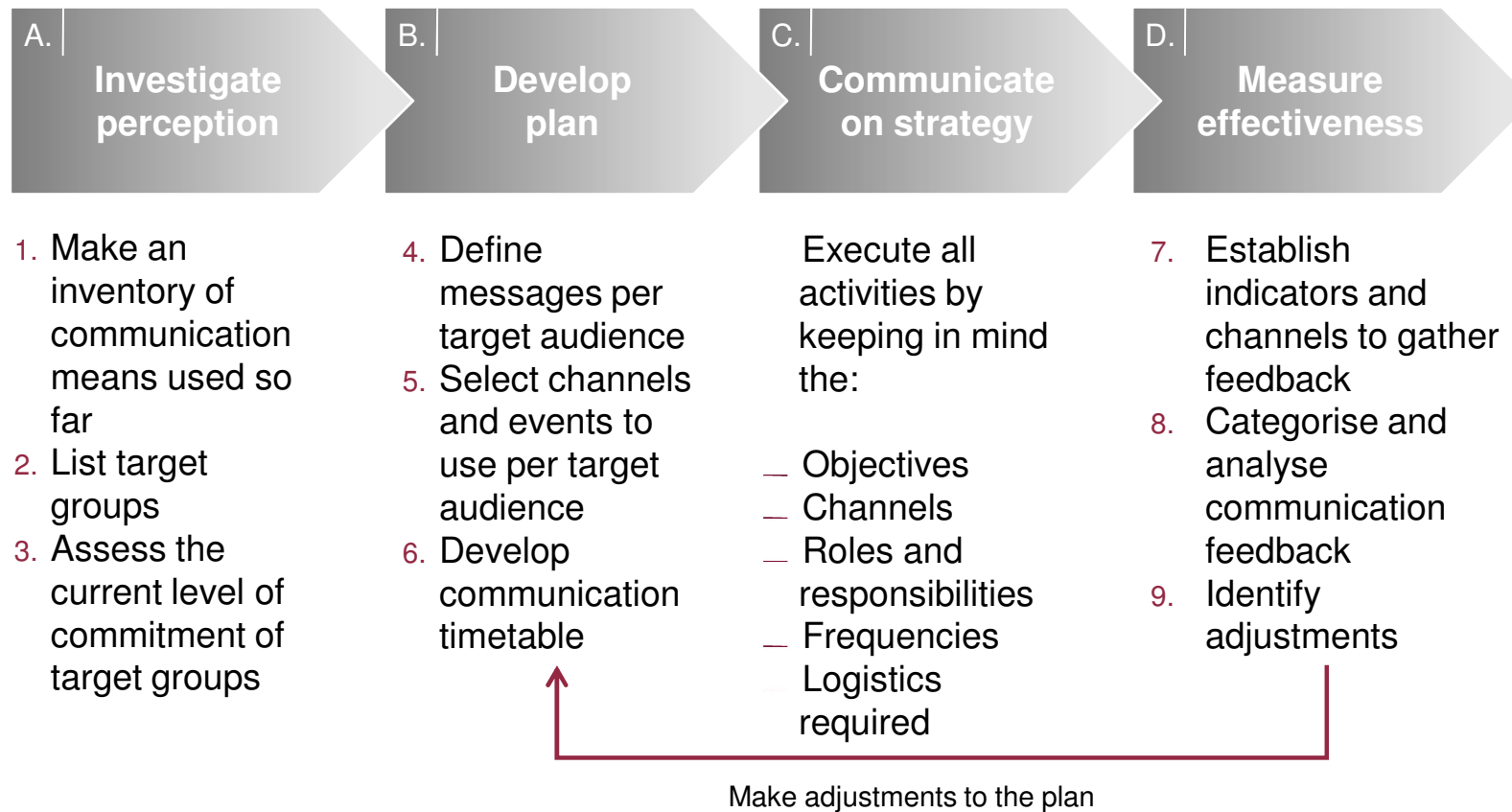
This document is part of a set of supporting material available for download upon purchase of *Strategy Execution Heroes* by Jeroen De Flander (ISBN 978-908148731-3).

