



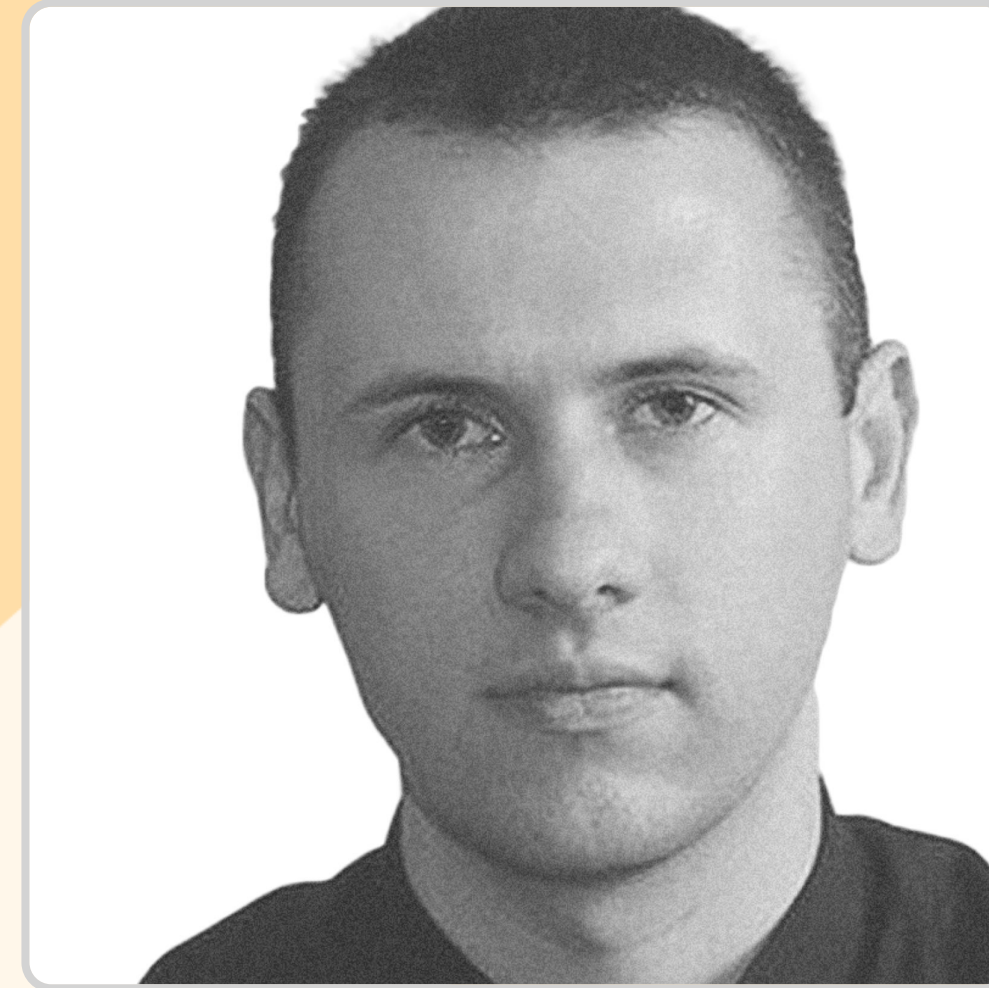
Skillset Map of a modern IC department

Research in Collaboration with 7 IC Professionals





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Introduction

Employee communication is a web that reaches and influences every single person in an organization. Often it goes unnoticed how much work it takes to set up and run internal comms. On average, you'll find 1 communication practitioner for every 1,000 employees. With this much responsibility on their shoulders, IC professionals have to master various disciplines, channels, tools & skills to be able to reach every employee with relevant information.

This ebook features the research based on the materials from G2, The Institute of Internal Communication, and the book on Successful Employee Communications by Sue Dewhurst & Liam Fitzpatrick. We also reached out to seven IC professionals for their practical input on this topic. All of it, combined, has crystallized into a Skillset Map of a Modern IC Department which we encourage you to explore in more detail at the end of this publication.



