Part 6
Evaluating and doing research on communication

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Chapter 21

Managing the performance of corporate communication: an overview and a framework proposal

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Contents

Learning objectives

Having read this chapter, readers will be able to:

- describe the basic principles of process evaluation and explain how they have affected the corporate communication field
- describe the basic principles of performance measurement and explain how they have affected the corporate communication field
- assess the limitations as well as advantages associated with these two approaches
- describe the basic principles of the communication performance management (CPM) framework
- define the main steps of the CPM framework and the available measurement tools

INTRODUCTION

Communication managers and technicians are aware of the need for research and evaluation, which are considered the key factors in the process of institutionalizing communication within organizations, because they facilitate the acceptance of the strategic role of the function by top management (Grunig, Grunig and Dozier 2002; Radford and Goldstein, 2002; Invernizzi and Romenti, 2009). Evaluation and measurement are the keys to the boardroom door (Macnamara, 2004). A significant tendency in the communication field is the move away from an evaluative approach focused on outputs and outcomes of the processes (process evaluation approach), towards a more managerial approach that pays greater attention to the quantitative results as well as the impacts of communication on the organizational performance (performance measurement approach). Communication scholars and practitioners embraced both approaches, managing their respective limits and strengths. Recent evolution in the evaluation and measurement fields of studies underlines the importance of looking at process evaluation and performance measurement as two complementary approaches that should be managed in an integrated manner (performance management approach). Adopting a performance management approach in the corporate communication field means paying more attention to stakeholders' expectations of the evaluation process, analysing the functioning of the communication programmes and reporting on the results. A lot of progress has been made in this direction; nevertheless, the challenges in the communication field remain significant. In this chapter, a communication performance management framework, built on the basic principles of performance management, will be proposed and its implications for corporate communication studies will be discussed.

THE PROCESS EVALUATION SCHOOL OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

The origin of process evaluation dates to the years preceding the First World War in the USA in the field of training programmes related to public health. In the 1970s, process evaluation became an independent branch of study within social sciences, since it was based on a variety of dedicated academic journals and specific techniques. Process evaluation is based on the collection, analysis and interpretation of systematic information about a programme in order to express an opinion on its functioning and guide the decisions of all parties involved (Patton, 1998; Rossi, Lipsey and Freeman, 1999). In other words, evaluation applies the methods deriving from social sciences within organizational contexts, and therefore requires a particular sensitivity to the subjects involved, the environmental factors that may affect the results and communication of the results themselves (American Evaluation Association, 1994; Caulley, 1997). The early, most important models developed by scholars

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and practitioners of corporate communication and public relations are based on the basic principles of process evaluation and research (Central Office of Information, 2009). Basic principles can be summarized in the following three main points.

Richness of the evaluative questions

Process evaluation has a much deeper heuristic nature than performance measurement, since it offers a broad set of evaluative questions. Evaluation studies conceive a communication programme as an open system that takes place within organizational and social contexts from which specific needs derive (Figure 21.1). The communication needs drive the definition of specific objectives (Institute for Public Relations, 1999), followed by the provision of inputs (for example financial resources) that are transformed into outputs through specific activities (units of work), into outcomes (effects on the public) and the impact on organizational and/or social environments.

