A woman with long, wavy brown hair and black-rimmed glasses is looking slightly upwards and to the right with a thoughtful expression. She is wearing a blue, short-sleeved top. The background is dark with a faint, light-colored geometric pattern of lines and squares.

CEOs Don't Just Own Strategy. They Own the Story Behind It.

If an organization succeeds or fails at implementing corporate initiatives, navigating a crisis, completing a merger, launching a new product line, or living up to the company's vision, mission and values ... the CEO is accountable.

Why? Because he or she owns the strategy. No, not just the business strategy – the messaging and communication strategy that is required to make it a success.

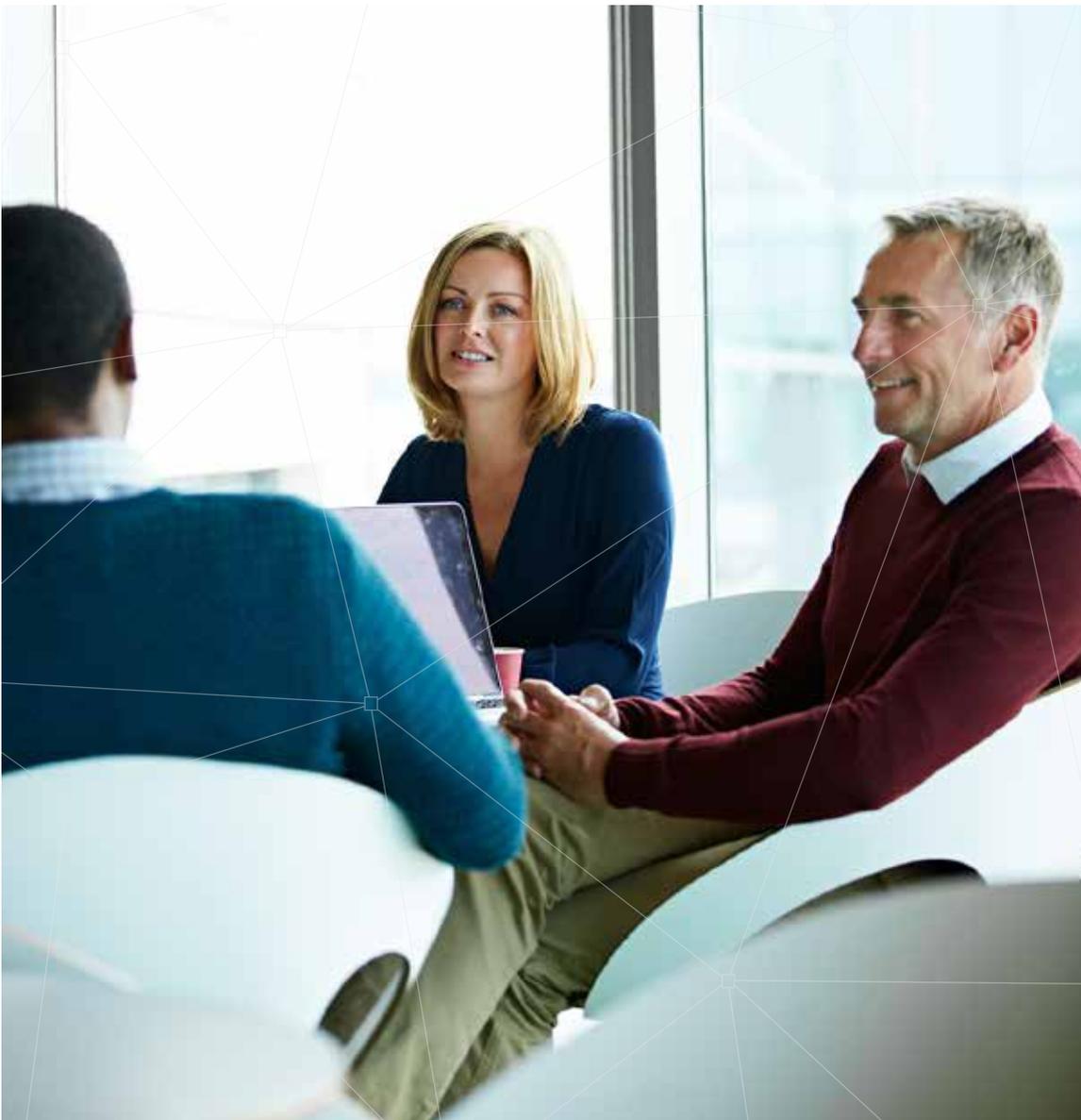
Sure, C-suite executives hold themselves accountable for strategy. However, what many executives have not acknowledged is ... they own the story behind it.