Attention is your gateway

Employee communication involves listening to the voice of the employee to advance an organization's goals and culture. It means giving staff the information they need, when and where they need it, to better serve the customer, colleagues and themselves. In my experience, success starts with the ability to attract people's attention credibly and repeatedly. It's the gateway to everything else in regular and effective communication.

In many organizations, we bombard staff with too much information and too many distractions. The top advice on surveys from employees is that they're at work, they're busy, and they don't have time – **so get to the point.**

Our metrics bear this out – they spend, on average, 2 minutes scanning a weekly newsletter. With this in mind, **we should ask ourselves:**

- Do we focus on people?
- Do our headlines hook readers?
- Do we include compelling images and video?
- Do we check the readability level of our copy and avoid corporate-speak?
- Do we simplify our copy and images for maximum impact?
- Do our metrics show content engagement – clicks, views, likes, comments, shares?
- Do we compare our content engagement with industry benchmarks?



John Twombly

Senior Consultant, Internal Communication at St.
Louis Children's Hospital



Business + people formula

Business and people savvy are the two skills that will make you valuable in 2020-s and beyond. Business savvy is really about being dialed into the business challenges that your organization faces and understanding the results that are needed to succeed in this era of disruption. Get out of the internal communication box and understand what's going on with the global economy, climate change and the world of business.

People savvy is about understanding the people in your organization. To really connect with employees, you need to understand what they want and need to thrive. Data and metrics can help you with understanding, but you also need a fundamental understanding of neuroscience and empathy to truly be able to listen, understand, and help leaders develop meaningful, effective communication that drives business results.

Strategic internal communication comes from combining these two skills.



Andrea Greenhous

Founder of Vision2Voice Communications



Internal communications professionals must constantly ask themselves:

“How can employees receive the information they need/want exactly when they need/want it? How can we meet them where they are?”

Hailo





The power of community

Building (and managing) relationships is an important skill every internal communications practitioner should have. Maybe “stakeholder management” is the one that pops into your mind right now. Yes, it is a core competency, however, I look at it from a different angle — community management.

We are beyond the times when internal social platforms were the shiny new things within the enterprise. Yet, I bet we use them only to a certain level. For example, getting the message out there, sparking some conversations about the latest internal news, events and so on. Rarely do we build relationships between people, motivate members – our peers – to do things on the platform, to be active and curious.

Building a strong community doesn't require advanced tech skills. **We don't need to be tech-savvy to do it, we need to be enablers, trusted advisors, facilitators.** At the same time, we have to know how the platform & the community fits into the overall business strategy.

When I worked as an Employee Engagement and Communications Specialist for Citi, I was among the early adopters of their Internal Digital Platform. I trained my colleagues. Not only did I cover technical side of the things but also community management best practices. I know it was not a waste of time based on the feedback from my colleagues. One of them even mentioned my training helped her advance in her career.