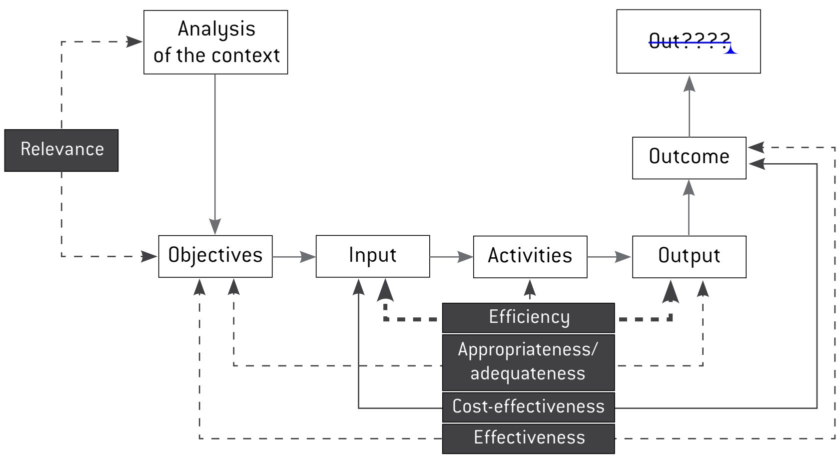

Figure 21.1 The communication programme in evaluation studies

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The most important evaluation models of communication, such as the Preparation, Implementation and Impact (PII) model by Cutlip, Center and Broom (2000), the Macro Model of PR Evaluation by Macnamara (1992) and the PR Yardstick model by Lindenmann (2003), follow the idea of process evaluation described above. They define the evaluative levels of communication, which are those aspects of the process that can be evaluated. In particular, the PII model focuses on assessing the consistency of gathered information through environmental analysis and defined communication needs. Furthermore, the model points out the importance of assessing the consistency between projected communication activities and needs, as well as the coherence of messages to be communicated and the provided communication tools. In this case, pre-testing of communication materials is essential in order to carry out ex ante evaluation activities. The Macro Model of PR and the PR Evaluation Yardstick model focus instead on the difference between outputs and outcomes of the communication. Watson (1997) defines the most common mistake made by communication professionals as a 'substitution game', that is, replacement of the outcomes, which are the measures of the effects of communication, with the outputs, which represent the measures of the implemented activities. The outputs are pseudo-effects because they are indicators of the efforts made by communications professionals, but they don't represent meaningful results. The main limitations of the described models are that they do not deepen the concept of the impact of communication on organizational context and they don't develop the appropriate methods and measures to evaluate this.

Evaluative research and attribution questions

If evaluation is expressing opinions on a process, its reliability depends on the level of methodological rigour adopted by the evaluator to gather, analyse and process information. The core of the evaluation process is therefore the evaluative research. The results are solid, clear, replicable and testable, because they are obtained through explicit, controllable processes, known by the scientific and professional community (Cole, 2002). The nature of the measures at the basis of evaluation research is conventional, and for that reason it allows replicability, transparency and control. The theme of the research methodology is crucial in the field of communication, where intuition and personal opinions have often been preferred to rigorous scientific procedures (Grunig and Hunt, 1984; Lerbinger, 1977; Lindenmann, 2001; Daymon and Holloway, 2002; Gregory, 2003). Communication scholars have, for a long time, emphasized the importance of combining qualitative and quantitative research techniques to obtain more precise results (Broom and Dozier, 1990). One of the main topics of evaluation is often to reconstruct the cause and effect relationship between two phenomena (attribution question), and to that end the effects of the communication programme must be isolated from other intervening factors that may have influenced the results. In this case, experimental and quasi-experimental designs are the most used techniques.

Relational and communicative nature

The purpose of evaluation is always contextualized at a specific point in time and in a given organizational context (Noble, 1999). The negotiation of the purposes of evaluation is one of the most delicate phases of the process. Since evaluation can pursue different goals, it is important to understand why the evaluation process is carried out in order to define the tools and resources. One of the most interesting streams of evaluation research is the utilization-oriented evaluation (Patton, 1998), according to which the users of evaluation results must be identified at the beginning of the process and their needs must be kept in mind throughout all phases of the evaluation process. The stakeholders involved in the evaluation process should influence the choice of what is evaluated, the necessary resources, the time required and, finally, how the results are shared, communicated and used. Evaluators should also manage relationships with other key players involved in the process, such as the information providers, in addition to the end users (Phillips, 2001). Communication scholars pay much attention to the role of the evaluator. Likely (2000, 2004), for example, identifies three types of evaluators: technical, managerial and leader. The first is responsible for the technical assessment of a single communication tool, such as a brochure or corporate event. The managerial evaluator is responsible for the evaluation of communication programmes such as media relations or public affairs programmes. The leader evaluator is responsible for assessing the management of the entire communication function and its contribution to the overall goals of the organization.

THE PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT SCHOOL OF CORPORATE COMMUNICATION

At the end of the 19th century, the focus of communicators moved from evaluation process and research to performance measurement and accountability. A number of limitations related to the evaluation process, including the difficulty of translating the results obtained into immediate decisions, favoured a greater emphasis on the measurement of performance: ‘A growing disillusionment with conventional evaluation praxis. Many companies experience only limited use of evaluation findings. Evaluation findings do not automatically feedback into a receptive and responsive decision-making process’ (Bastoe, 2006, p. 97). The evaluation process takes a long time and produces a huge amount of data that has to be processed, thus producing lengthy evaluation reports. Top management, however, only needs a few key numbers and facts on how the communication process has worked, in order to make quick adjustments. Performance measurement seems to offer corporate communication the opportunity to become a managerial function, which relies on synthetic dashboards, quickly available and always updated. Performance measurement is based on the following key principles.

