



Senior Security Studies Program (SSSP 2022)  
July 18-22, 2022

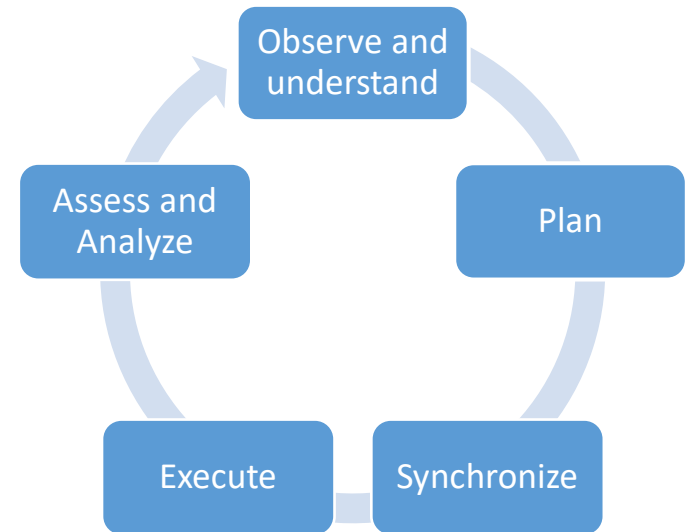
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# **Strategic Communication**

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# Strategic Communication Agenda

- Types of Communication
- What happens when Communications go wrong?
- Building a Plan
- Synchronizing the Plan
- Case Studies
- Measures of Effectiveness



# Communication Strategy

A communication plan should be part of every major plan otherwise how will people understand:

- Your mission goals & objectives
- What actions they should take
- Whether the program was successful
- Why they should trust your plan or organization



# Types of Communications

## Public Relations

- General information exchange and building of good will.

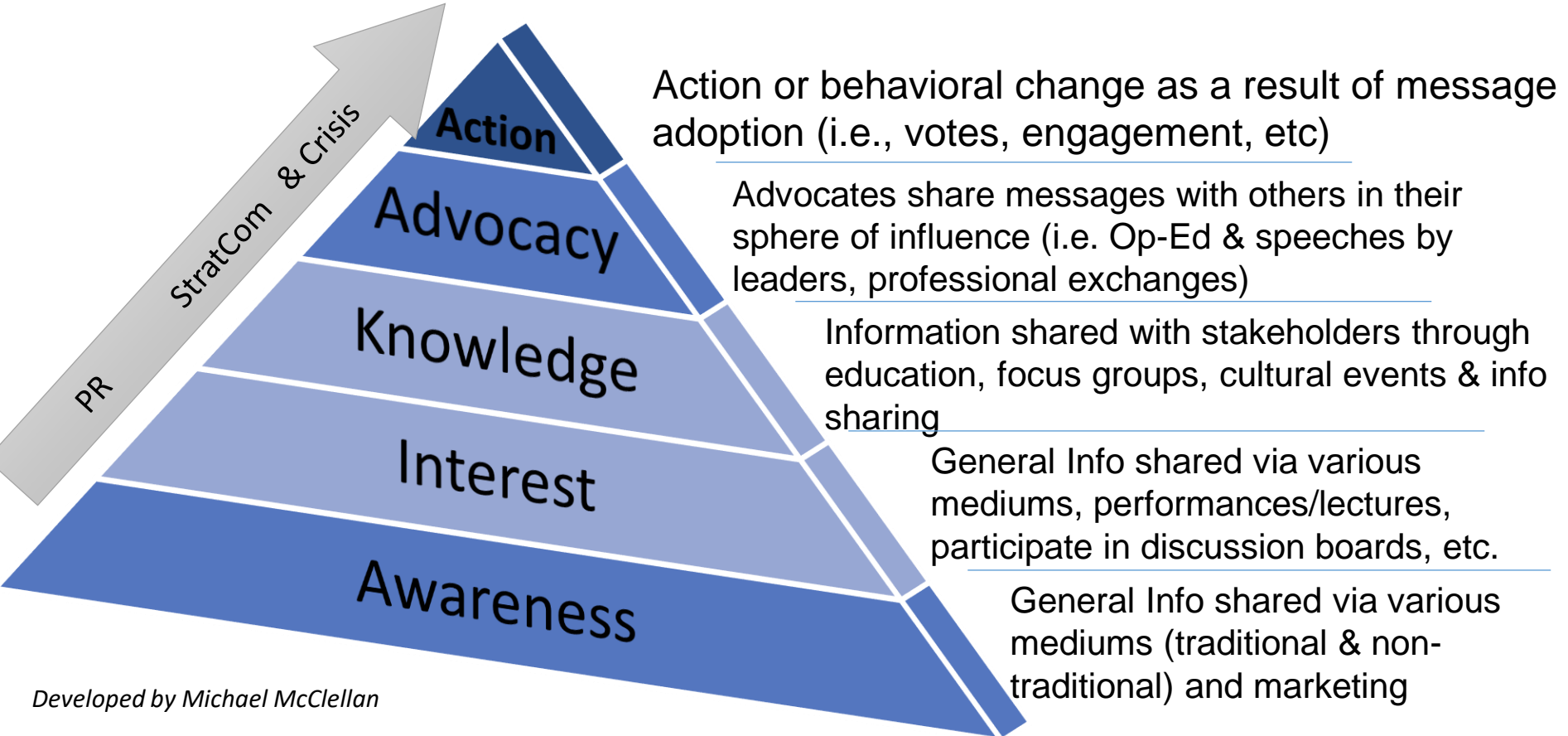
## Crisis/Risk Communications

- Unexpected event or emergency where the reaction is very emotional and intense. The reaction is the crisis.

## Strategic Communication

- Information/actions coordinated between communicators and operators with goals & objectives to influence or change behavior

# Communications Pyramid



*Developed by Michael McClellan*

# **Strategic Communication:**

The right message

Through the right media

to the right audience

at the right time

with the right effect



# Problems caused by poor communications





# The Washington Post

Despite talk of a military strike, Trump's 'armada' actually sailed away from Korea

On April 16, one week after U.S. officials suggested it had been ordered to leave Singapore and sail north toward the Korean Peninsula, the USS Carl Vinson was seen headed in the opposite direction leaving the Sunda Strait.



