

BledCom

A World in Crisis:
The Role of
Public Relations

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The crisis of the profession

- Exponential growth of the communications profession during the last decades in many countries
- Broadening of task and roles; some spearheads of excellence

BUT:

- Influence and internal reputation of communications still low
- Lack of widely accepted definitions, concepts and management tools in the field
- Communications seldom a trendsetter;
mostly a follower of overall developments in organisations and society

Empirical insights

The European Communication Monitor reveals:

Competency gap

- Less than 50% of communicators report high capabilities for managing financial resources, less than 59% for human resources
- Social media skills: 65% are competent in messaging, but only 34% in initiating dialogues and 22% in understanding algorithms

Leadership gap

- Only 63% of highest-ranking communicators are perceived excellent leaders
- Only 66% provide a compelling vision for how communication can help the organisation

Positioning gap

- Operational contributions to organisational success rated higher than strategic impact
- Limited understanding of value creation: 80% focus on immaterial assets like reputation, brands, culture; only 55% demonstrate economic impact

How can we overcome the crisis?

Probably the profession could ...

- refrain from the inflationary use of the term “strategic” for all communication activities
- stop producing buzzwords and fog candles to create internal demand for communications, but employ reliable data and a holistic perspective

Probably the research community could ...

- widen its view and put communications in interdisciplinary context, unmasking myths of the profession as well as of normative PR theories
- stop producing even more of the same micro studies based on our own theories that are disconnected from other disciplines
- focus on exploring real-world problems (e.g. power, black PR) and challenges – which are often too complex for quantitative design and short journal articles 😞