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Key performance indicators and key results indicator

The balanced scorecard (BSC) is the most frequently applied instrument to communication processes in order to monitor their contribution to organizational performance. The BSC is a strategic management approach developed by Robert Kaplan and David Norton in the early 1990s to support organizations in the processes of measuring and managing their strategy. The BSC translates business strategy into objectives, and then into measures capable of monitoring the achievement of those objectives and finally into appropriate activities to achieve them. The objectives relate to six main areas of activity, called perspectives, which comprise the overall performance of an organization (Kaplan and Norton, 2004; Parmenter, 2007):

1. The *financial perspective* concerns the organization's ability to be attractive to the financial community, the actual and potential investors.
2. The *customer perspective* concerns the satisfaction of customers' needs through a proper offer of products and services.
3. The *internal perspective* identifies the key processes in the generation of organizational values.
4. The *learning and growth perspective* aims to activate virtuous internal learning processes.
5. The *environment/community perspective* concerns the ability of the organization to support local businesses, to develop links with future employees and community leadership.
6. The *employee satisfaction perspective* seeks to develop and spread a positive company culture, to increase the retention of key staff and the sense of belonging to the company.

For each perspective, the BSC identifies key performance indicators (KPIs), that is, those measures which indicate what needs to be done in order to improve key results indicators (KRIs). The difference between KPIs and KRIs is crucial in the field of performance measurement, and is often misunderstood by communication scholars. While KRIs refer to the past and indicate what the organization has achieved, KPIs refer to the future and indicate what the organization needs to do to enhance future organizational performance. KPIs are non-financial measures and frequently monitored (Parmenter, 2007). Corporate reputation, for example, is a KRI in the environment/community perspective (Bowd and Bowd, 2001; Lewis, 2001; Bromley, 2002), while the quality of stakeholder relationships is a related communication KPI (Grunig and Hon, 1999; Bruning, 2002).

Communication scholars applied the BSC method to specific communication instruments, such as corporate publications (Fleisher and Mahaffy, 1997), specific communication programmes, such as public affairs programmes (Ritter, 2003; Zerfass, 2008), or to the overall communication activities within an organization (Vos and Schoemaker, 2004).

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Performance measurement reports are synthetic and action-oriented

In the field of performance measurement, 'dashboards' comprise reports that contain the main facts and figures related to communication processes and their performance (Paine and Bender, 2001). Reported measures derive from the communication strategy and objectives, and frequently coincide with communication KPIs, which can be defined as the most prominent levers that improve organizational performance. Performance measurement reports also describe the actions and decisions to be taken, which are consistent with the results, because measurement provides actionable results, since it is deeply integrated within the organizational environment, linked with decision-making processes and managerial actions. In other words, the measurement process is integrated with the processes of organizational planning and programming. At the same time, performance measurement reports are easily understood by all organizational members because they use the same terminology as other managerial functions.

Return on investment (ROI) of communication

One of the most requested performance measures in communication is the calculation of return on investment (ROI) (Swedish Public Relations Association, 1996; Institute of Public Relations, 2004). There is a lively debate about the appropriateness of applying this formula to communication. Some scholars argue that ROI should be considered as the return on predetermined communication objectives, because assigning an economic value to communication is a nonsense. Communication often pursues long-term, intangible results that can't have a direct economic value. On the other hand, some say that ROI is the correct way to assign an economic value to communication results and that it is fundamental to legitimize the strategic role of the communication function in the eyes of management.

In addition to these conflicting points of view, the ROI of communication is often confused with other methods to assign an economic value to communication (Institute for Public Relations, 2002; Tosun, ~~2002~~). For example, advertising value equivalence (Jeffries-Fox, 2003) is mistakenly considered an ROI measure, while it should be defined as a method to assign an economic value to media relations programmes, albeit with limitations. Performance measurement literature defines ROI as a ratio between the net benefits and the net costs determined by the communication process, multiplied by 100. This is the only existing formula to calculate ROI and communicators should be aware of it. If ROI is properly calculated, communicators can compare different communication programmes and decide which contributes most to organizational performance. If, on the other hand, the economic value of communication programmes has been assigned using another method, comparisons are unfruitful.

