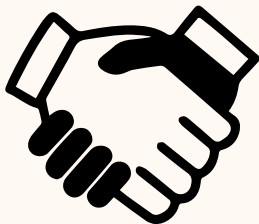


**What does a  
communication  
consultant do?**



**michael g. strawser, ph.d.**

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LEGACY

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COMMUNICATION

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# What does a communication consultant do?

**COMMUNICATION CONSULTANTS: DIAGNOSE PROBLEMS;  
RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS; FACILITATE INTERVENTIONS; AND  
EVALUATE OUTCOMES**

EVERYONE WANTS TO BE A CONSULTANT. I STUDY COMMUNICATION BECAUSE I WANT TO SOLVE COMMUNICATION-RELATED PROBLEMS. I CONSULT SO THAT I CAN HELP APPLY RESEARCH TO COMPLEX PROBLEMS. PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ME, 'WHAT DOES A COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT ACTUALLY DO?' I BELIEVE THERE ARE FOUR PRIMARY TASKS OF COMMUNICATION CONSULTANTS:

## COMMUNICATION CONSULTANTS\*

- DIAGNOSE PROBLEMS
- RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS
- FACILITATE INTERVENTIONS
- EVALUATE OUTCOMES

\*BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION IN THE DIGITAL AGE (WALDECK, KEARNEY, PLAX, 2013)

# What does a communication consultant do?

THESE CONSULTING "STANDARDS" PRESENT A WONDERFUL FOUNDATION TO A CONVERSATION-WHAT CAN I DO AND HOW CAN I HELP. WORKING WITH AN ORGANIZATION (ANY ORGANIZATION) REQUIRES PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS THAT LEAD TO EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS. PROPERLY FACILITATING INTERVENTIONS (I.E. SOLVING THE PROBLEM) AND EVALUATING WHAT WORKS ARE STEPS THAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED BY MOST COMPETENT EMPLOYEES. BUT, SOMETIMES IT TAKES AN EXPERT, AN OUTSIDE OBSERVER-A CONSULTANT.

# A Communication Consultant Diagnoses Problems

## COMMUNICATION CONSULTANTS DIAGNOSE PROBLEMS AND COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS ARE MULTIFACETED

YOU ARE ALWAYS THE LAST TO KNOW. SERIOUSLY, YOU ARE. LEADERS (AND MANAGERS) ARE USUALLY EFFECTIVE BECAUSE THEY ARE FORWARD THINKING. THEY CAN SEE PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY HAPPEN AND CAN IMPLEMENT FORWARD-THINKING STRATEGIC SOLUTIONS. SOMETIMES, THOUGH, YOU MAY NOT KNOW A PROBLEM EXISTS. IN THIS WAY, YOU ARE ALWAYS THE LAST TO KNOW.

PROBLEMS CAN BE MULTI-FACETED.

IT MAY BE THAT YOUR COMPANY HAS SURVIVED DOING THE STATUS-QUO AND YOU HAVE STAGNATED. #PROBLEM

IT MAY BE THAT YOUR COMPANY HAS LOST THE CORE OF ITS MISSION OR VISION. #PROBLEM

IT MAY BE THAT YOU ARE SPREAD TOO THIN (AS A LEADER, AS AN EMPLOYEE, OR AS AN ORGANIZATION). #PROBLEM

IT MAY BE THAT YOUR EMPLOYEES ARE LACKING THE TRAINING THEY NEED TO DO A JOB EFFECTIVELY. #PROBLEM

# A Communication Consultant Diagnoses Problems

I LIKE CONSULTING FOR A LOT OF REASONS BUT I REALLY ENJOY SOLVING PROBLEMS AND, EVEN MORE SO, IDENTIFYING PROBLEMS. COMMUNICATION PROBLEMS CAN BE OBVIOUS, BUT MANY TIMES COMMUNICATION ISSUES ARE UNDER THE SURFACE.

EMPLOYEES ARE OVER-SATURATED WITH MESSAGES AND CANNOT IDENTIFY KEY TASKS. RELATIONSHIPS MAY BE NEGATIVE, BITTER, AND FESTERING. THERE MAY BE A LACK OF TRUST. THESE ARE ALL COMMUNICATION ISSUES AND THERE ARE SO MANY MORE (AS I AM SURE YOU ARE AWARE). A CONSULTANT CAN HELP YOU DIAGNOSE THESE PROBLEMS AND WORK TOWARD A SOLUTION. I CAN HELP AND I WANT TO HELP YOUR ORGANIZATION DIAGNOSE PROBLEMS AND DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN.

