

Putting the 'sure' in measurement

Claire Power – a perspective piece



I broke out in a cold sweat when the Chair of the Board decided it was time to bring in a consultant to evaluate the performance of our communications function.

I was comfortable having my efforts talked about by people inside the organisation, but an external review? I felt as though my job was surely going to be on the line.

I'd seen consultant's reports before – there was one sitting in my bottom drawer from the last time the organisation had done one. Right before my predecessor left.

It was long, vague, and most frustratingly, left nothing for us to measure against this time.

I put the call out. Out of the many that came back, there was only one that provided a solid methodology that could measure performance.

I was hooked.

There was no way I could go back to measuring performance based on intuition. Suddenly I was eager to review the effectiveness of the communication function because the results would mean something.

And the results were pretty good. Sure there were some areas that needed tweaking, but at least I knew the direction I was headed in. Rather than giving me anything to fear – the review gave me a goal. It showed me where the focus for my next communication plan should lie.

I learned two things through this process. The first was that even the best communicators should keep looking for ways to improve.

The second was that people say who say that there is no holy grail of communication measurement are wrong. They just haven't called PRISM.

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