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COMPARISON BETWEEN PROCESS EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Communication scholars have applied one or the other approach to their processes and activities within organizations, highlighting their differences, as well as the respective strengths and limitations (Table 21.1).

Table 21.1 Comparison between process evaluation and performance measurement

Items	Process evaluation	Performance measurement
Frequency and time	Episodic, before, during and after the programme	Ongoing throughout the programme
Units of measurement and data production	Customized qualitative and quantitative indicators produced once	Quantitative indicators reproduced over time through a routine process
Evaluative questions	Issue-specific	General issues
Attribution and tools	Attribution of outcomes is a key aim and it is inferred through regression analyses and experimental designs	Attribution is assumed and it is inferred through contribution analyses and time series
Evaluators and report	Internal or external programme evaluator, evaluation report	Internal programme managers as evaluators, tabular reporting
Points of reference	Goals, customer expectations, past performance, benchmark, international comparison, professional standards, stakeholder demands	Set targets, past performance, performance of 'like organizations'
Use	Few users, low instrumental application, high conceptual use	All organizational levels, high instrumental and process application, low conceptual and tactical use
Resources	Targeted	Part of the programme infrastructure
Strengths	Context-oriented Relational nature Theory-driven	Less expensive and timely Decision-oriented
Weaknesses	Expensive	Aligned with managerial processes

Sources: Nielsen and Ejler, 1999; Hatry, 1999; Vedung, 2004; McDavid and Hawthorn, 2006

Each evaluation is customized, because it is perfectly consistent with the communication programme taking place. The evaluation begins with the implementation of the communication programme and ends with its conclusion. On the other hand, performance measurement is a system of fixed measures, monitored on a regular basis.

The evaluation involves the construction of a research design addressing the cause and effect relationship between each activity and its achievements. The methodological aspects related to the isolation of the effects of intervening variables of the context as well as the validity of the measures are essential. Performance measurement does not tackle the problem of attribution. It identifies the measures to monitor, because they represent KPIs, which can contribute to the future organizational performance. Evaluative research usually implies professional evaluators, while managers often monitor the most important KPIs.

The evaluation can tell whether a communication programme has been successful or not by comparing the results with historical data, with results obtained by competitors or by comparing results with international standards and stakeholder expectations. The performance measurement sets objectives to be achieved on the basis of past performance or that of competitors. The evaluation needs dedicated resources, and its use is limited because of its high conceptual nature. As a consequence, it is much more expensive than performance measurement. Performance measurement does not imply dedicated resources, because it is deeply integrated within managerial processes. In summary, evaluation and measurement answer two different questions, which are, respectively: 'What were the critical factors in my success or failure?' 'Did I achieve the desired results?'

INTEGRATING VALUATION AND MEASUREMENT: ADOPTING A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

The debate on which is preferable, evaluation or measurement, has been continuing for years. Some communication scholars prefer a synthetic dashboard of performance indicators, quickly available and always updated, while others claim the need for methodologically sound research designs, which can scientifically demonstrate the existence of a causal link between communication activities and observed results. Communication scholars argue that the two schools are not substitutes, since they answer different questions, require different skills and resources, but neglect any complementarity. However, complementarity is a crucial topic that many scholars have tried to exploit in the field of measurement and evaluation (Blalock, 1999; McDavid and Hawthorn, 2006; Mayne, 2007; Nielsen and Ejler, 2008). More precisely, Rist (2006, pp. 9–10) identifies four types of complementarities between evaluation and performance measurement:

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1 *Sequential:* measurement often generates questions, which can be answered through evaluation, and evaluative research may generate knowledge that requires continuous monitoring of performance.

2 *Informational:* evaluation and measurement often acquire data from the same sources, but use it for different purposes and analyses.
3 *Organizational:* in many organizations they are managed by the same unit in an integrated manner.
4 *Methodological:* evaluation and measurement share many processes and tools for planning, data collection and analysis.

Adopting an integrated approach to measurement and evaluation of results implies what Bastoe (2006, p. 97) defines as a performance management approach, which 'puts evaluation and performance monitoring elements into a system that also includes planning and feedback elements'.

