



Strategic development of communication at Statistics Finland

Mervi Ukkonen

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Why are strategic guidelines for communication needed in organisations?

- To know how to communicate in different situations and to prove the effectiveness of communication
- To achieve the objectives set for communication
- To ensure communication is in line with the strategy
- To create a backbone for daily activities
- To help recognise what is important and what to focus on when having to make a choice



How was the process of communication implemented at Statistics Finland?

- At the beginning of 2018, Statistics Finland launched a process to **shake up** the present way of communicating
- An external communications agency assisted us in the shake-up
- Previous communication principles had been compiled for 2015 to 2017. They had been written in a “civil servant tone” as a separate assignment and consisted of some 10 pages of text.
- This time, the aim is to really shake things up and find new ways to operate

How was the process of communication implemented at Statistics Finland?

2018				2019-2021
1-2	3-4	5-8	9-12	
Supply of the Agency	Interviews, workshops	Guidelines of Communication	Communication Plan	Implementation
	An inquiry to the Media			

Previous reports / background material

- The results of the stakeholder survey completed in 2016
- Results of the business image survey from 2016
- Results of the business communications survey from 2017
- Summary of customer feedback from 2017
- Customer groups recognised in the web project
- The publicity analysis from 2017



Interviews with key persons

- The agency interviewed our key personnel in March
- Interviews in groups of one to four persons
- Ten directors, eight experts from different departments and experts from the communications department
- Three outsiders that represented different stakeholder groups



Issues asked about in the interviews

- The role of Statistics Finland in society
- Target groups of communication
- Main messages
- What works in communication and what requires change
- The role of communication in the organisation
- The role of experts in communication



Shake-up workshops / workshop 1

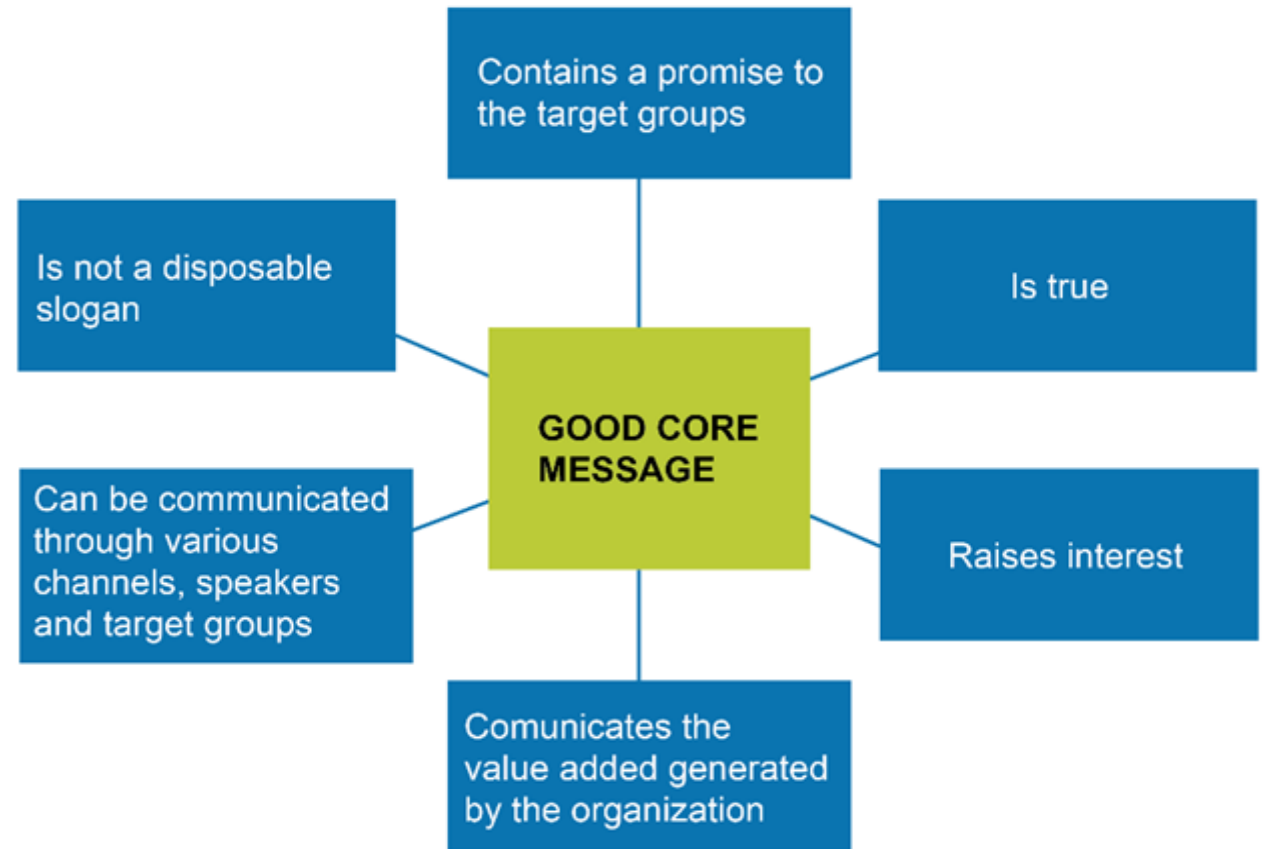
- View on the world of communication in 2018
- Analysis on Statistics Finland's communication based on the interviews and background materials
- Illustrated postcards were used to pick out images that describe the dream future of Statistics Finland



