

CEO Communicator

Organizational communication and performance insights for the C-suite.

Regain Control of Your Corporate Story and Strategy.

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Many CEOs and Founders Have Lost It.

What is Really Driving Your Story in the Market?

7 out of 10 Employees Don't Know Where You are Headed.

The Rapid Pace of Change ... is Changing the CEO's Role.





Many CEOs and Founders Have Lost It.

Maybe you're the original founder of the business ... maybe you are not. Regardless, when you first took the reins at your company you...

- > Were laser focused on a clearly defined opportunity
- > Developed a strategy that was simple and easy for every employee to understand
- > Ensured everyone on the team was aligned with your vision and mission
- > Reminded the team every day of the company's higher purpose
- > Made sure everyone was clear on how the company should be positioned in the market
- > You even made sure the corporate story you were sharing with customers was clear, compelling and consistent across all critical touch points.



Remember?

Clarity and alignment was at an all-time high. And, most likely, so was your revenue growth, customer loyalty, employee engagement and competitive differentiation in the market.

What happened? Where did that go?

“Most successful businesses start off with a clear insurgent mission on behalf of underserved customers. They are at war with their industry and each employee understands the company’s bold vision — and is inspired by it. Yet as a company grows over time, this insurgent mission and sense of purpose can become diluted.”

— Founder’s Mentality

Every CEO knows what this quote is talking about.

There are points and times where clarity and alignment in the business is absolute. However, left unattended, clarity and alignment fades. Time passes. Organizational changes take root. The corporate strategy evolves.

The good news is, you can regain that clarity and alignment. But it requires commitment from you, your leaders and middle management. It requires an intentional plan — concerted effort and energy — up and down the organization.

Are you struggling to get your company to the next level? Has growth stalled? Is employee engagement low?

It may be for one or several of the following reasons...

- > Your business strategy has gotten cloudy and employees no longer understand how they connect with the bigger picture.
- > Your purpose, vision, mission and values are no longer actively embraced up and down the organization.
- > Words and actions from your leadership team no longer align with or support your corporate story and strategy.
- > Employees lack connection with, understanding of or belief in your corporate story and strategy.
- > Customers acquisition rates are stagnant or declining because you lack a differentiated corporate story that is delivered consistently throughout the customer experience.

Maybe these are the reasons. Maybe they’re not.

But the fact is, when growth stalls ... when culture negatively impacts business performance ... and when leaders are no longer aligned – lack of clarity in your corporate story and strategy is very likely the root cause.

Recapture clarity.

The clarity you and your workforce had in your very first days.

Regain alignment.

The organizational alignment you used to drive connected decisions and actions across the business.

Companies that succeed in maintaining complete clarity and alignment between their corporate story and strategy — win. They win because their words and actions are consistent; creating a superior experience that increases customer acquisition, retention, loyalty and competitive differentiation.

At OnMessage, we specialize in helping executives align and activate their entire organization around a corporate strategy and story that dramatically improves the employee and customer experience.

Leveraging our disciplined methodology — executive teams are able to crystalize their go-to-market strategy, formulate a strategically aligned corporate messaging platform and ensure every stakeholder understands how to activate the strategy and story throughout the customer journey.



Learn more about the critical role clarity and alignment play in business performance at www.itsonmessage.com.



BY: JAMES O'GARA

What is Really Driving Your Story in the Market?

High-growth companies experience significant change. They move at a rapid pace. That's why the C-suite must be extremely diligent about maintaining organizational alignment.

Changes in fast moving companies often originate in the R&D side of the house. Changes in solution and service offerings based on customer requirements or competitive movement. Many times, these changes impact the company's overall strategy and story.

However, very few executives stop down long enough to reconnect the dots. To realign the company's go-to-market strategy (vision, mission, strategic initiatives), the company's story (positioning, value proposition, key points of difference), with the changes taking place in the company's offerings (products, solutions, services).

When this happens, the solution / service story can overtake or derail the position the company must own in the minds of its customers to experience long-term success. Ultimately, the company's vision, combined with an intimate understanding of customer requirements, should drive your product roadmap. However, when corporate and product stories get out of alignment, it creates a great deal of confusion in the minds of customers and employees. Maybe this quote from a leading product management firm says it best...

“If the executive team has not constructed, communicated, or deployed the broader company strategy, the product team will have nothing to tether their product development activities to. Product and development managers who lack knowledge of the corporate strategy have no grounding from which to effectively develop useful multi-year product and technology strategies, nor tools to motivate their teams.”