THE WASHINGTON POST

# The New York Times

“(White House officials) described a glitch-ridden sequence of events, from a premature announcement of the deployment by (PACOM) to an erroneous explanation by (SECDEF) – all of which perpetuated the false narrative that an American armada was racing toward the waters off North Korea.”

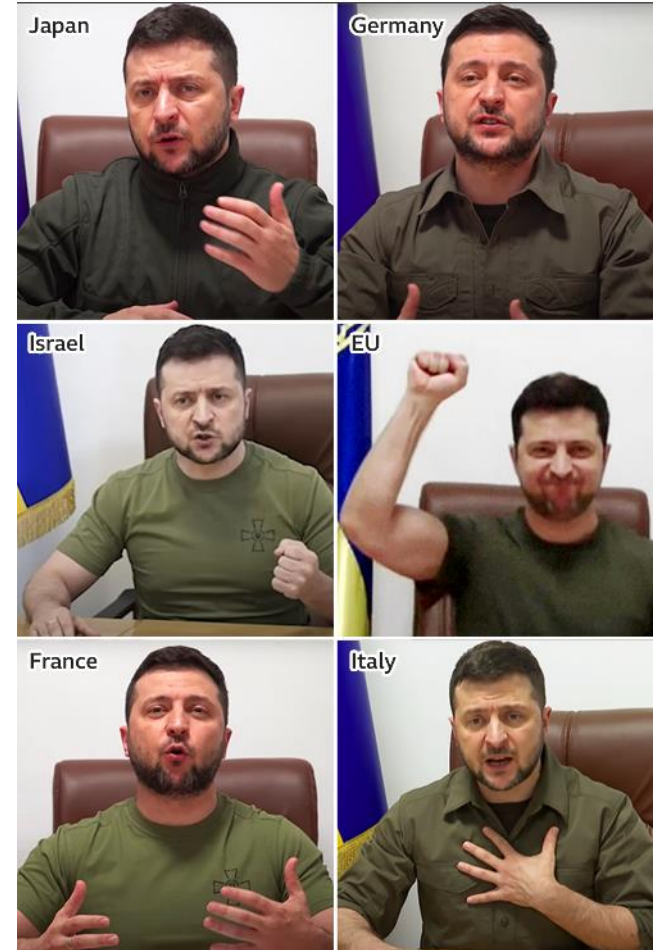
# Strategic Messaging

Has been very successful for the Ukraine in several areas:

- Pre-bunked Putin narratives
- Upended Putin's original strategy
- Unified in opposition to the invasion
- Drove unprecedented levels of economic sanctions and business withdrawals from Russia