Shake-up workshops / workshop 2

- The core of communication and how it is utilised
- The purpose of the organisation's existence is crystallised in the core message.
- 34 persons from Statistics Finland participated in the interview and workshop phase.

WHAT IS A GOOD CORE MESSAGE BUILT OF?



Strategic guidelines for communication / aims

- Communication should be seen as a **strategic opportunity** and is an integral part of the job specification of the **directors and experts**,
- **Every Finn** could feel that Statistics Finland has useful data for me.
- Statistics Finland would have **air supremacy** when speaking of data utilisation, i.e. Statistics Finland would be the entity to whom both the public at large, the media, as well as opinion leaders and decision makers turn.
- Statistics Finland would be **an agile actor** that seizes opportunities and constantly proves to move with the times and has its hand **on the pulse of Finns**.

Strategic guidelines for communication

- All of Statistics Finland's target groups can be affected through **wider public debate**
- Communication focuses too much on releasing statistics, is agency-type communication, one-way, colourless and static
- Communication could be **more in the strategic core** and the directors could be more active communicators
- The objective is that Statistics Finland actively participates in discussions and shows its expertise. It communicates analytically, explains the broader context and acts as a fact checker.
- Communication could develop **a confident, analytical and lively tone**

The Core Message

Facts take you far

The core message crystallises Statistics Finland's identity. Based on the core message, we could build Statistics Finland's narrative or story that would be linked to

- the dataisation of the world
- the fact that data need an interpreter and
- smart decisions that are based on statistics

The Communication Plan



- **Major actions** make the organisation's core message understandable. They concretise to the general public what we want to say.
- **Opportunity communication** grabs hold of topical phenomena and discussions. It requires speed and conversational skills.
- **Basic communication** maintains the basic condition of communication. It is continuous work that ensures that people get information.

An Opportunity Communication Team

- An opportunity communication team could be established at Statistics Finland
- The team would consist of opinion leaders and experts from different departments of Statistics Finland
- To probe and create ideas on themes and discussion openings



What does the media think about Statistics Finland's communication?

- Experts should be **more visible** and they should focus on long-term development and more analysis.
- **An expert on Twitter** that would speak for statistics, a Finnish "hansrosling".
- The **reliability of data** was still seen as important, more important than speed.
- To get **publicity in the morning primetime** from 7 to 9 am, releases should be published earlier (now at 9 am)



What development efforts have been made to highlight our experts?

- Starting from the end of 2017, Statistics Finland has increased the visibility of its experts by utilising videos in communication.
- Each month, we produce videos on a few statistical releases where an expert talks about the main points in the release.
- We have also made videos for employer image communication



Conclusions

- Tendering of a communications agency to help with the process is a good idea. An **outsider** is better at spotting development targets and can help shake off old habits.
- The more of the **personnel** that are aware of the process, the easier it is to commit to the communication policy and reach the objectives set for communication.
- The communication policy is **linked** to the organisation's strategy so they should be renewed together.





Thank you! Any questions?

mervi.ukkonen@stat.fi

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