In a recent article published by Wharton School of Business, communications expert Walter G. Montgomery said ...

“CEOs commonly blame lousy communication when well-laid plans go awry. Yet, paradoxically, communications is an undervalued, lightly regarded discipline in the theory and practice of corporate leadership.”

Think about how much brain power and energy you and your C-suite put into shaping strategic business initiatives.

Now, think about the small amount of time (in comparison) you spend on the messaging and communication strategy in support of it. As a C-suite executive, you may not be the one to actually put words on paper (many do) – but you absolutely need to lead, shape and guide the messaging and communication strategy that is used to bring the strategy to life. No one knows the business strategy like you do. No one knows the story behind it like you do. You need to be involved throughout the entire journey.



CEOS DON'T JUST OWN STRATEGY. THEY OWN THE STORY BEHIND IT.

Montgomery went on to say...

“Chief executives need to focus on communications as a management capability more seriously than they typically do. They should lead a thorough rethinking of what communications does and should do, subsequently transforming it into the constructive force it can be.”

Modern CEOs are taking Montgomery’s advice.

- > They know, if communication breaks down, business performance goes down.
- > They realize business strategies, when backed with the right messaging, deliver better results.
- > More importantly, modern CEOs know they have to own the process, because at the end of the day ... success or failure lies on their shoulders.

Winning business strategies are driven by successful messaging and communication strategies.

So, if you’re a CEO or C-suite executive, it’s time to redraw the boundaries around strategic communication in your business ... placing yourself and members of your C-suite squarely in the middle of it.

OnMessage is a management consulting firm that specializes in helping C-suite executives formulate intentional messaging and communication strategies that create clarity in the minds of employees and customers. Clarity that increases employee engagement, improves the customer experience and maximizes organizational performance. Learn more at www.itsonmessage.com.





This article is an excerpt from CEO Communicator, the monthly magazine published by OnMessage. This publication is specifically for C-Suite and Communications Executives who want to improve organizational clarity, alignment and performance. To download full issues of CEO Communicator Magazine, go to www.itsonmessage.com.

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James F. O'Gara is the CEO and Founder of OnMessage a leading B2B Communications Consultancy. Mr. O'Gara has spent thousands of hours formulating winning go-to-market strategies and stories for dozens of Fortune 100 companies and hundreds of high-growth businesses. O'Gara's expertise in go-to-market strategy development, Voice of Customer research, messaging and positioning, as well as customer-centric culture development, has earned him the respect of executives around the world. His ability to breakdown strategy, sales, marketing and positioning challenges in complex industries has been invaluable to CEOs, CCOs and CMOs at a number of leading companies. James is also an active member of the Forbes Communications Council and his thought leadership often appears on Forbes.com.

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About OnMessage:

OnMessage is the B2B communications consultancy executives call when it counts. When strategic shifts in the business take place, when financial performance is on the line and when the message absolutely must deliver material business results. OnMessage specializes in helping C-suite and communications executives ...

- > Reposition and differentiate their businesses
- > Produce laser focused messaging / positioning for new product and service launches
- > Establish clear, compelling messaging for specific industries and geographic markets
- > Communicate changes in vision / strategy or leadership inside and outside of their organizations
- > Develop effective communication programs in support of M&A integration and other organizational changes

For the last 16 years, OnMessage has earned trust and respect from executives around the world.

- > Trusted Advisor to 100's of C-Suite Executives
- > 500+ B2B Mid-Market and Fortune 1000 Companies Served
- > 600+ Strategic Messaging Engagements Delivered
- > +250 Successful Product Messaging/Positioning Platforms Developed
- > 75+ Years of Combined M&A Communication & Integration Experience
- > 50+ Years of Combined Organizational Communications Expertise
- > 16-Years of Consistently Exceeding Client Requirements

Let us earn your trust. Request an engagement briefing and learn more about our firm at www.itsonmessage.com.