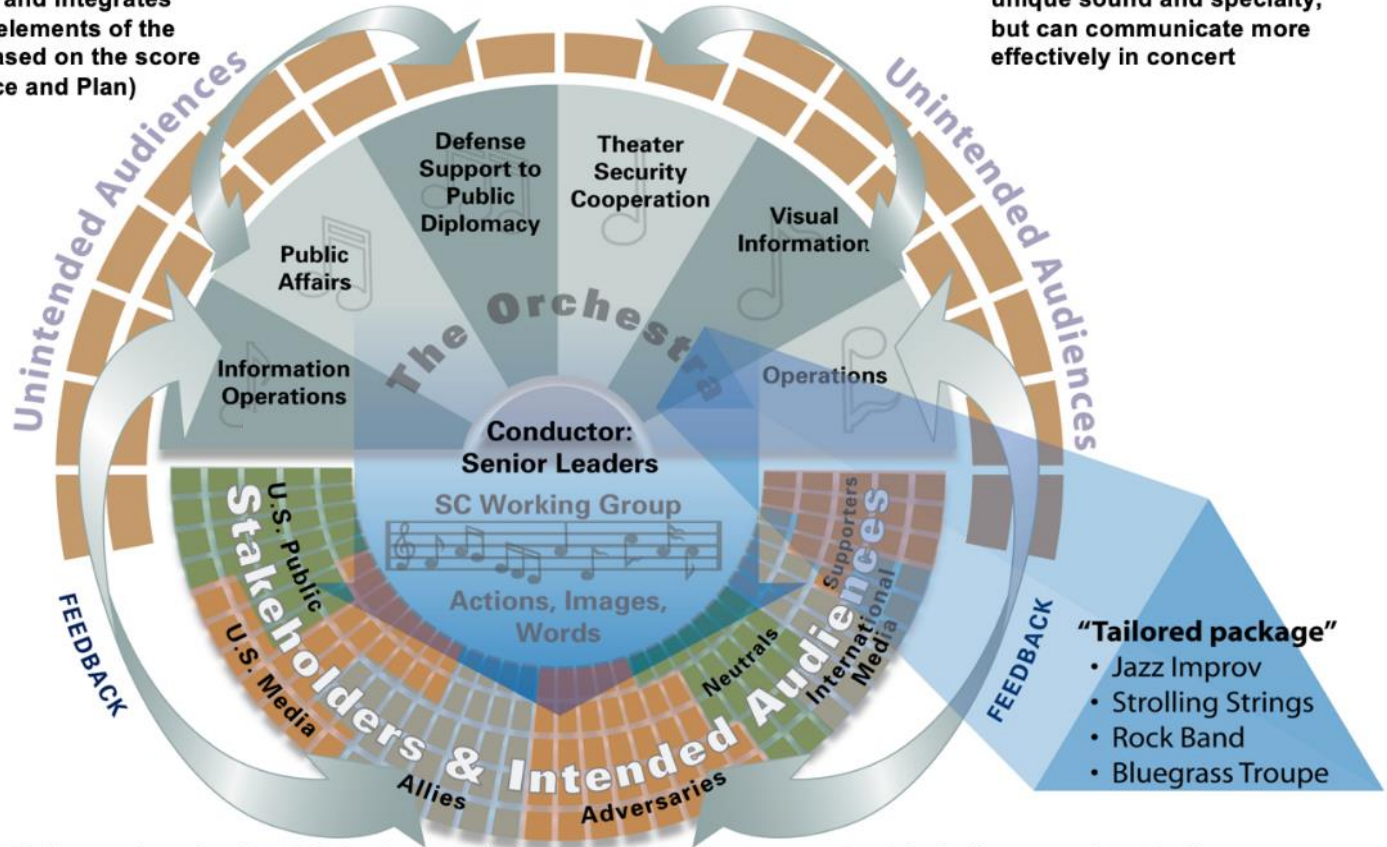
--Peter Singer

Zelensky's parliamentary appearances



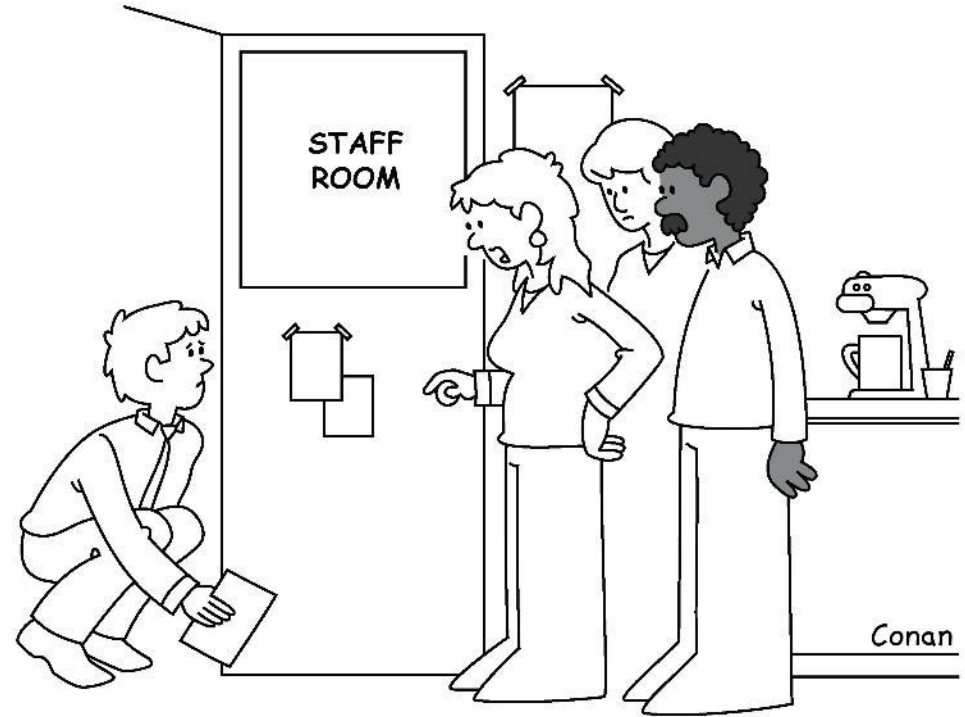
- **Conductor (Senior Leader)** coordinates and integrates the various elements of the orchestra based on the score (SC Guidance and Plan)

- All instruments retain their unique sound and specialty, but can communicate more effectively in concert



The selection, timing, and emphasis of SC instruments help orchestrate the message to stakeholders consistent with a desired effect or commander's intent. The Conductor must continuously adapt the score based on stakeholder feedback.

# Building a plan

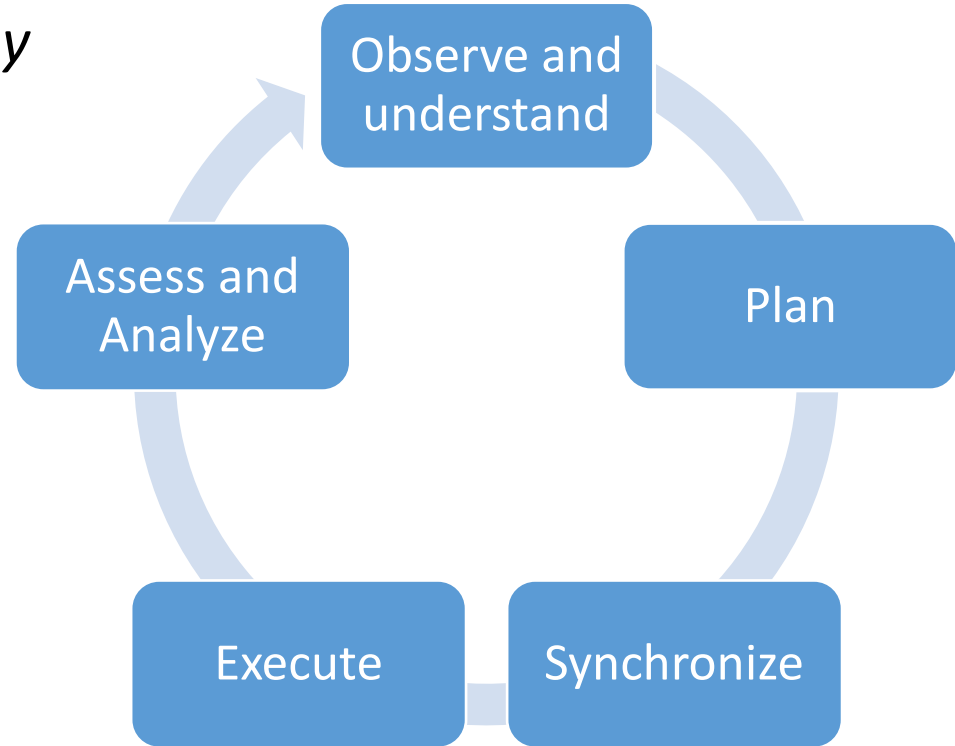


"I'm not sure slipping notes under the door is the best communications strategy."