Csaba Szücs

Project Manager at IBM

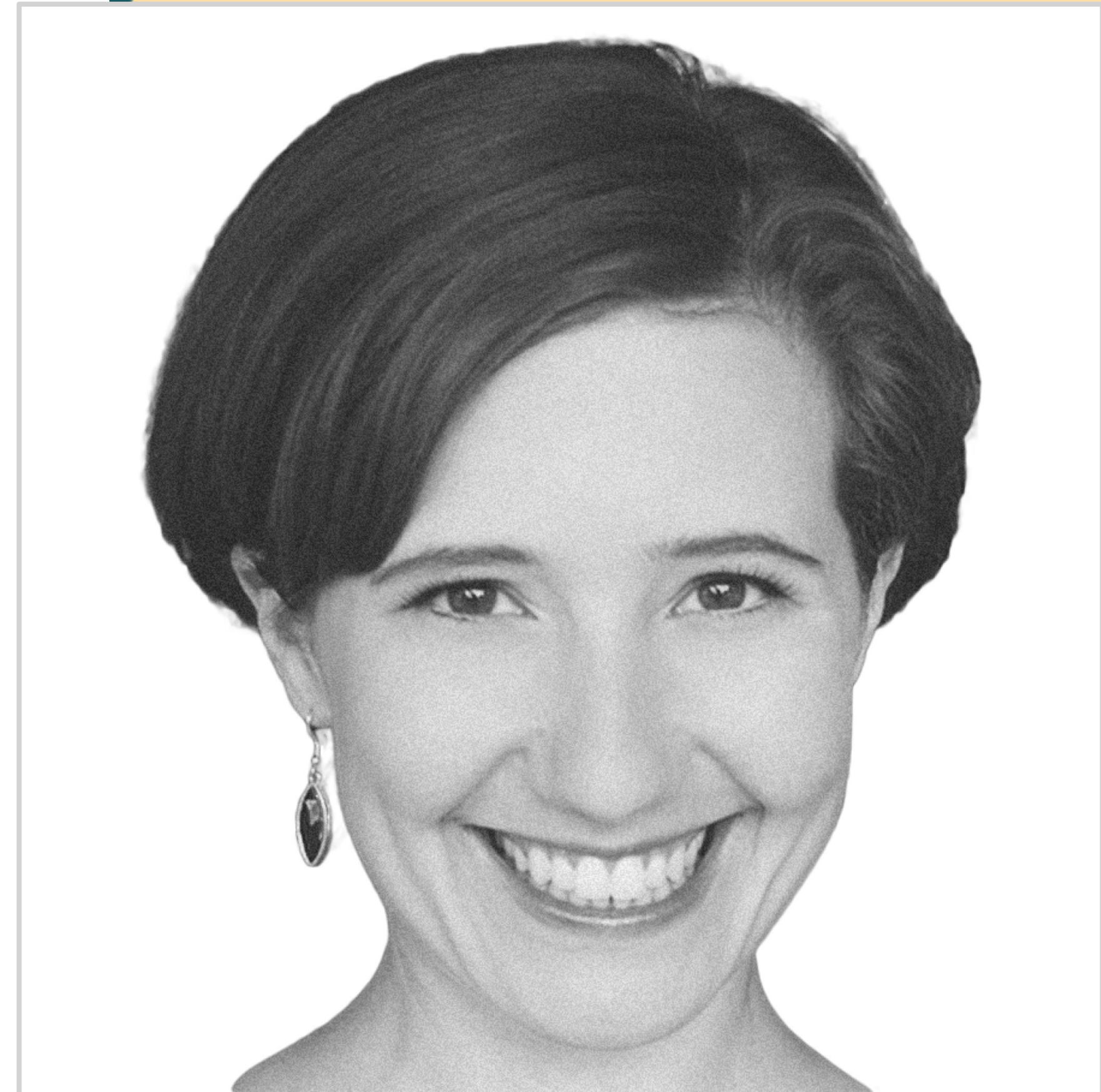


Stay curious

Curiosity and empathy enhance storytelling, but not only that. These skills also empower internal communications professionals to understand employees and their daily work.

Making great content is half of the internal communications equation; getting that content to your employees and engaging them in meaningful conversation is the other half.

Healthcare is a great example. Clinical employees are overwhelmed with information daily and forced to toggle between dozens of technical systems each hour. Adding more software, emails, or even additional clicks distracts them from getting the information they need and makes their day more difficult. Internal communications professionals must constantly ask, ***“How can employees receive the information they need/want exactly when they need/want it? How can we meet them where they are?”*** Curiosity and empathy can help turn internal communications professionals into the investigators, process improvers, and experience designers that help elevate employee satisfaction.



