

Communications Function Maturity Scale™

The diagnostic diagram on the previous page provides a general temperature check of how your team is doing. Now it's time to shift to a more specific assessment using a maturity scale. This exercise can give you more precise insights on which operational areas of your organization are working well, and which parts require attention to elevate your team to a high performing strategic communications function.

Fill out the scale based on the best available information you have today. Keep in mind that the exercise is designed to capture your *current* state, not your aspirational future state.

Answer each question, tally up your score first by section, and then calculate the total for all answers.

1. Organizational Design

- a. Is the reporting structure for the head of communications appropriate (e.g. reports directly to the CEO or most senior executive level)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- b. To what extent does your organization integrate internal and external communications strategically (e.g. in setting priorities, planning and aligning messaging)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- c. To what extent and does it integrate these functions strategically (e.g. in setting priorities and aligning messaging)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- d. Does the communications function have an adequate level of human resources?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- e. Does the communications function have an adequate budget?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- f. Is it clear to communications practitioners what the target performance indicators are for their work (e.g. what communications and/or corporate indicators they are working towards)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

Total score for Organizational Design: _____/50

2. Governance

- a. Does the organization have a current Corporate Strategic Communications Plan that aligns to the organization's overall Strategic Plan?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- b. Is the Corporate Strategic Communications Plan understood by the communications team and integrated into day-to-day practice?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- c. Are leaders across the organization aligned with the Corporate Strategic Communications Plan (e.g. are the organizational leaders doing their part to contribute to the Plan's implementation)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- d. Are the responsibilities and accountabilities of the communications function clearly understood across the organization?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- e. Do internal clients, including executives, know how to engage the services of communications in a consistent and efficient fashion?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

Total score for Governance: _____/50

3. Enablement

- a. Does the communications function use an effective project management/tracking system?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- b. Are employees equipped with the tools and technology they need to function properly?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- c. Is there an effective approval process that enables, rather than impedes, performance?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

- d. Are the core processes of the communications function documented and understood?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

e. Does the communications team have effective and regular staff meetings?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

Total score for Enablement: _____/50

4. Capability

a. Does the communications team have the core competencies required to deliver the function effectively?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

b. Does the communications function have a culture of learning?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

c. Is appropriate technical or subject matter training offered to employees based on best practices in their area of work?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

d. Do training plans for communicators include professional development related to how they can contribute effectively as enablers, such as consultative skills or project management?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

e. Are leaders and executives equipped with the knowledge and skills required to contribute effectively to high performance communications?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

To a great extent

Total score for Capability: _____/50

Scoring

Write your score for each dimension of maturity in the table below, then add up the total for your overall Maturity Score and mark it on the scale below.

Dimension	Score
Organizational Design	
Governance	
Enablement	
Capability	
Overall Maturity Score	/200



Overall Maturity Score

Low Level of Maturity: Risk			Moderate Level of Maturity: Caution				High Level of Maturity: Opportunity		
20	40	60	80	100	120	140	160	180	200

Interpretation of Results

Overall Maturity Score:

High Level of Maturity: Opportunity (160 and above)

An overall score in this range suggests that the communications function is effectively positioned and equipped to perform. To further ensure success, continued attention should be paid to each dimension of maturity. It is also important to consider long-term measures to maintain this level of maturity over time, such as succession planning and upskilling the team.

Moderate Level of Maturity: Caution (80 to 159)

A score in this range indicates that deliberate steps are required to improve the team’s level of functional maturity. A core area of required focus is likely to ensure that a Corporate Strategic Communications Plan, aligned to the organization’s Strategic Plan, is in place and effectively executed. It may be helpful to conduct a more detailed assessment of each part of the communications function, to identify areas within the four dimensions requiring further attention.

Low Level of Maturity: Risk (20 to 79)

An overall score in this range points to an elevated degree of risk for the communications function. It signals a low prognosis for success in effectively delivering the level of communications value required to meet organizational and audience needs.

Begin by identifying the dimensions with the lowest scores and engage in a process to involve staff and executives in making improvements. There may be an opportunity to identify core interventions that could have a “flywheel effect” of building momentum and improving performance, such as tackling the fundamentals of strategic communications planning and governance.

Maturity by Dimension:

Review your score for each dimension of maturity – Organizational Design, Governance, Enablement and Capability. A score of 30 or below demonstrates that attention in this area is required to ensure that your function is effectively set up to perform.