The 'communication performance management' framework, described later on, is built on integrated principles of evaluation and measurement (E&M) applied to communication discipline. These principles can be summarized as follows:

1 *Measurement and evaluation processes are relational:* Prospective users of results and decision-makers need to be identified at the beginning of the process. Communication programme managers will have an important stake in the system. Their involvement in validating the logic of communication programmes functioning (programme logics) increases the likelihood that the results obtained will be useful for programme improvements. In the meantime, multi-channel ways of communicating should be established to facilitate top-down, bottom-up and horizontal sharing of information, problem identification and problem-solving. A further important step is to clarify top managers' expectations about results to be achieved. At the end of the process, results must be properly communicated, shared and discussed with the stakeholders of the process.
2 *Logic models of communication activities must be put at the heart of a performance management framework:* Logic models make the links between causes and effects in a communication programme explicit and highlight the specific functioning of each of them. A public affairs logic model will differ from a sponsoring model or an internal communication one. A performance management framework should consider the specificity of each communication programme and should put its functioning at the centre of the E&M process. In other words, a performance management process should be theory-driven and built on the functioning model of the process to evaluate. A logic model clarifies which implementation objectives are connected to which outputs, linking constructs and outcomes. Implementation objectives include activities that are required to produce intended outputs (Rush and Ogborne, 1991). Linking constructs (or bridging variables) (Weiss, 1997) describe what must be done to translate outputs into outcomes. Obviously, clear and measurable communication objectives are crucial for the development of logic models.

3 *Measurement and evaluation are situational and context-oriented:* Since organizational performance is a multidimensional construct, E&M can follow different paths according to the situation in which they occur. E&M can pursue different goals, answer different questions and feed different decision-making processes. Understanding the history of the organization around similar communication initiatives can be useful in order to define what has to be measured, why and with what consequences. Time and environmental context can also have a significant impact on the results and should be analysed and included in the development of performance stories. Performance management considers E&M as sense-making building processes around data, facts and results. E&M are not mere applications of methods and models, but they should use a dialogic and constructivist approach to make performance results significant within a specified context and organization. E&M can also give the organization a richness of different evaluative results, which have to be processed and interpreted within a specific organizational environment.

4 *Measurement and evaluation should be action and decision-making oriented:* Performance management produces actionable results. As a consequence, decision-makers within organizations should be involved in the process. At the end of the performance management process, results should be shared and discussed with decision-makers in order to identify appropriate actions. Evaluation of stakeholder engagement initiatives should be useful to share and discuss solutions to problems that have emerged from measurement.

CASE STUDY: **Granarolo**

Granarolo is one of the largest groups in the Italian food industry. The core business is concentrated on three main product areas: milk and cream, yogurt and cheese, and industrial gastronomy. Established in 1957, the company has achieved significant growth thanks to its high commitment on product quality, assured by a rigorous selection and systematic evaluation of suppliers based on the quality of raw materials used, the human resources policies applied, and environmental and social responsibilities. But despite its high profile, in the 1990s the company suffered a crisis of trust among internal and external stakeholders. The causes of the crisis were management decisions, in particular a drastic reorganization and restructuring of the production process.

To restore trust and organizational reputation among key stakeholders (employees, suppliers, local communities), the chief communications officer implemented a number of communication programmes. For example, internal communication activities were planned to revitalize organizational values and vision among employees. New values were diffused through meetings where employees were actively involved in suggesting concrete applications of the values. Employees also became real supporters of the new code of conduct by notifying improper behaviour to the ethical officer. Employees from all levels voluntarily joined 'Groups of Change' to reflect on the future challenges facing the company and share solutions, strategies and plans of action. Each group dealt with a topic and produced a plan of action, which was discussed with top management and if it was feasible and advantageous for the company, it was implemented. The wide range of topics that the groups took up, such as corporate governance or production efficiency, were periodically updated. Local communities were involved in the development of sustainability programmes to stimulate thinking and debate on new initiatives. For instance, a group of clients collaborated to design clearer and more legible product labels. Educational campaigns were developed in partnership with some suppliers. Regarding financial performance, Granarolo developed numerous partnerships with its suppliers to reduce costs, for example by reducing energy consumption and fuel in the distribution of products.