Stephanie J Ramos
Communications Manager at
Mount Sinai Beth Israel



Deploying the right metrics for business success:

“It's absolutely essential that communicators deploy the right metrics to evidence the efficacy of all campaigns, messaging and channels. A well-crafted measurement framework is crucial to the success of the function as it can help to translate communication outcomes into business success.”





Use behavioral science

Communication is about achieving change — if not, why are we doing it?

Underpinning this is influencing how people behave, and in order to do that, it's vital to have an understanding of human motivation.

To operate at a strategic level, being able to practically apply the principles of behavioral science is increasingly important. **The specific words we use, how we frame change, and how we build campaigns can have a binary effect on how people respond. Advertisers have known this for years but IC often adopts an unscientific, subjective approach.**

A simple real-life example I frequently see is too much focus on the benefits of a change, and a reluctance to focus on the consequences of not changing. But evolution has pre-programmed us to respond far more rapidly to threats to our existing possessions, than the potential of gaining something new. This is uncomfortable for stakeholders worried about seeming alarmist but finding proper gearing is critical to achieving results.

There are hundreds of similar examples and when you start to view communication through these filters, it challenges us to not fall back on assumptions and dig deeper into the science behind human behavior. That's what will give us more credibility because the results we deliver will be measurable, tangible and lasting.



Roland Burton

Founder of Comms & Effect



Dare to become an advisor

As an internal comms professional, I think **it's extremely important to be able to take an advisory role.**

Fortunately, now IC professionals are getting much more involved in strategic positions than before. We have to dare to be advisors, and not only to senior management but also to different departments. Internal Communications have such a central position in any company, we work together and collaborate with many of the departments so it's natural to be advisors for those teams around us.

The second essential skill is project management. It probably comes from my background as a marketer. Our work is all about translating the communication goals into projects, programs, and campaigns. The way you prepare your concepts, turn data into outputs, turn it into content, turn content into messages, share those in the right channels — all of that is about executing your projects.



Caroline Tjan

Head of Global Internal Communications
at Nouryon



Measure. Analyze. Act. Repeat.

The modern-day IC function has moved up the value chain to claim more prominence than ever before. This paradigm shift reflects the fast growing acknowledgment of the power of internal communication in helping organisations manoeuvre through complex challenges to achieve desired business goals.

With this elevation in stature and responsibilities, the modern-day IC professionals must constantly upgrade their arsenal. Here are my top two recommendations:

Weave an integrated brand story. Great brands are built inside out. As communicators, we must own the prowess to seamlessly integrate the brand narrative for our internal and external audiences. This enables IC professionals to create a consistent persona for the organization which in turn can foster a strong sense of pride and belief amongst employees, thereby creating an army of advocates for any business organization.

Measure. Analyze. Act. Repeat. While communicators are widely perceived to be right-brained, IC professionals must marry the art of communication with the science of measurement. It's absolutely essential that communicators deploy the right metrics to evidence the efficacy of all campaigns, messaging and channels. A well-crafted measurement framework is crucial to the success of the function as it can help to translate communication outcomes into business success.



