



Gartner®

Chief Communications Officer Leadership Vision for 2022

3 Strategic Actions for Success

From Chris Howard, Chief of Research, Gartner

In 2022, we continue to feel the human toll of the global pandemic, but we already know that 2021 has been a watershed period in which attitudes and norms have permanently shifted — in our everyday lives and at work.

Living through COVID-19 has increased social awareness — as have growing demands for equity for those who are underrepresented.

Businesses have also changed. For many organizations, the pandemic has catalyzed digital business initiatives as we adapt to the demands of employees, customers and other stakeholders, who were forced into new digital options that they have now come to favor.

B2B purchasers are happy to buy digitally, without a sales representative; B2C consumers are buying off social media platforms; employees are physically distributed and communicating asynchronously — and IT infrastructures must secure the organization despite this “anytime, anyway, anywhere” way in which we’re operating.

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In your role as a leader, you’ve now spent months adapting to change and delivering new solutions at speed. You and your team may be burning out, and it’s never been more important to prioritize your time and energy. To help with that, Gartner Leadership Vision provides top-level guidance to leaders and their teams on where to focus — based on our data-driven research.

We’re providing detailed insights to our clients across dozens of roles, and we’re now excited to share excerpts with the business community beyond our clients. We hope this will help you to focus discussions with your teams, peers and other leaders, so you can more quickly and effectively diagnose priorities and actions, especially as you solidify your strategic plans for 2022.



Chris Howard
Chief of Research, Gartner

A Perfect Storm

Sources of Challenges for Chief Communications Officers (CCOs)



ESG = environmental, social and governance

Trends, Challenges, Actions for the Communications Leader



Source: Gartner

Create Structure and Processes to Enable Goal Focus

Tactics to Improve Goal Focus



Strategic Planning

Ensure that strategies are cascaded from top business priorities and that they include SMART business objectives and KPIs.



Role Design

Redesign team roles to separate execution and strategy, assigning execution to junior and midlevel staff, and strategy to senior staff.



Processes

Introduce processes and governance (for example, service statements and prioritization exercises) that enable communications to push back on nonstrategic work.

Process Opportunity: Communications Activity Prioritization Matrix to Help Identify Priority Areas for CCOs

■ High Value ■ Medium Value ■ Low Value







SMART = specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound

Source: Gartner Communications Activity Value Assessment

Evolve Communication Approaches to Engage Employees in New Ways of Working

New Ways of Working

	Working Together, Together	Working Alone, Together
Colocated		
Distributed		
	Working Together, Apart	Working Alone, Apart
	Synchronous Work	Asynchronous Work

Tactics to Engage Employees



Listen to employees to enhance understanding of employee needs, as well as barriers to engagement and performance.



Segment audiences and develop personas to ensure targeted communications that best reach, engage and drive behavioral change.



Determine which channels are most suitable for engaging employees — including digital enablement, peer-to-peer connections, and optimizing leaders and managers when appropriate.

Follow 3 Principles to Ensure You Prioritize the Right Social Issues and Communicate Effectively

Tactics to Improve Social Issue Communication

Align With the Corporate Narrative

CCOs must update and use their corporate identity and direction to guide their selection and communication of social impact commitments.

Use Predetermined Engagement Criteria

CCOs must help create consistent decision criteria to reach a consensus and defend social issue selection.

Communicate Personal Fulfillment

CCOs must communicate how social impact commitments fulfill the personal needs of stakeholders.

**ESG/Social
Issue
Communication**

Recommended Actions





Enable goal focus by creating a strategic plan that cascades from business priorities — designing roles to enable people to focus on strategy and introducing processes to help prioritize work.

Evaluate and evolve communications approaches to engaging employees in new ways of working by listening to employees, segmenting audiences and evaluating the optimal channel mix.

Prioritize which social issues your organization will support, using predetermined engagement criteria. Then **optimize your social impact messaging** by aligning it to your corporate narrative and emphasizing personal benefits.

Actionable, objective insight

Explore these additional complimentary resources and tools for communications and marketing leaders:

 <p>Research Communications' Role in Managing the Future of Work</p> <p>The shift to remote work is an opportunity for communications leaders to make an impact. Learn how to evolve remote worker experiences.</p> <p>Download Research</p>	 <p>Research Build a Better Strategic Plan for Your Function</p> <p>Turn your strategy into action with our tools and templates.</p> <p>Download Templates</p>	 <p>Resource Hub Future of Work Reinvented</p> <p>Reinvent where, when and how we work to maximize employees' engagement and productivity.</p> <p>Learn More</p>	 <p>Journal Gartner Business Quarterly</p> <p>Stay up to date with the most compelling research on organizational issues that cut across the C-suite.</p> <p>Download Now</p>
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