# A Communication Consultant Listens

**GOOD COMMUNICATION CONSULTANTS LISTEN AND  
GOOD COMMUNICATION CONSULTANTS DIAGNOSE THE  
"ROOT" OF THE PROBLEM AND SUGGEST SOLUTIONS**

IF YOU ARE LIKE ME, YOU ARE QUICK TO SOLVE. IN SOME WAYS THIS IS A WONDERFUL TRAIT. THE ABILITY TO "SOLVE" IS A FANTASTIC CHARACTERISTIC. PEOPLE WHO CAN SOLVE PROBLEMS ARE VALUABLE TO ANY ORGANIZATION. I BELIEVE THOUGH THAT YOU CANNOT SOLVE PROBLEMS WITHOUT FIRST DIAGNOSING PROBLEMS ACCURATELY. THIS MEANS YOU HAVE TO LISTEN TO THOSE IN THE ORGANIZATION. IT IS EASY TO WALK INTO A SITUATION, WITHOUT CONTEXT, AND START "TELLING" PEOPLE WHAT TO DO-BUT GOOD CONSULTANTS LISTEN TO THOSE AROUND THEM AND RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS THAT ARE TAILORED TO THE ORGANIZATION (NOT JUST A ONE-SIZE FITS ALL NEXT STEP). I DO BELIEVE A GOOD COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT RECOMMENDS SOLUTIONS, BUT I ALSO BELIEVE A GOOD COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT RECOMMENDS SOLUTIONS BASED ON LISTENING TO, AND DIAGNOSING, ACTUAL PROBLEMS.

# A Communication Consultant Listens

IF YOU CONTINUE TO CUT OFF THE BRANCHES OF A TREE WITHOUT EVER ATTACKING THE ROOT-THE BRANCHES CONTINUE TO GROW. THIS IS THE SAME WITH PROBLEMS. A CONSULTANT WHO IS WORTH YOUR TIME AND MONEY WILL DIAGNOSE REAL PROBLEMS AND WILL PROVIDE SOLUTIONS THAT ACHIEVE HOLISTIC CHANGE, NOT JUST PERIPHERY SUGGESTIONS. BUT— THIS TAKES TIME, IT TAKES TRUST, AND IT TAKES EFFORT. I WANT TO BE A COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT THAT PROVIDES HEALING, NOT JUST A BAND-AID.



# **A Communication Consultant Facilitates Interventions**

**ORGANIZATIONAL TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT *DONE WELL* CAN ENHANCE A CULTURE AND  
CLARIFY MISCONCEPTIONS**

CORPORATE TRAINING CAN BE DULL, DRAB, AND CHECK-BOX READY. HERE'S WHAT I MEAN: SOME ORGANIZATIONS ARE QUICK TO LOOK AT TRAINING NEEDS AND SEARCH FOR THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE INSTEAD OF ACTUALLY SEARCHING FOR TRAINING, AND A TRAINER, WHO CAN HELP THE ORGANIZATION IN BOTH THE SHORT AND LONG-TERM. A COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT, OR, IN THIS CASE, A COMMUNICATION TRAINER SHOULD FACILITATE INTERVENTIONS THAT RESONATE WITH THE ORGANIZATION'S MISSION AND SOLVE THE CORPORATION'S COMPLEX PROBLEMS OR, AT THE VERY LEAST, MOVE A POTENTIAL SOLUTION FORWARD.

# A Communication Consultant Facilitates Interventions

TRAINING DOES NOT HAVE TO BE BORING.

TRAINING DOES NOT HAVE TO BE DRAB.

TRAINING DOES NOT HAVE TO BE A WASTE OF TIME.

TRAINING DOES NOT HAVE TO BE A “CHECK-MARK” IN AN  
OTHERWISE MINIMALIST DEVELOPMENT VISION.

