

Translate, lead and communicate

On this page

Communicate strategic direction

Monitor progress

The objective of this step is to communicate the agency's strategic imperatives so that everyone is on the same page.

Communication is key ▼

Communication underpins the entire strategy development process. While included as the final step, senior leaders should clearly communicate the agency's goals, priorities and vision when it is practical to do so. Even if the strategy has not been endorsed, employees and stakeholders should be informed of progress towards finalisation. Establishing mechanisms for two way communication will help to surface any barriers to achieving organisational priorities that emerge.

Monitor strategy ▼

Senior leaders should regularly monitor and communicate the agency's progress towards achieving objectives, and work with their direct reports and middle managers to ensure key messages are received and everyone is on the same page. This promotes a sense of purpose and enthusiasm to achieve organisational goals at the team and individual level, which helps to build engagement. Regularly monitoring and communicating progress also serves as an early warning system.

Review strategy ▼

Implementing a continuous feedback system with two way communications (e.g. change agent networks) will support timely review of organisational strategy. When there is significant change as a result of internal or external factors and it is evident that one of more of the agency's objectives will not be achieved, senior

leaders should amend the objectives and metrics to reflect the change and ensure the objectives remain achievable.

Communicate strategic direction

Leaders must relentlessly communicate the agency's strategy and vision to ensure a shared understanding. Successful strategy relies on leaders who constantly communicate the agency's vision and strategy to staff, customers and key stakeholders. Great change leaders translate the strategic narrative into relevant messages for the particular audience, creating a shared understanding and building engagement across the agency and with stakeholders.

The strategy map might not make sense to everyone. Leaders need to create their own compelling messages about the agency's strategic imperatives and communicate these regularly and consistently. Setting and communicating clear goals and expectations helps to create a shared understanding of the agency's strategic direction, and ensures staff and key stakeholders understand what is expected of them.

To successfully execute strategy, leaders need to ensure that staff, customers and key stakeholders understand what the agency is trying to achieve, and what their role is in this vision. Successful strategy implementation relies on senior leaders:

- Relentlessly communicating the strategy, sharing the decision context and rationale to facilitate buy-in
- Facilitating forums or infrastructure for 2-way communication around key messages – many agencies use change agent networks to communicate directly and as needed with the coal face
- Listening to feedback from staff, customers and stakeholders, and responding to concerns
- Measuring and reviewing effectiveness of communication channels, and taking steps to address any shortfalls to ensure everyone is on the same page
- Check engagement regularly and respond if it starts to fall.

Critically, leaders need to anticipate parts of the strategic journey where tough decisions are required. In these circumstances, senior leaders should monitor and measure the organisation's ability to absorb change, and their readiness for change. Based on this information, senior leaders need to prepare the plans and communication strategies required to help staff, customers and stakeholders understand the change and support them through the transition.

Monitor progress

Following implementation of the agency's strategy, senior leaders need to monitor progress towards achieving the agency's goals, and where required, make adjustments to the strategies and initiatives to ensure delivery of the desired outcomes. It is essential that staff, customers and stakeholders are informed of progress and milestones.

Monitoring and reviewing the agency's strategy enables senior leaders to assess what is working, make adjustments to plans and strategies, and stay informed of new workforce and organisational issues. The metrics defined in the agency's Balanced Scorecard will support senior leaders with this task.

To successfully monitor and communicate the agency's progress towards achieving objectives, senior leaders can:

- Conduct progress reviews against strategic imperatives via regular monitoring/reporting activities and standing agenda items at executive/board meetings
- Communicate progress and share critical success factors widely and regularly
- Facilitate progress by proactively asking about and resolving roadblocks to success
- Reinforce commitment to objectives by refining and re-prioritising deadlines. If things change, the agency's staff, customers and stakeholders should be made aware
- Encourage continuous improvement by:
 - sharing learnings from what worked well
 - leading frank, non-judgemental discussion of unsuccessful initiatives
- Take time to celebrate success.

Implementing a continuous feedback loop will help senior leaders to monitor strategy, assess outcomes and leverage the feedback from staff, customers and key stakeholders to build robust strategy.