After a year, a process of communication performance management started. Results had to demonstrate the contribution of communication programmes to KRIs into three main performance areas: *customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction* and *environment/community satisfaction*. A customer satisfaction survey and an internal climate survey were conducted. Results were compared to previous ones, and discussed with top managers in order to identify solutions to criticisms. For example, results of the internal climate survey suggested the creation of interdepartmental groups of employees to discuss daily problems and share concrete solutions and ideas. Each group was headed by a member of Granarolo's management and included two leaders from middle management, who had the job of involving employees at all levels and functions. The task of the groups was to gather ideas, from which they then identified projects to work on. As an example, one project involved the restructuring of the company cafeteria to reduce queuing time and make the environment more pleasant.

Granarolo also evaluated changes of corporate reputation using a quantitative methodology (Berens and van Riel, 2004). A questionnaire was sent to a sample of stakeholders, such as environmental associations, consumers, local communities and financial entities. A follow-up stakeholder workshop was held, where stakeholders expressed their opinions on the results of the corporate reputation survey, provided new perspectives on how to interpret those results, and suggested innovative solutions to reduce the gap between actual and desired results. The main suggestions gathered during the stakeholder workshop were published in the company's annual sustainability report, a transparent way to disseminate performance management results and facilitate public discussion.

Case study questions

1 Which performance management principles did Granarolo apply?
2 What was the aim of the stakeholder workshop?
3 Did Granarolo privilege an evaluation or a measurement approach? Why?

THE PROPOSED COMMUNICATION PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT (CPM) FRAMEWORK

Starting from the basic principles of performance management applied to communication, a communication performance management (CPM) framework has been developed (Figure 21.2), consisting of five sequential steps:

1. Engage decision-makers and choose the performance management path(s) to follow.
2. Develop and analyse the logic model of the communication process.
3. Choose the measures, methods and models to apply.
4. Develop a performance story.
5. Communicate the performance story and engage stakeholders in the results.

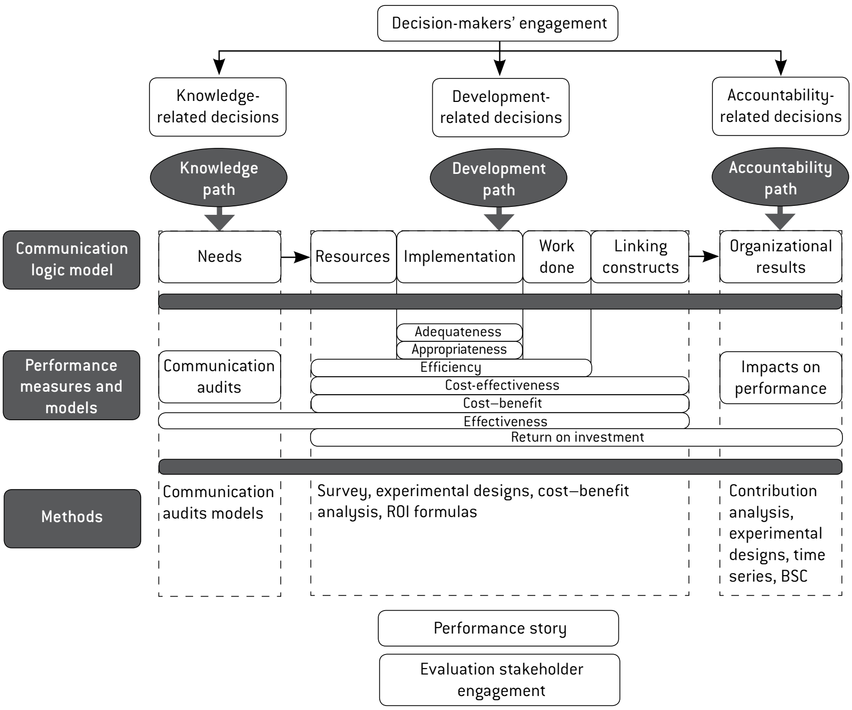

Figure 21.2 Communication performance management framework

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Here, we explain these five steps in more detail:

1 Who are the decision-makers? What kinds of decisions should be taken after the performance management process? A basic principle of the CPM framework is its user orientation. For this reason, the first step consists of engaging people who will use measurements to take decisions. For example, a communication technician needs to understand how to improve the results of an event, while a communication manager will be more interested in reviewing the mix of communication tools available to cut the budget allocated. Decisions can be divided into three main categories, which are related to three types of measurement and evaluation: knowledge, development and accountability (Ehling, 1992; Chelimsky, 1997; Elmer, 2001). *Evaluation and measurement for knowledge* detect the external and internal communication needs, define the fit between them and the programmes designed to address them. *Evaluation and measurement for development* coincide with formative evaluation (Scriven, 1996) and have to do with the provision of help to strengthen communication instruments and programmes and, ultimately, to improve organizational performance. *Evaluation and measurement for accountability* provide information to top managers about the contribution of communication instruments and programmes to organizational performance.