# Requires Planning

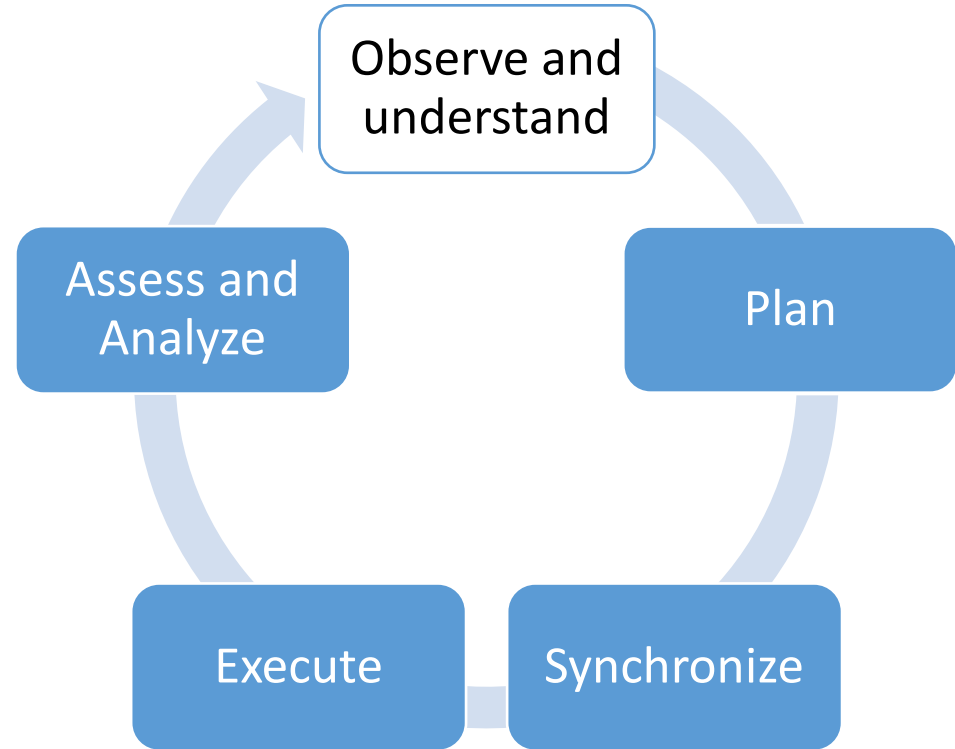
Follows a *plan* and *methodology*

- Aligned with mission goals
- Research-based
- Sets priorities  
Proactive and reactive
- Tactically sound
- Accountable and measurable



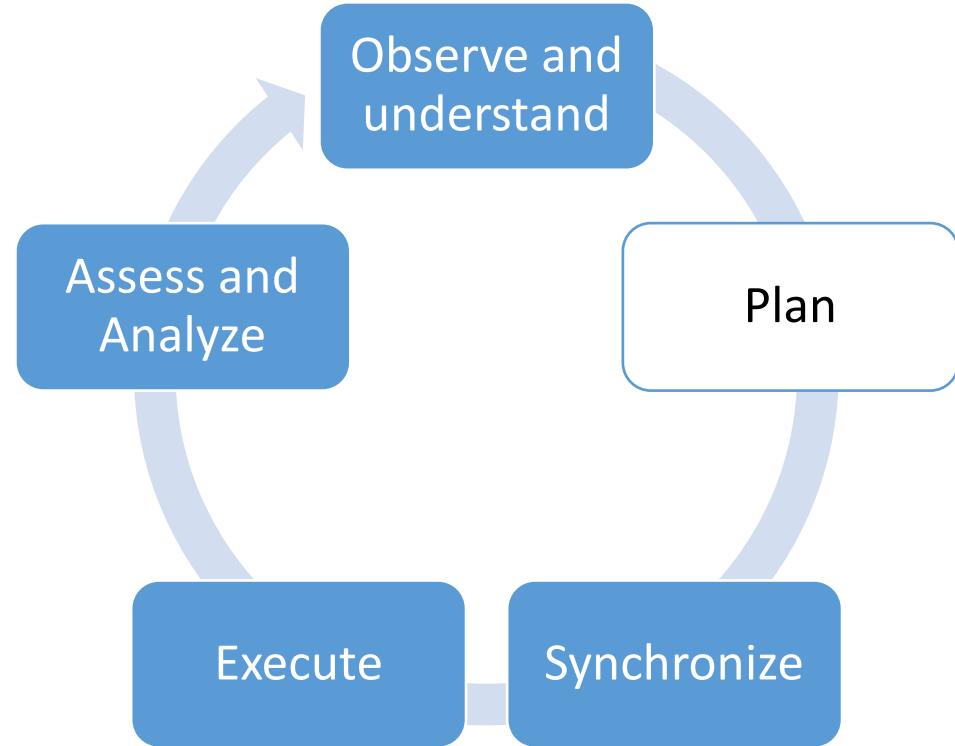
# Observe and Understand

- What are your goals?
- What behaviors do you want to change?
- What how does the local environment impact your messages?



# Planning

- Which audiences need to be reached?
- What change in behavior is required?
- What messages would be appropriate?
- Which channels of communication would be most effective?
- How will the communication process be monitored and evaluated?



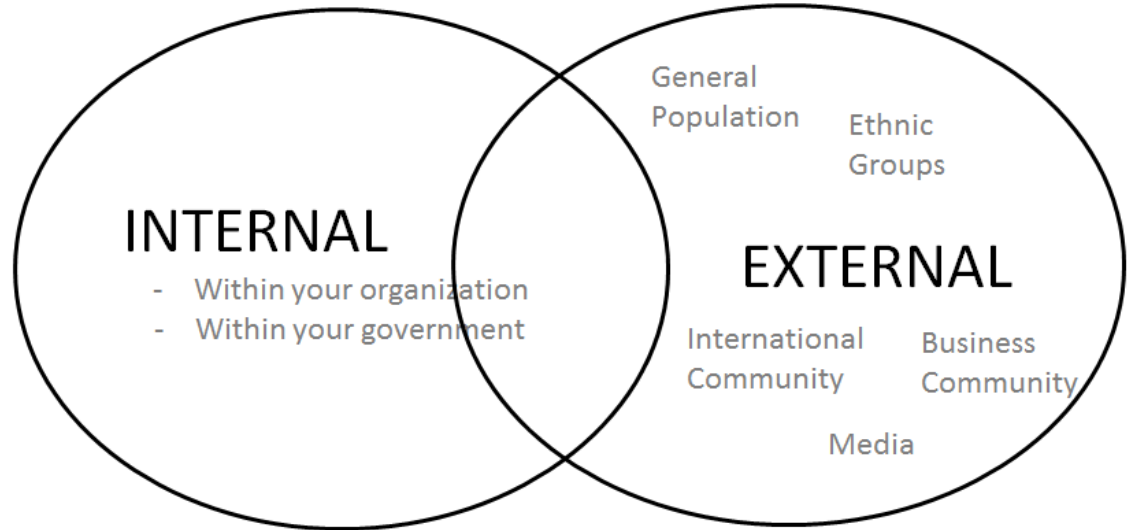
# Elements of a Strategic Communication Plan





# Who is your audience?

- Who needs to receive and understand this information?
- Who are the influencers?
- Who are their influencers?

















