

An aerial photograph of a city at dusk. The sky is a mix of deep blue, purple, and orange, with wispy clouds. The city below is illuminated with lights, and the Petronas Twin Towers are prominent in the skyline. The overall mood is serene and professional.

Helping your CEO  
be the best they can be  
The role of communications

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Communications are an  
integral part of every  
human endeavour

# If everybody does it, what do we do?

- Focus Communications to achieve everything required for organisational success
  - Values
  - Vision
  - Stories
  - Leadership
  - Relationships
  - Reputation
  - Communications Philosophy



# Characteristics of excellent communications departments

- Contribute significantly to the way business relates to internal and external publics
- Interpret the current and future social and political environment for strategic commercial planning
- Encourage the integration of responsibility for dealing with social and political matters with other management aspects
  - Mark Rayner, Chair of National Australia Bank, Mayne Nickless & Pasminco

# The CEO is the Chief Communications Officer

So here's some assistance you can provide them!

# Know your values, vision & story

- Organisations are made up of people with values of their own
- Values, visions and stories are about the people as well as the organisation
- Define your values, vision and story clearly – they will create themes for all communications and ensure consistency
- Work with the board, CEO and senior leadership team to define them
- The best communicators will help you define, refine and simplify your values, vision and story to make them meaningful and real

# Communication is central to leadership

- Organisations succeed when they lead their stakeholders, including their customers
- The key focus of communications should be leadership – sales, marketing, HR, CSR and media should all be supported by communications, but should not be the drivers of communications



# Know communications work in the long term

- You have been using communications all your life – you know it works
- Communication is most effective long term which is why you network, attend meetings, lead teams etc
- Trust if you have the values, vision and story right, your communications will be effective in the long term



*And to this day, most institutions look at public relations as their trumpet and not as their hearing aid. It's got to be both.*

Peter Drucker (As quoted by Seitel 2004)

# A Great Place to Start

We were searching for employees,  
but people turned up instead

Anita Roddick, Founder of the Body Shop, Business as Unusual 2000

# Relationships

- Professional
  - Our working lives
- Personal
  - Family and friends
- Community
  - Schools, sports, arts, neighbourhood, clubs, interests

# Create & apply a communications philosophy

- Philosophies help guide us over our long journeys, in our lives, they also work for organisations
- Organisations, corporations and companies exist because our communities have philosophies that allow them to exist – freedom of association for example
- Base your philosophy on community and Board expectations, and your own expectations



# Strategy

- “A strategy is a plan that integrates major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole in support of the organisation’s mission” (Harrison 2003)
- Elements
  - Big Picture
  - Leads the organisation
  - Integrates values, vision, mission, major policies
  - Creative
- PR/Communications deals with relationship activities

# The connection

- Strategies are used to plan for the future to achieve specific outcomes
- Leadership creates the vision for the future – strategy helps to achieve that vision

# Environmental Analysis

- Remember Characteristics of Excellent Communications Departments
  - “Interpret the current and future social and political environment for strategic commercial planning”

# A Test

Are our stakeholders receiving  
real pictures of the world in  
which they live?



*And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall march ahead ... I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment, I still have a dream.*

The Rev Dr Martin Luther King Jr,  
28 August 1963  
Lincoln Memorial, Washington DC