



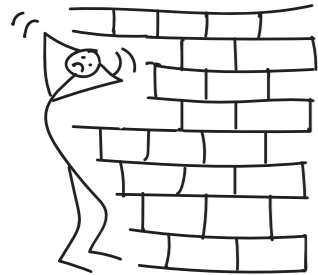
Mark's top tips on a winning internal communication strategy

What's it all about?

We've helped many organisations develop their very own communication strategy to help them get employee engagement levels up. As every brilliant Board member knows, the more engaged your employees are, the better your bottom line...

Our philosophy on...

Internal communication teams need a strategy to give them purpose, meaning and direction; if this strategy doesn't have the organisation's vision, strategies and goals at its heart then it's a lot like having a sandwich with no filling – it's no good and the vital component is missing



Who will benefit?

Anyone who's involved in internal communication; anyone who feels as though they're banging their head against a brick wall trying to 'get communication done properly around here'; and anyone who's struggling to get their directors engaged with what they're trying to do. [By the way, everyone in your business will ultimately benefit too]

Books that will help:

- Time to think** by Nancy Kline - this will help you if you need to take time out to think strategically amidst the busyness of your everyday, tactical communications!
- Making the Connections: Using Internal Communication to Turn Strategy into Action** by Bill Quirke - understand the what and how of internal communication
- Understanding Organizations** by Charles Handy - this will help those internal communications people who haven't had much experience of how businesses work

Visit these websites:

- www.hbr.org for business stories and thinking that are read by gazillions of the world's leaders
- www.linkedin.com has a great internal communication group to share best practice, lessons learned and trends
- www.ioic.org.uk to get you hooked up with other people who are passionate about employee communication



Or give us a shout:

+44 (0) 1858 461071 / hello@rambutan.biz / www.rambutan.biz and we'll happily chat to you about how you can develop your winning strategy!

Get the Board on board

Having a Board-level sponsor of your strategy is mission-critical; somebody who really knows what great internal communication can do for them and the business. Get to know them, make sure they know what you're doing and that they approve the strategy before it goes to the Board so you've got a really strong ally

Research is key

Do your research thoroughly; don't rely on your own experiences of your business and the way it communicates. Remember that communication is all about your audiences so use their insights to inform your strategy. Involve a cross-section of colleagues in focus groups, one-to-ones and coffee-machine chats so that you can get the real low-down



Alignment with the business agenda

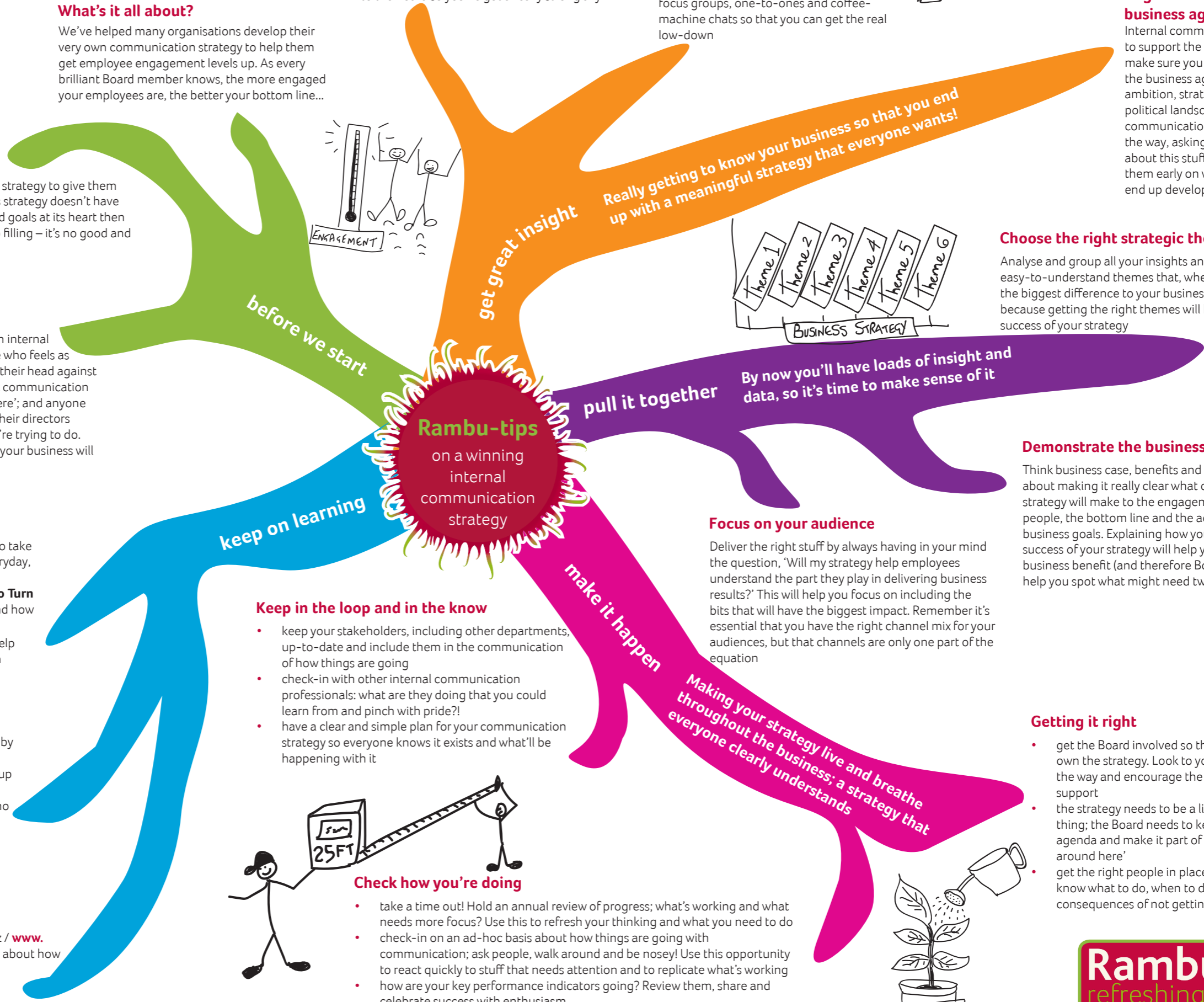
Internal communication needs to support the business, so make sure you know what's on the business agenda (the vision, ambition, strategies, major projects, political landscape, appetite for communication and change...) By the way, asking your Board members about this stuff will start to engage them early on with the strategy you end up developing