# Audience Analysis

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>A</b> nalyze      | Who is/are the recipient(s)?  |
| <b>U</b> nderstand   | What is their knowledge of your message?  |
| <b>D</b> emographics | What is their age, gender, education level, position?   |
| <b>I</b> nterest     | What are their interests or investment to your message?   |
| <b>E</b> nvironment  | What is your relationship to the audience? What is their likely attitude to your message? Have you taken cultural differences into consideration? |
| <b>N</b> eeds        | What information does your audience need?   |
| <b>C</b> ustomize    | How do you adjust your message to your audience?  |
| <b>E</b> xpectations | What is your audience's expectations?   |

Table 1 Audience Analysis

# One policy - 4 generations

4 generations will be working side-by-side in 2020. Here we look at the most effective ways to communicate with each.

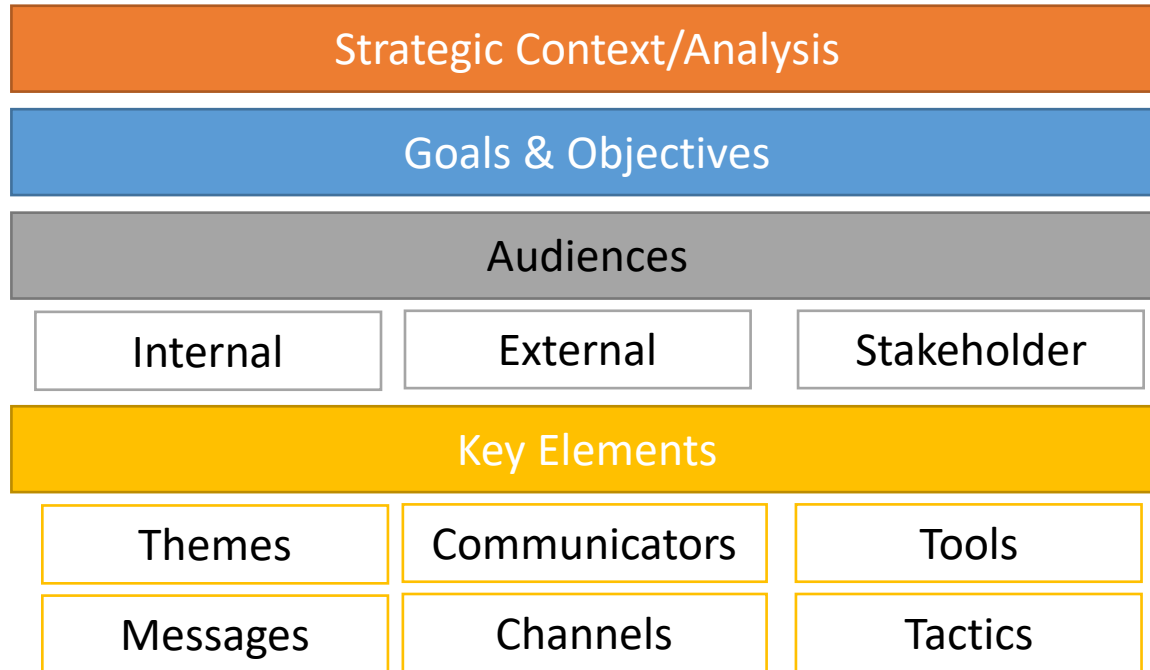
|                          | Baby Boomers<br>(1945 - 1960)   | Generation X<br>(1961 - 1980)  | Generation Y<br>(1981 - 1995)  | Generation Z<br>(after 1995)  |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Preferred ways to engage | <br>Phone  | <br>Email <br>Text  |  <br>Text   Social media | <br>Handheld devices |
| Preferred comms methods  |  <br>Email   Phone<br><br>Face to face | <br>Email <br>Text |  <br>Online   Mobile     | <br>Facetime         |

Source: Barclays

# Coordination: Audience & Medium

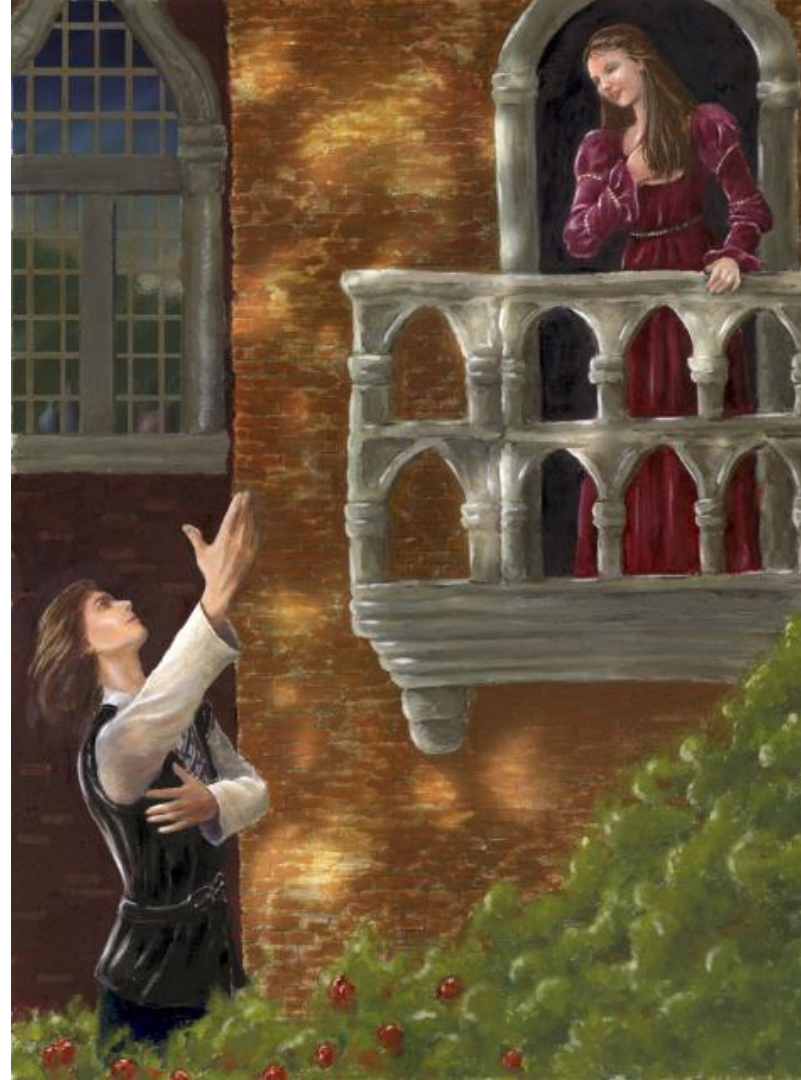
| <b>Audience</b><br><b>Media or Channels</b>     | <b>General Public</b> | <b>Other Governments</b> | <b>Politicians</b> | <b>Educators</b> | <b>Specific groups</b> | <b>Other Influencers</b> |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Newspapers                                      | X                     |                          |                    |                  |                        |                          |
| Television                                      | X                     |                          |                    |                  |                        |                          |
| Direct Contact (person to person)               |                       |                          |                    |                  |                        |                          |
| Social Media                                    | X                     |                          |                    |                  |                        |                          |
| Radio   | X                     |                          |                    |                  |                        |                          |
| Special Events                                  | X                     |                          |                    |                  |                        |                          |
| <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Party (i.e. other gov'ts)</b> |                       |                          |                    |                  |                        |                          |

