

BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS: TOP 5 CONCEPTS IN 2019

The International Association of Business Communicators 2019 World Conference was a wealth of info. We loved networking with peers, sharing best practices and identifying new strategies for improving our services. Being with this community energized us and inspired us to share our favorite learnings and new approaches.



Here are our five favorite takeaways – useful for anyone who communicates on behalf of a business:

1

Long-form journalism isn't dead

Today's audiences want to understand each other and they want to understand complex topics. This is evidenced by the ongoing success of long-form interview shows and the exploding popularity of documentaries and podcasts. Emmy-winning broadcast icon Soledad O'Brien explains that media who cater only to social media audiences with 6-second sound bites are missing the boat.



PR pros and content marketers take note: longer stories are OK so long as they are told in authentic, compelling ways.

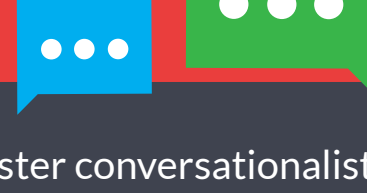
2

Conversation makes us better, happier

"Within reach" technology has enabled terrific new ways to communicate. But a side effect is we're less confident with traditional conversation.



Professional communicators need to be adept at all forms of communication – even "old school" methods. Plus, NPR's Celeste Headlee says speaking face-to-face, via phone or via video activates parts of the brain that emailing and texting don't. Just one 10-minute conversation per day can lead to better performance and feelings of happiness.



Business communicators should strive to be master conversationalists. This will bolster our results selling ideas into the C-suite, pitching media and communicating with other influencers.

3

Business acumen will future-proof PR

A survey of PR pros from around the globe¹ revealed the top competence needed in the profession is the ability to "better understand business priorities." The research is from Professor Ana Adi of Quadriga University.

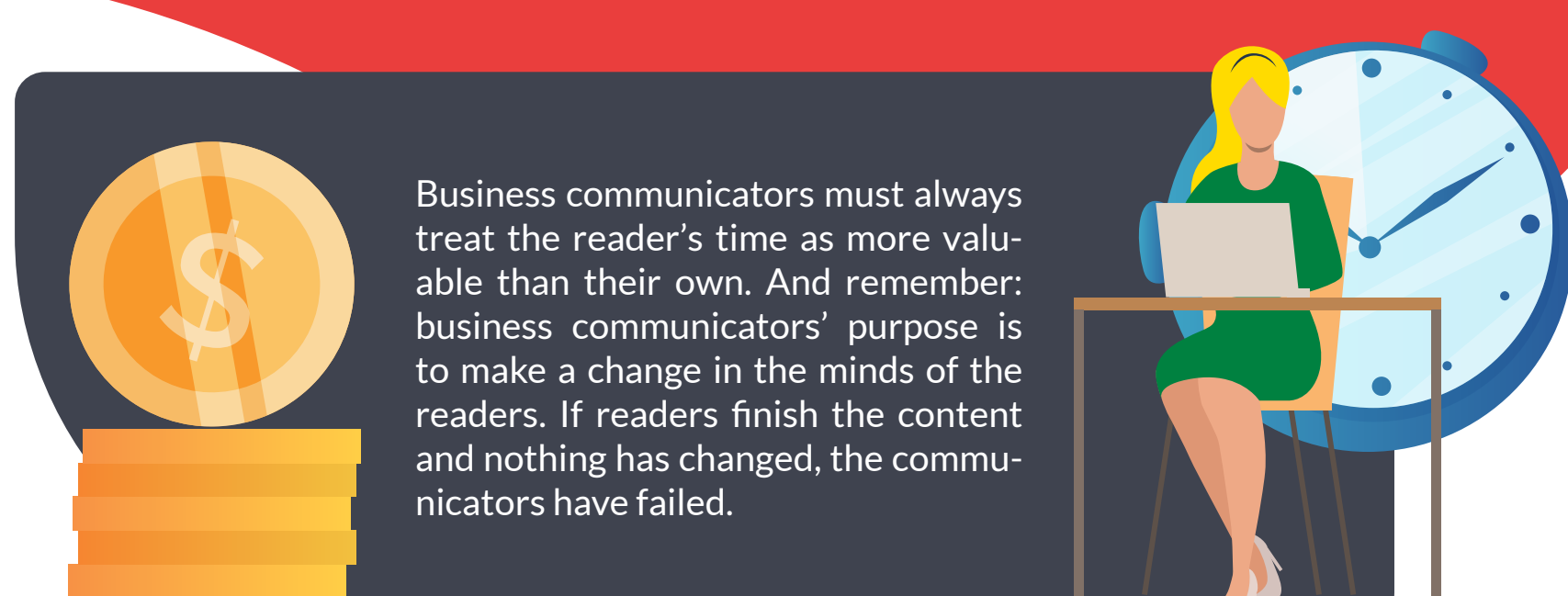
This is no surprise, considering the trends of digitalization, market fragmentation, demands for transparency and the increasing convergence of PR and marketing. Today, successful PR pros must be much more than publicists. They have to dive deep on business objectives and become trusted advisors.



4

6% of every dollar paid in the US is spent paying people to read poorly written materials

Talk about a wakeup call. Life is too short for terrible content! This data point was formulated by bestselling author and former Forrester analyst Josh Bernoff².



Business communicators must always treat the reader's time as more valuable than their own. And remember: business communicators' purpose is to make a change in the minds of the readers. If readers finish the content and nothing has changed, the communicators have failed.

5

Every communicator should care about diversity & inclusion

Since we often speak on behalf of organizations, write for executives and interact with outside stakeholders, communicators have an outsized influence on a business. It's vital that our very visible work abides by the highest ethical standards.

Diversity and inclusion are good for every business. As Princeton's Chris Lentz puts it: diversity ignites creativity, problem solving and innovation. Inclusion promotes belonging, purpose and wellbeing. Communicators should keep an eye on the diversity and inclusiveness of communications efforts, and can be the forward-leaning changemakers to help pivot organizations into further diversity and inclusion readiness. For instance, communicators can ensure diversity of spokespeople, balance of perspectives shared publicly and inclusiveness of company messaging.



Want to discuss how we can improve your company's communications?

Drop us a note: info@fletchergrupp.com



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1. PR2025: Trends, competences and solutions for the near future of PR/ Communications; Quadriga University, 2019. https://www.quadriga-university.com/sites/default/files/document/2019-06/PR2025_Adi.pdf
2. The State of Business Writing, Josh Bernoff, 2016. <http://withoutbullshit.jbspartnersinc.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/State-of-Business-Writing-2016-final-2.pdf>