

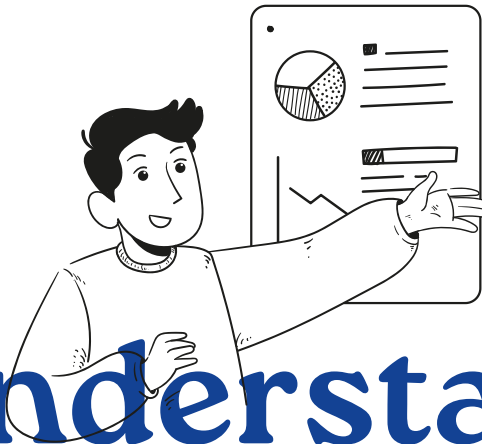
10 Signs that you are a **Strategic Communications Professional**

By Sola Abulu
Principal Consultant, SA&A



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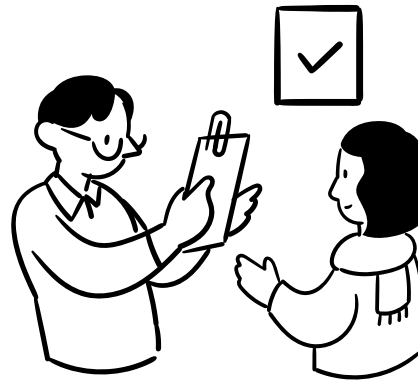
1. You understand your corporate business plan

- A strategic communications professional understands what their business is trying to achieve. You take time to learn the fundamentals i.e. how value is created and eroded in the business and sector
- A strategic communicator is very familiar with the business plan, understand the key elements and work with key leaders to develop communications strategies that enable the achievement of the desired outcomes



2. You develop a communications strategy **BEFORE** the plan

- Strategic Communications professionals know the difference between a communications strategy and a plan and develop both to achieve desired objectives.
- Your communications strategy derives its purpose and agenda from the corporate business strategy, while your communications plan derives its approach from the priorities and audiences identified in your communications strategy
- Tactical communicators tend to rush to implementation and often start with a plan and not a well researched strategy



3. Your Communications KPIs are based on tangible bottom-line results

- A strategic communications professional develops fit for purpose Key Performance Indicators that measure what matters to the business or the organization.
- Communication is purposeful and targeted towards a specific end



4. Business leaders rely on you to help drive key business and organizational agendas

- Once your leaders begin to see communications as an enabler for delivery and achievement of desired outcomes, it's an indication that you have moved into the problem-solving strategic communications space



5. The purpose of your communication is to influence

- Strategic Communicators think carefully about purpose, design, impact, audience and proactively identify and manage communications risks
- Once you realize that the core purpose of communications is to influence, then your approach would be completely different. You will be methodical and structured in your approach



6. You understand how to identify and manage communications risk

- Strategic Communications professionals understand communication risks. They are able to identify potential risks in messaging or with targeted audiences and ensure that their communications approach is de-risked and messaging lands as intended.
- They understand the importance of audience analysis, language, content, tone, spokesperson, timing and message sequence as well as stakeholder consultation before communication



7. You always map, profile and analyse audience habits and needs

- Strategic Communications professionals do not have a copy-and-paste approach to communication. They insist on a tailored approach for each audience
- They rely on research, data, insights and analysis to determine who to target, how, why, when and where



8. Your communications strategy is multi-layered

- You understand that you need to have a content strategy, platform strategy and messaging strategy as part of your communications strategy and you incorporate and implement judiciously with a strong level of coherence running through



9. You know how to use AI tools, research, data and platform analytics to refine your communications approach

- Strategic Communications professionals stay on top of the latest tools and technology to enable them to achieve their objectives
- They are constantly monitoring and tweaking their strategy to ensure it delivers the desired results



10. You are able to calculate the return on investment on all your campaigns

- Strategic Communications professionals are able to calculate ROI by measuring the impact of their campaigns in terms of business value created or protected. They base campaigns upon an identified business or strategic problem and come up with a communications or advocacy approach to raise awareness or influence stakeholder positions or public perception
- They ensure that impact is measurable and trackable in tangible terms. They do not struggle to show the value of what they do because they focus only on what can be measured and tracked



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2 You develop a communications strategy before the plan

3 Your communications KPI is based on tangible bottom-line results

4 Business leaders rely on you to help drive key business and organizational agendas

5 The purpose of your communications is to influence

6 You understand how to identify and manage communications risk

7 You always map, identify and profile audience habits and needs

8 Your communications strategy is multi-layered

9 You know how to use technology, analytics and research to refine your approach

10 You can quantify the value of your communications campaigns in value terms



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WEBSITE

learn.solaabuluassociates.com

EMAIL US

training@solaabuluassociates.com
consulting@solaabuluassociates.com