# Elements of a Strategic Communication Plan



# Communicating Your Point

- **Themes** – overall idea – what you want people to understand
- **Messages** - what you say so they will understand
- **Narratives** – Using stories to express your idea
- **Frames** – Points of View that influences the receiver.



# Theme Example

“We will continue to fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows and demonstrate resolve through operational presence in the South China Sea and beyond.”

# Message Example 1

"We view with concern [China's] unlawful claim to the entire South China Sea — directly and negatively impacting all of the countries in the region, from their livelihood, whether it be with fishing or access to natural resources," Aquilino said. "Those are the things that lead me to believe that our execution of integrated deterrence has to occur now, and with a sense of urgency."

*DoD News, Aug. 4, 2021*

<https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/2720047/us-will-continue-to-operate-in-south-china-sea-to-ensure-prosperity-for-all/>





# Message Example 2



Beijing's claim to the vast majority of the South China Sea has no basis in international law. That assertion treads on the sovereignty of states in the region. We continue to support the region's coastal states in upholding their rights under international law.

– (27 July 2021)

# Creating a Narrative

An easily expressed story that:

- Resonates with the group
- Taps into deep cultural identity
- Includes a call to action
- Has credibility
- Future focused
- Emotional symbolic imagery

Adapted from David Kilcullen, 2007



Photo: Associated Press' Khalid Mohammed

# Framing Your Point

Things to consider:

- History
- Culture/Religion
- Biases
- Benefits/Risks
  - Financial
  - Environmental
  - Humanitarian

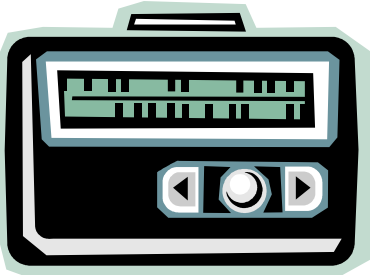


# Who can best share your message?

- Traditional Media .  
(Print, TV, Radio)
- Teachers/Religious leaders
- Political leaders
- Internet sites/Social Media
- Entertainers
- Internal audience

***Cultivate and maintain good relationships before, during, and after your campaign.***

How do does your audience want to receive information?



# How are people motivated?

Are they motivated by...

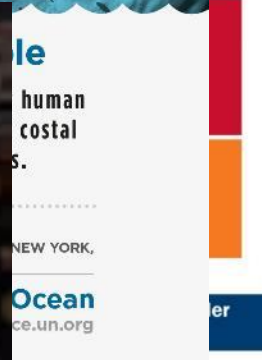
- Positive?
- Negative?
- Wanting to help?
- Wanting to profit?



# Tailoring messages for the medium

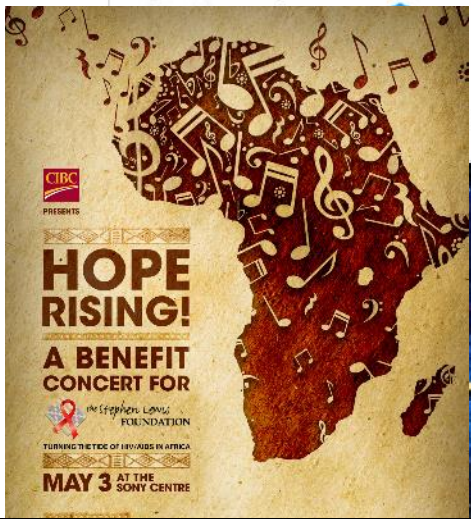
How can I package my ideas to ensure maximum audience receptivity?