Ankit Nanavati
Internal Communication Professional
in multinational bank



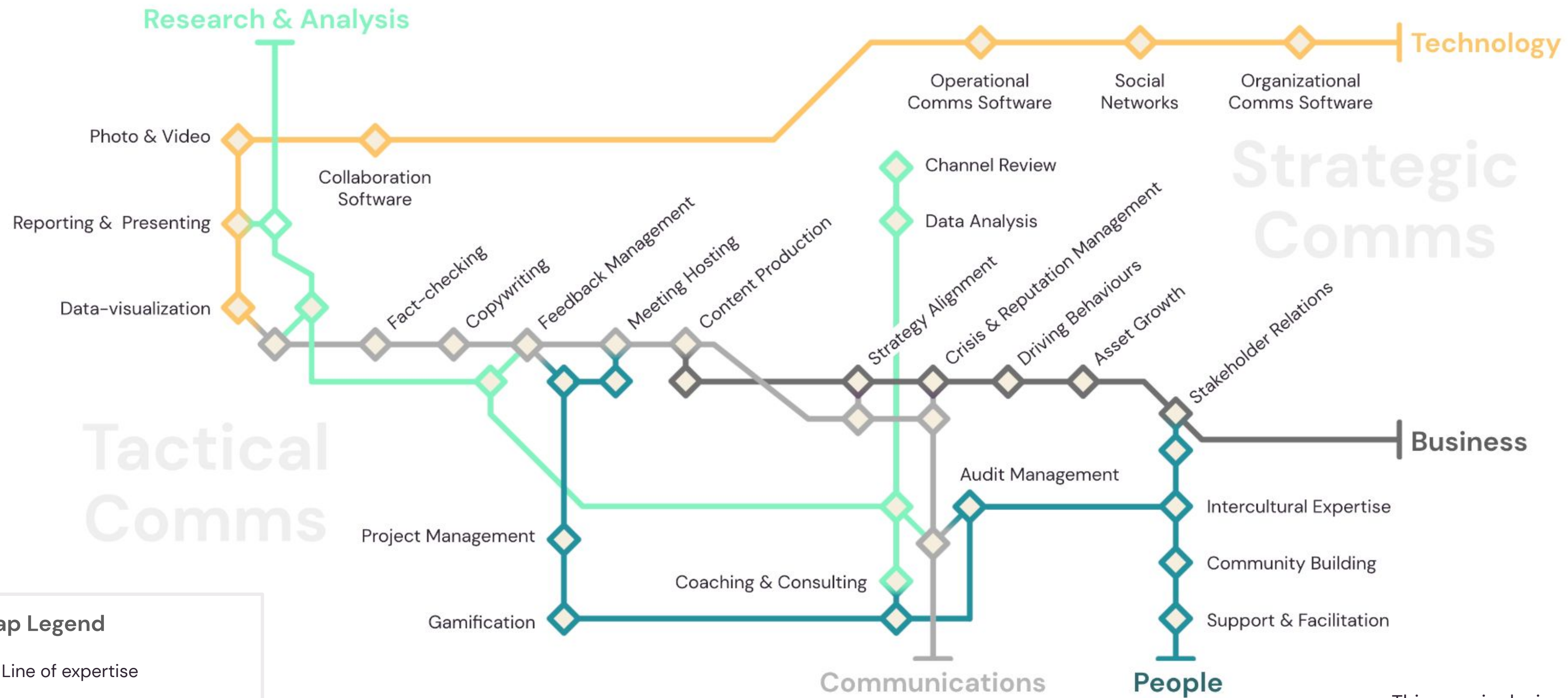
Distributing content and messages in the right channels:

“Our work is all about translating the communication goals into projects, programs, and campaigns. The way you prepare your concepts, turn data into outputs, turn it into content, turn content into messages, share those in the right channels — all of that is about executing your projects.”