Choose the right strategic themes

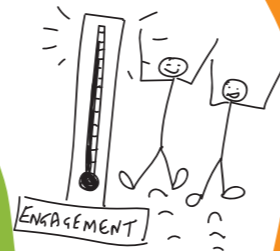
Analyse and group all your insights and data into six to eight easy-to-understand themes that, when delivered, will make the biggest difference to your business. Take your time here, because getting the right themes will be essential to the success of your strategy



Rambu-tips on a winning internal communication strategy



before we start



get great insight

Really getting to know your business so that you end up with a meaningful strategy that everyone wants!

pull it together

By now you'll have loads of insight and data, so it's time to make sense of it

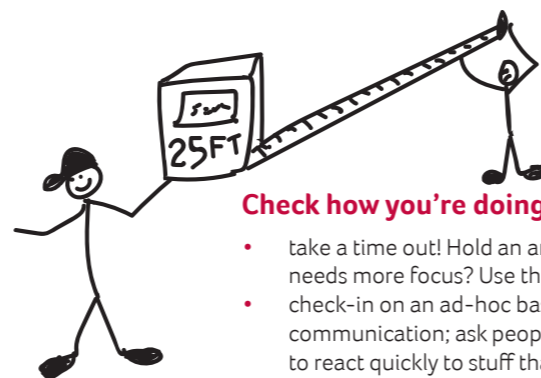
make it happen

Making your strategy live and breathe throughout the business; a strategy that everyone clearly understands

keep on learning

Keep in the loop and in the know

- keep your stakeholders, including other departments, up-to-date and include them in the communication of how things are going
- check-in with other internal communication professionals: what are they doing that you could learn from and pinch with pride?!
- have a clear and simple plan for your communication strategy so everyone knows it exists and what'll be happening with it



Check how you're doing

- take a time out! Hold an annual review of progress; what's working and what needs more focus? Use this to refresh your thinking and what you need to do
- check-in on an ad-hoc basis about how things are going with communication; ask people, walk around and be nosy! Use this opportunity to react quickly to stuff that needs attention and to replicate what's working
- how are your key performance indicators going? Review them, share and celebrate success with enthusiasm

Focus on your audience

Deliver the right stuff by always having in your mind the question, 'Will my strategy help employees understand the part they play in delivering business results?' This will help you focus on including the bits that will have the biggest impact. Remember it's essential that you have the right channel mix for your audiences, but that channels are only one part of the equation

Demonstrate the business benefit

Think business case, benefits and measures: this is about making it really clear what difference your strategy will make to the engagement of your people, the bottom line and the achievement of business goals. Explaining how you'll measure the success of your strategy will help you demonstrate business benefit (and therefore Board buy-in) and help you spot what might need tweaking

Getting it right

- get the Board involved so they buy-in to and own the strategy. Look to your sponsor to guide the way and encourage the Board to give visible support
- the strategy needs to be a living and breathing thing; the Board needs to keep it on their agenda and make it part of 'how we do things around here'
- get the right people in place! Make sure they know what to do, when to do it by and the consequences of not getting it done