- Topics people care about
- Useful graphics
- Compelling photos of people

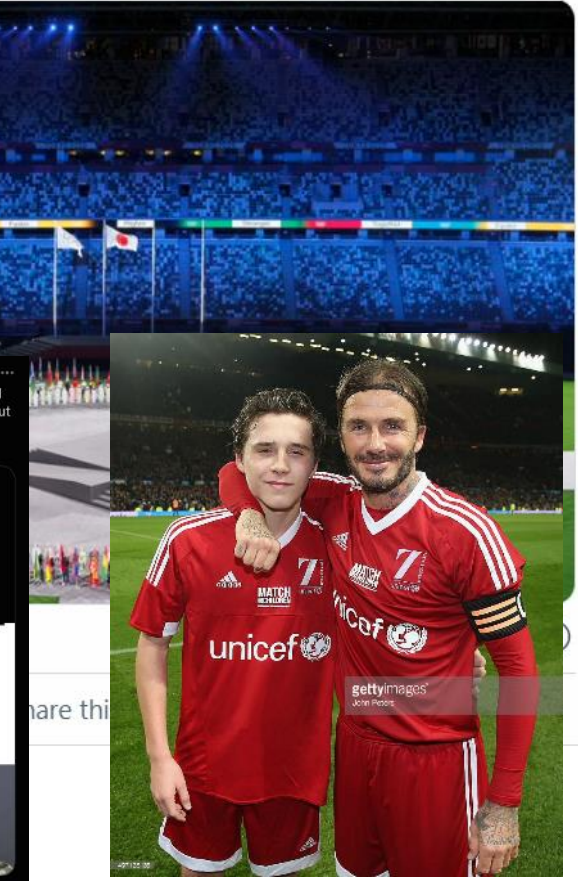


# Events

- Events can be the reason for the plan
- Or a tool for implementing a plan



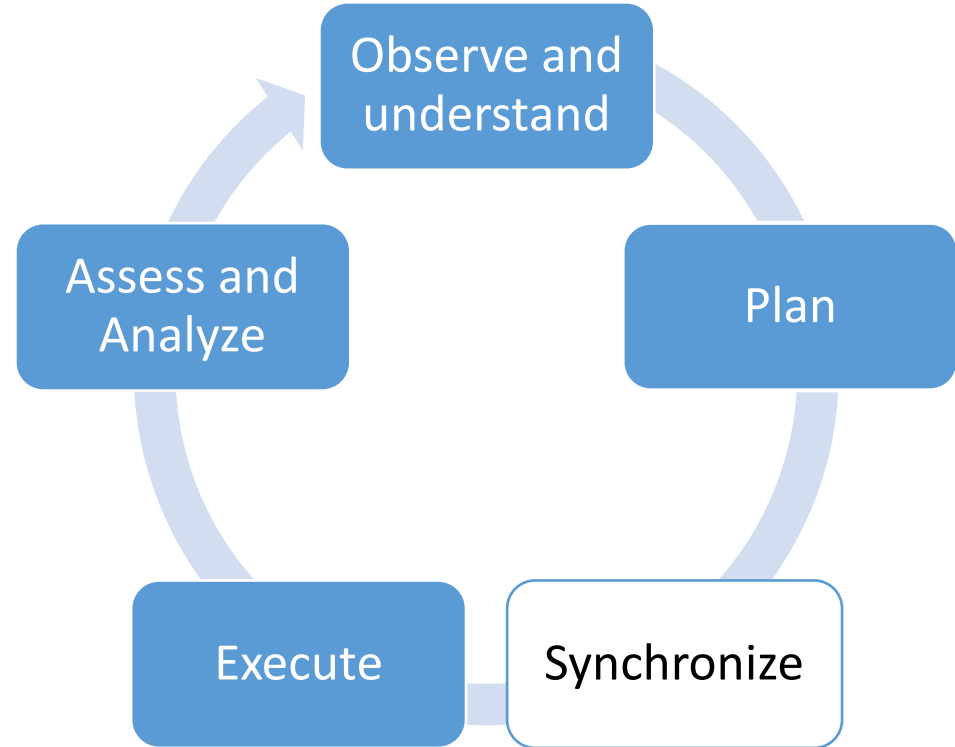
the #Tokyo2020 #ClosingCeremony





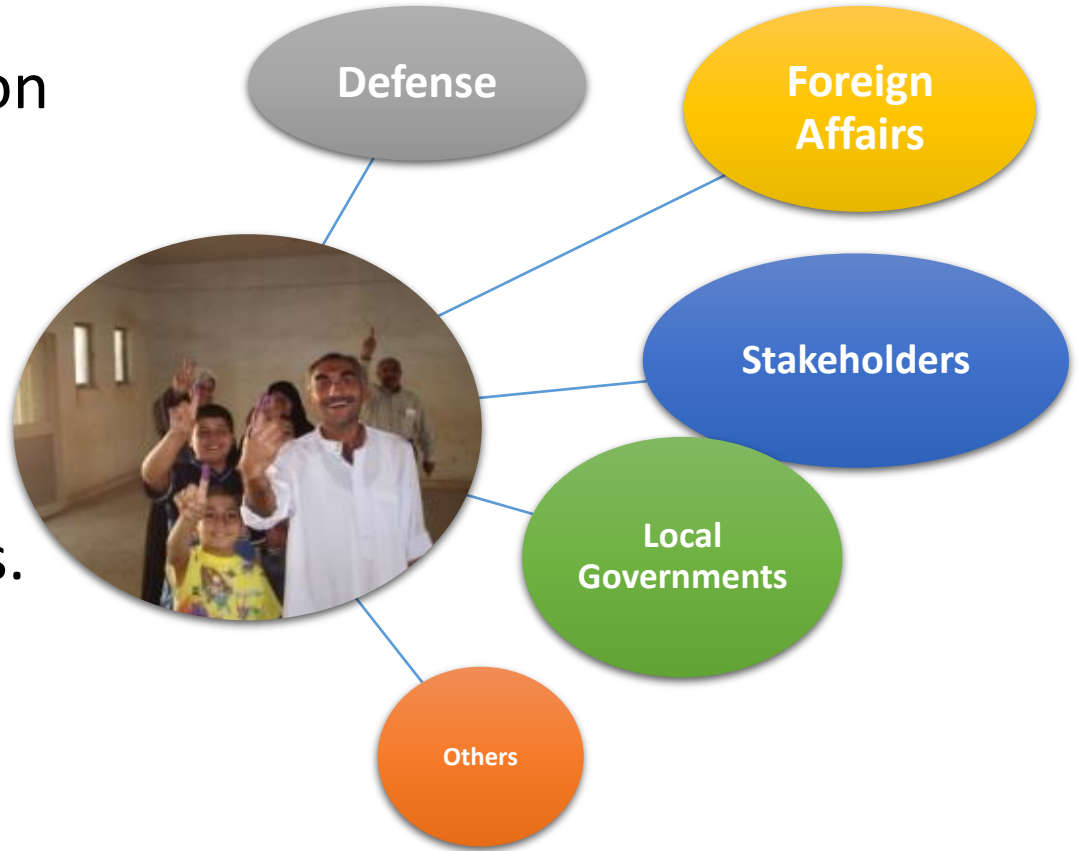
# Synchronize the Plan

- Coordinate messages & events in advance with other stakeholders.



# Synchronize the Plan

- Interagency coordination to synchronize efforts.
- Coordinate strategic planning for both domestic and international audiences.



