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## **How to convince your boss**

### **New concepts for proving the value-add of corporate communications**

- **Over the course of the last two and a half years the Academic Society for Management & Communication as part of the research program Value Creating Communication has looked at how communication can contribute to a company's success.**
- **Working closely with leading German and international companies, we have developed new tools to explain the core goals, contributions and roles of communication.**
- **COMMUNICATION INSIGHTS offers practitioners insights into our findings.**

It's an ongoing struggle that communication departments face: the need to explain how they contribute to the success of the company. In order to prove their value-add, communication executives use multiple rationales – ranging from reputation and other intangible assets to influencing stakeholders and producing communication campaigns. All this, however, creates an inconsistent story and leads to a lack of acceptance of the communication department among top managers.

"Corporate Communications urgently needs a consistent understanding of their goals, achievements and roles," says Dr. Ansgar Zerfass, Professor of Strategic Communication at the University of Leipzig. During the last two and a half years he has headed a large-scale research project to address this topic. Nearly 40 Chief Communication Officers as well as numerous international researchers have been involved. Case studies in ten organizations were conducted and more than 800 international publications from various disciplines have been analysed.

"So far a common language has been missing to explain how corporate communications creates value, which roles are performed by Chief Communication Officers, and which communication targets are in place", adds Dr. Ansgar Zerfass. However, our research has shown that these issues matter more to the management board and top management than issues such as KPIs and performance measures, which have dominated the discussion up to now. As a result, we have developed new tools based on established management concepts that will allow communication departments to speak the same language as the board. These new tools are not only of interest to corporate communicators, but can also be utilized by agencies for their strategic-conceptual work.

All research findings have been summarized in the latest issue of COMMUNICATION INSIGHTS *How to play the game*. It has been written specially for practitioners and is available to download free of charge at [www.academic-society.net](http://www.academic-society.net).



Here is a quick overview of the new tools:

- The **Communication Value Circle** summarizes twelve central goals of corporate communications derived from four generic corporate goals. It supports communicators in the alignment of communication and corporate strategy and is underpinned by KPIs and measurement methods.
- The **Communication Managers Roles Grid** identifies eight strategic and operational roles of communication executives and helps practitioners to create personal target agreements, develop competencies and set up teams.
- The **Communications Contributions Framework** showcases four core contributions of communications to the success of the company and helps to systematize and report these.
- The **Toolbox for Strategic Communication Management** offers a unique overview of the most important management and communication tools that support the daily operations of communication managers.

The study is part of the world's most comprehensive research program for corporate communications *Value Creating Communication*. It was initiated by the Academic Society for Management & Communication in close cooperation with almost 40 corporate partners.



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The **Academic Society for Management & Communication** is a joint initiative of leading companies and universities. Through joint research and knowledge sharing it aims to actively shape the future of corporate communications. The initiative was founded in 2010, and today is supported by six universities and nearly 40 corporate partners.

In 2015 the Academic Society launched the world's most comprehensive research program for strategic corporate communications – **Value Creating Communication**. In different research modules we are researching the key challenges facing communication management today, such as digitalization and Big Data, value creation and how to set up processes and collaborate with internal and external partners. More information at [www.academic-society.net](http://www.academic-society.net).

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