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Strategy communication: the approach



A.1. Make an inventory of communication means used so far

Verbal

- Staff meeting
- Group meetings
- Speech
- Training
- Walk-around
- Interviews

Written

- Memos
- Reports
- Instructions
- Brochure
- Flyers
- Newsletter

Audio-visual

- Presentation
- Company video
- Internal journal
- Presentations
- Audio message
- Internet movie

Electronic

- Email
- Chat line
- Tele-conference
- SMS
- Social network
- Handheld

A.2. List target groups

- Identify target audiences by asking some fundamental questions:
 - | Who was involved in defining the strategy?
 - | How will we cascade the strategy and what does this imply?
 - | Is a distinction between first line managers and other managers relevant?
 - | Are geographical or functional differences relevant?

- List all target groups according to the level in the strategy cascade

A.3. Assess the current level of commitment of target groups

- Analyse results from surveys or benchmark studies on strategy communication and employee engagement
- Conduct a workshop to assess the average level of commitment of target groups – use with a heterogenous group: managers and employees, different functions, locations...
- Use Peter Senge's seven levels of commitment (*Strategy Execution Heroes* p.48)

Commitment	Grudging compliance
Enrolment	Non-compliance
Genuine compliance	Apathy
Formal compliance	
- Put the results in a matrix with target groups on one axis and level of commitment on the other

B.4. Define messages per target audience

- Information needs and key messages should differ based on the level of commitment and the nature of the target groups
- Take the list of target groups with your estimated level of commitment and detail what information they each need:
 - | On the Strategy Execution process
 - | On the content of the strategy at corporate, departmental or unit level
 - | On the content of the strategy of other departments or units
- Cross-check that knowledge levels increase and are coherent with the increase in level of commitment

B.5. Select the channels and events to use per target audience

- Communication channels/events differ in their impact on audience behaviour
- Other evaluation criteria may be important as well: reach, speed, ability for dialogue, information capacity, cost effectiveness, credibility, emotional versus factual influence...
- Use the list from step A.1. and estimate:
 - | The impact/fit of the channel to positively influence the commitment level
 - | The impact on additional evaluation criteria that you find important
- Some tips: choose channels or events so that you:
 - | Build in overlap: communicate the same information via different channels
 - | Involve the top: the CEO/top executives explain the overall strategy
 - | Make time for dialogue: ensure you can engage in Q&As



B.5. Develop a detailed communication timetable

- Put the messages (what) the target audiences (who) and the channel (how) on a timeline (when)
- For a large communication programme, it might be useful to detail each communication activity on a sheet: objectives, channel structure, process, roles and responsibilities, critical success factors, effectiveness measurement, frequency, logistics...

	Target Group	Channel	Key Message	Involved Parties other than Communication	Timing																							
					May				June				July				August				September							
					7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	2	9	16	23	30	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24			
Management Walkabout (MWA)																												
Management Walkabout (cont'd)																												
4. Roles and Responsibilities																												
5. Critical Success Factors																												
6. Effectiveness Measurement																												
7. Frequency																												
8. Logistics Required																												

D.7. Establish indicators and channels to gather feedback

- Possible effectiveness indicators are:
 - | Message: were the messages clear, understood, complete...?
 - | Tone: was the tone and style appropriate for the message and event?
 - | Length: was the length of the event appropriate for the messages?
 - | Timing: was it up-to-date, timely information?
 - | Behaviour: did the event support the desired behaviour?
 - | Execution: was the event well-executed, with sufficient logistics?
 - | ...
- Various channels can be used to quantify or qualify the effectiveness: post-event interviews, written or verbal surveys, solicited or unsolicited email feedback, intranet message board...

D.8. Categorise and analyse communication feedback

- Categorise feedback according to the:
 - | Type of feedback
 - | Source of the feedback
 - | Area concerned
- Distribute the feedback to all stakeholders: CEO/top management, strategy office, performance management process owner, communication department, intranet owner...
- Analyse (in group) the feedback

D.9. Identify and execute adjustments to the plan

- Ensure all communication events are measured and analysed
- Identify adjustments per effectiveness category (message, tone, length...)
- Adapt the communication plan accordingly