INSTEAD, I FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT ORGANIZATIONAL TRAINING  
AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DONE WELL CAN ENHANCE A  
CULTURE AND CLARIFY MISCONCEPTIONS. IT CAN HELP YOUR  
BOTTOM LINE, ESTABLISH A CLEAR MISSION AND VISION, AND  
ENSURE THAT ALL EMPLOYEES ARE ON THE SAME PAGE.

# A Communication Consultant Facilitates Interventions

WHAT IS IT WORTH TO YOU?

OUT-OF-THE-BOX TRAINING CAN BE HELPFUL, SURE, BUT WOULDN'T YOU RATHER WORK WITH A CONSULTANT WHO HAS LISTENED TO YOUR ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES AND CRAFTS A TRAINING PLAN SUITED AROUND YOUR NEEDS AND YOUR PEOPLE? IN MANY WAYS, IT IS ABOUT YOU. IT IS NOT ABOUT THE TRAINER. IT IS ABOUT YOU, ABOUT YOUR PEOPLE. FIND SOMEONE TO HELP SOLVE COMPLEX PROBLEMS AND FIND SOMEONE WILLING TO PUT IN THE WORK TO CREATE OUTCOMES AND OBJECTIVES SUITED TO THE NEEDS OF YOUR ORGANIZATION. I CAN HELP.

# **A Communication Consultant Evaluates Outcomes**

**DON'T JUST ASSUME SOMETHING WORKED, EVALUATE IT.**

AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT, ONE WHO ADDS VALUE TO YOUR ORGANIZATION, WILL NOT JUST ARRIVE AND LEAVE LIKE A BOLT OF LIGHTNING. INSTEAD, AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT WILL HELP YOU THINK ABOUT A LONG-TERM PLAN AND EVALUATE THE OUTCOMES. A COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT SHOULD CREATE A POSITIVE ENVIRONMENT WHERE LONG TERM SUCCESS, NOT JUST CHECKED BOXES, IS THE END GOAL.

# **A Communication Consultant Evaluates Outcomes**

YOU ARE THE CLIENT. THE CLIENT AND CONSULTANT WORK COLLABORATIVELY TO UNDERSTAND NEEDS AND DETERMINE OUTCOMES. A GOOD COMMUNICATION CONSULTANT WILL NOT LEAVE YOU TO THEN FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO ONCE THOSE OUTCOMES HAVE BEEN DECIDED. INSTEAD, THERE SHOULD BE A PARTNERSHIP, A WILLINGNESS TO WORK TOGETHER TO ACHIEVE A COMMON GOAL-TO IMPLEMENT SOLUTIONS AND EVALUATE THE OUTCOMES.

# michael g. strawser, ph.d.

I understand the art of communication and its strategic importance for your organization. Effective communication can help you manage complex business problems and reach new heights.

## **How can I help:**

Strategic Corporate Communication  
Talent Optimization and Employee Engagement  
Nonprofit Consulting  
Instructional Design/Teaching and Learning/Instructor Coaching

## **Who can I help:**

Individuals, large and small businesses, and professional/nonprofit organizations

## **Results:**

Increase effectiveness, diagnose challenges and solve problems, enhance customer interaction, and drive profit and stakeholder engagement.

As an Assistant Professor of Communication, and experienced consultant with Legacy Communication Training and Consulting, I have developed a communication-based expertise to help you solve challenges in your organization. I am available at reasonable rates as a speaker, generational consultant, internal communication consultant, business strategist, communication coach, communication skills trainer, corporate consultant, freelance trainer/facilitator, or corporate trainer. If you have other questions, visit my website: [www.legacyctc.com](http://www.legacyctc.com) or email me: [michaelstrawser@legacyctc.com](mailto:michaelstrawser@legacyctc.com) for additional information.

Gallup Strengths: achiever, learner, significance, futuristic, focus

PI Behavioral: venturer

Enneagram: 8w7 (nonconformist or maverick)

DiSC- D Style (direct, firm)



# published books

Instructional Communication in Professional Contexts

Conducting a Communication Audit

Multigenerational Communication in Organizations

Emerging Trends in Higher Education

Transformative Student Experiences in Higher Education

New Media and Digital Pedagogy

Engaging Millennial Faculty

Leading Millennial Faculty

The COVID-19 Impact on Higher Education Stakeholders and Institutional Services

Higher Education Implications for Teaching and Learning during COVID-19

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