That's why companies must evaluate and reconnect the dots between their corporate strategy, story and their product roadmap. They must ensure that changes in the makeup of their offerings continue to align with the company's vision, mission and positioning in the market.

This won't happen if C-suite executives do not go through a formal audit and alignment process on a consistent basis. We recommend this happen at least once a year or as significant changes in the company's solution / service offerings take place.

What's driving your story in the market?

New features and functionality ... or a larger promise to your customers? Do they align? Clarity in the minds of your customers can only exist if you tell a clear, cohesive and connected story. A corporate story that aligns with your business strategy and product roadmap.

For more insights on how organizational clarity and alignment can improve business performance, visit www.itsonmessage.com.



7 out of 10 Employees Don't Know Where You / They are Going.

Did you know research shows less than 30% of employees know where their company is going (vision) and how they are supposed to get there (strategy)?

Ask most C-suite executives if their company's vision and strategy matter and they will say ... "Of course it matters." But the real answer is ... uncovered when you ask the next question ...

"What are you doing to ensure clarity and alignment in your vision and strategy — up and down the organization — on a consistent basis?"

In most cases ... their answer is vague and delivered with less conviction. So, let's be clear, having a vision is one thing — actually infusing that vision into the fabric of your culture is another. Defining your go-to-market strategy is one thing, however translating that strategy into a message employees can understand and act on is something else.



The truth is, activating your vision and strategy is hard.

What C-suite executives must understand is that achieving organizational clarity and alignment in these areas is not a “one and done” effort. It requires intentionality at every layer of the organization. Not just within the executive team — but with every leader in the company with P&L responsibilities and direct reports.

Most executives believe they have “done enough” in this critical area of their business. However, industry research says otherwise. According to a Harvard Business Review article, “When CEOs Talk Strategy, Is Anyone Listening,” only a small percentage of employees know where their company is going (vision) and how they are going to get there (strategy).

The article includes research that shows **only 29% of employees can correctly identify their company's strategy out of six choices**. This means 7 out of 10 employees are unknowingly misaligned with your company's vision and strategic direction.

Today more than ever, if you want to achieve organizational alignment that will produce optimal business performance — you have to make clarity in your vision and strategy a priority.

And make no mistake, **it does matter**. According to McKinsey and Company ...

“When people understand and are excited about the direction their company is taking, the company's earnings margin is twice as likely to be above the median.”

Who is responsible for aligning your vision, strategy and story up and down the organization?

Who wakes up every day asking this critical question ...
“What are we currently doing to ensure every employee knows where we are going and what they should be doing to help us get there?”

Many C-suite executives are turning to OnMessage to help them answer this critical question and define a sustained strategy that produces clarity and alignment at every level of their business.

To learn more about establishing organizational clarity and alignment, visit www.itsonmessage.com.



BY: JAMES O'GARA

According to Knoll Workplace Research, substantial organizational change occurs every three years.

How much has your business changed the last three months, let alone the last three years ...

- > Changes in **leadership**
- > Changes in **product or service offerings**
- > Changes in your **selling organization**
- > Changes in your **employee population**
- > Changes in **customer requirements**
- > Changes in your **vision and mission**
- > Changes in your **operating model and business strategy**



As a CEO or C-suite executive, you are experiencing changes across your business like no generation of business leaders before. And this rapid pace of change is redefining the role of a CEO.

Specifically, in the area of strategic communications.

In the past, communication was important ... but maybe not at the top of every CEO's priority list. Today, **leading executives understand the correlation between the desired outcome of change and the clarity of strategic communication** around that change.

That's why more and more CEOs are taking ownership in formulating and managing the story around strategic changes they are implementing in their business.

They are making this a high priority because they know what happens when they don't. Priorities get mixed up. Leadership decisions are not aligned. Employees get confused. Productivity drops off. And ultimately, customers get frustrated and leave.



The questions you must ask yourself are ...

- > Where does strategic and intentional communication land on your priority list?
- > What are you doing to formulate a clear, compelling and consistent message around changes in your business and how those changes will impact leaders, front-line employees and customers?
- > What story and intentional communication strategy will ensure change and innovation works for the business — not against it?

As the CEO, if you are not thinking about and leading the conversation in these areas — you should be.

Why? Because you ultimately own the impact these changes have on your business and you will not achieve desired results without an intentional, CEO-driven communication strategy that is activated up and down your organization.

C-suite executive teams turn to OnMessage to help shape, guide and execute strategic messaging and communication initiatives that are required to implement change and drive optimal organizational performance. Learn more at www.itsonmessage.com.



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