2 The second step consists of building the logic model(s) of communication programme(s) to be evaluated and measured. A logic model classifies the main parts of a programme into inputs, implementation objectives, linking constructs and organizational results. *Inputs* are the resources required to operate the programme and can be converted into equivalent money value. Rush and Ogborne (1991) introduced the concept of *implementation objectives*, which state the work to be done to achieve the intended outcomes. They shouldn't be confused with the programme objectives; and they remind communicators that correct implementation is a prerequisite for achieving outcomes. The *work done* (the output) is often countable, and is the most tangible result of a programme. *Linking constructs* or bridging variables (Weiss, ~~1972~~) are steps between the work done and intended organizational results. Linking constructs coincide with KPIs, because they are the levers to use to enhance organizational KRIs. Finally, *organizational results* are the intended impact of the communication programme on organizational performance.

3 After the development of the communication logic model, the third step is the choice of measures (what) and of methods to apply (how), on the basis of available resources. Needs can be detected through communication audits and organizational analyses (Church, 1996; Adrian and Downs, 2004; Queen and Hargie, 2004). Resources can be compared to work done (efficiency) (Werner, 2002). ~~If r~~esources ~~are~~ converted into money can

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be compared to linking constructs (cost-effectiveness), their monetary value (cost–benefit). Implementation objectives are useful to understand if a communication programme has been adequate and/or appropriate. The difference between adequateness and appropriateness coincides with the distinction between implementation and theory failures (Suchman, 1967). Adequateness evaluates the correct implementation of a communication programme from a technical point of view, for example the readability and accuracy of written messages in brochures (Clarke, 1999), or the design of a website. Appropriateness tests the theory behind the communication programmes, for example the proper choice of publics to whom the message is addressed, and the choice of proper instruments (written or interpersonal, digital or non-digital). Linking constructs are important to evaluate the effectiveness of the programme (Institute for Public Relations, 2003; Lindenmann, 1997; Macnamara, 2004), because ~~are~~ the effects of the programme on the publics. Finally, the impact on organizations performance (Gatfield, Barker and Graham, 1999) can be measured and ROI can be calculated.

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4 The results achieved should be described and analysed through a performance story set up to convince all stakeholders in the performance management process that the communication activities undertaken have indeed made a difference. Mayne (2007) states that a good performance story should contain a description of the overall context in which the programme occurred, and a comparison between the programme's intended accomplishments and the realized outcomes. The performance story should also discuss the contribution made by the programme to organizational results and ensure the quality of the data and information reported. Finally, a performance story should report the lessons learned and what should be done in the future.

5 The performance story should be shared with stakeholders in the performance management process. Decision-makers should also be engaged to discuss the contents of the performance story, in order to make adjustments, suggest further steps and reflect on lessons learned.

CHAPTER SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Adopting a performance management approach to assess the results of communication and its contribution to organizational performance imposes some demanding requirements on the process. First, the role of dialogue and communication with the stakeholders of the evaluation and measurement process. The communication performance management framework is utilization-oriented and its first step consists of clearing expectations of decision-makers, who have to be involved in the process. Then results should be discussed and shared among all stakeholders. Transparency about the

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accomplishments of the communication processes and their level of quality is a pillar of the performance management approach. Second, logic models of communication processes to be evaluated are at the heart of the performance management framework. Logic models help communication managers to identify key constructs and measures. In other words, communication performance management should be a theory-driven process. Finally, performance management focuses on the building of meaning around results achieved through performance stories, which pay attention to the context where communication programmes occurred, intervening variables and methodologies applied.

REVISION QUESTIONS

1 What are the basic principles of process evaluation and performance measurement? How do communication scholars apply them?
2 What are the changes introduced by performance management theory?
3 What are the main steps of the proposed communication performance management framework?
4 Describe the advantages of performance management for communication professionals.

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AQ: I found this to be a 2004 ref in this journal, pls advise

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