The skillset map of modern IC department



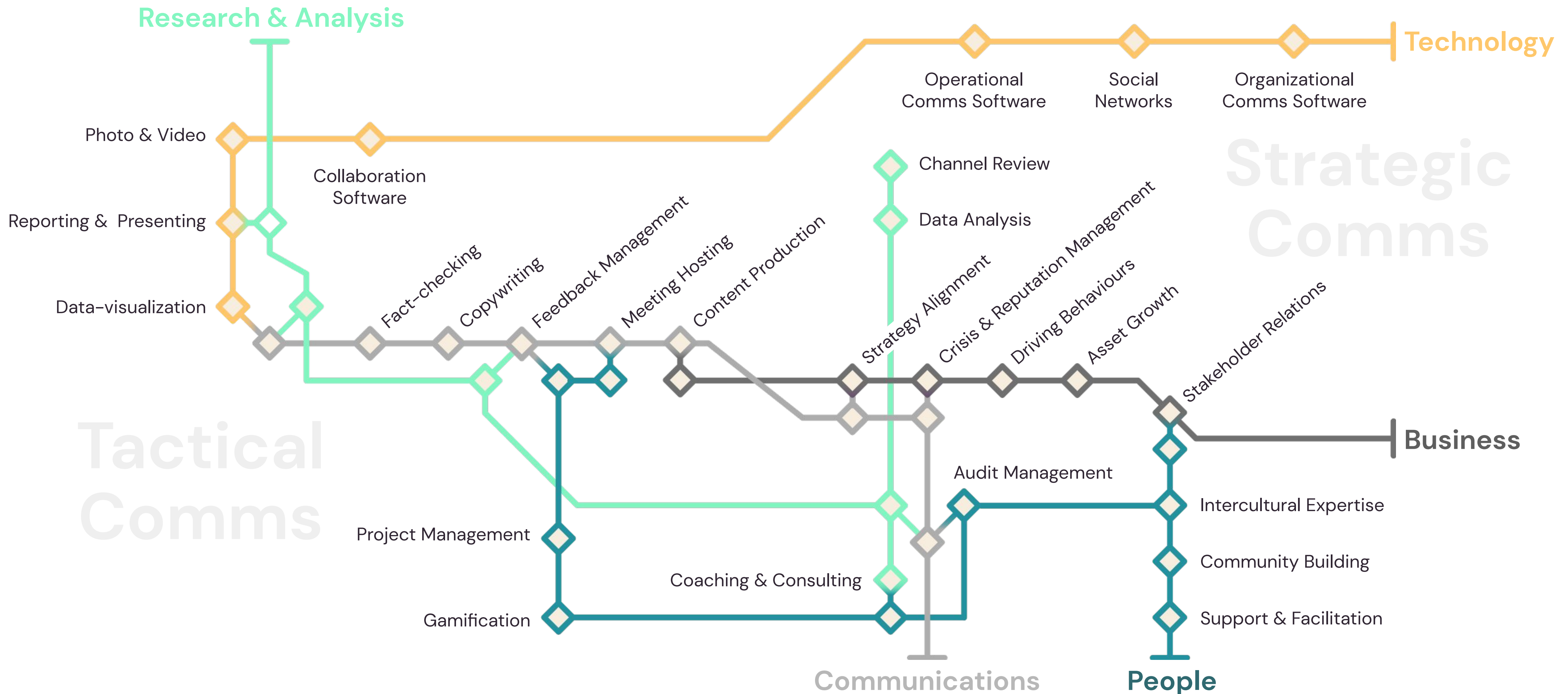
Map Legend

- Business** | Line of expertise
- Skill component
- Skill component combining two lines of expertise
- Skill component combining three lines of expertise

This map is designed to show the complexity of the professional landscape for internal comms specialists in 2020. Over the years, internal comms have evolved into a complex strategic role essential for a company's success. To be able to qualify as an expert in the field, a modern IC practitioner has to be at the forefront of innovation, creativity, and change.



The skillset map of modern IC department





We are Hailo.

In 2022, three established software vendors (COYO, Smarp, Jubiwee) in the employee communications and engagement space joined forces to redefine how companies reach, engage and retain their employees.

Today we are one of the world's largest providers of social intranet and employee communications solutions. From offices in Atlanta, London, Hamburg, Paris and Helsinki, our team of 300 passionate software and communication experts support customers, including Amazon, Google, Deutsche Telekom, Ritter Sport and German Railways, in putting the needs of more than 2 million employees at the forefront of their corporate culture.

With our Employee Engagement Cloud, we offer all the features and insights that companies need to improve corporate culture and establish cross-cutting communication in the workplace.

The Hailo Employee Engagement Cloud includes four products: Hailo Home, Hailo Share, Hailo Stories and Hailo Insights.

www.hailo.com