# Synchronize your plan

Example from the World  
Health Organization



# Synchronizing Images and Actions

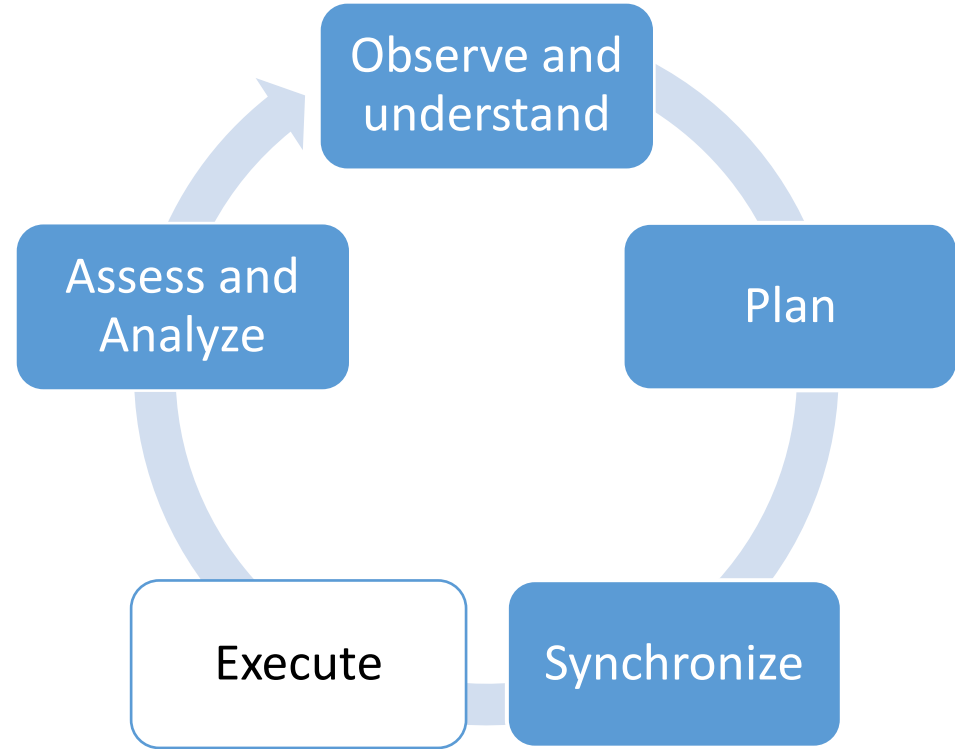
Your photo or photo op should match the intent of your message.



Armin Laschet, center, Governor of the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the top candidate of the German Christian Democrats for the upcoming federal elections.

# Executing the Plan

- Disseminate consistent messages – appropriately adapted to meet the requirements of different media channels to reach your publics.
- Deliver these messages with a unified voice through various spokespeople.



# Message Coordination Case Studies

- Local Government Energy Program
- National Government Elections
- Whole of Society – Defense Support
- National Communications - NATO exercise

## Communications Strategy Table Template

| PURPOSE  | AUDIENCE(S)  | MESSAGES   | CHANNELS                                      | PRODUCTS   | LEAD                              |
|--|--|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Build political support                                | Mayor, city council  | Energy efficiency is improving local residents' quality of life and saving them money                                | One-on-one meetings, presentations to council | One page program summary with citizen testimonials | Program manager                   |
| Attract additional funding                             | Foundations, government agencies                           | The program has a compelling business model for delivering cost-effective energy efficiency                          | One-on-one meetings                           | One page program summary, business plan            | Program manager                   |
| Create opportunities to expand the program             | Nearby city governments and program partners               | We have an opportunity to bring the benefits of energy efficiency to a broader region through a proven program model | One-on-one meetings, presentations            | Program summary, replication plan                  | Program summary, replication plan |
| Help support other programs by sharing lessons learned | Energy efficiency program administrators                   | Learn from what has been successful and avoid our mistakes   | Conference presentations                      | Presentation, lessons learned report               | Program manager                   |
| Attract partners                                       | Public and non-profit organizations with a related mission | This energy efficiency program can help you achieve your goals   | One-on-one meetings, presentations            | Program summary                                    | Partnership staff                 |
| Build demand by demonstrating success                  | Homeowners in program's target markets                     | Your neighbors have increased their comfort and saved money—you can too  | Local advertising, direct mail, website       | Yard signs, advertisements, flyers                 | Marketing and outreach staff      |

# Example of interagency coordination across lines of operations for an election

- Elections - Government message to ensure “fairness, honesty, widest participation for a unified nation.”
- Organizations sharing information
  - Election committee
    - Information about polling locations and processes
    - Information about candidates & issues
- Police/Security forces
  - Information on what is being done to protect voters and avoid/curb violence during elections
- Who else has a part of this?
  - Community leaders – encourage people to vote
  - Schools – education about elections, visits to government offices or speakers visit classes
  - Ministry of Foreign Affairs - provide talking points to ambassadors in other nations.



# Message Coordination

## **1<sup>st</sup> Iraqi Election Example**

Themes– Voting is essential for the nation and will be safe

Media/Civic engagement coordination done together- Iraqi & US

- Government of Iraq – PM, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, religious leaders, teachers, police chief, etc.
- US support– Senior military & diplomatic leader engagement & interviews.



# Referendum Engagement



|                 | 8       | 9                     | 10                          | 11                    | 12                | 13        | 14                | 15<br>Referendum          | 16                             |
|-----------------|---------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|
| GEN             |         |                       | ←                           | 3,4,6<br>(Radio)      | TBD               |           | →                 |                           |                                |
| MG<br>BG        |         | A1: 3,4,6<br>(Arabic) |                             | L2: 3,4,6<br>(Radio)  |                   | L2: 3,4,6 |                   |                           | L2: 5,8,6                      |
| MNF Other       |         |                       | DCSINT 6                    | ←                     | Cdrs o/o<br>3,4,6 |           | MNC CG<br>3,4,6 → |                           |                                |
| US AMB          | ←       |                       |                             |                       | DOS Working       |           |                   |                           | →                              |
| DOS other       | ←       |                       |                             |                       | DOS Working       |           |                   | SecState<br>7,8 (Address) | →                              |
| PM<br>President |         | Kubba 2               | PM 1,2,5                    | Kubba<br>2,3          | Ministers<br>1,2  |           | Pres 1,2,5        |                           | ITG 1,8                        |
| MOI or<br>MOD   | MOI 3,4 | Qadir (T)<br>3,4      |                             | Babiker<br>(T) 3,4    |                   |           | MOI/MOD<br>2,3,4  |                           |                                |
| Other           |         | IECI 2                |                             | Korsheed<br>(T) 3,4,6 | WAQF<br>(T) 1,5   |           |                   |                           |                                |
| Other Event     |         | Fallujah<br>Haditha   | Tikrit (IECI)<br>Sul'mani'a | Diwaniya<br>Haditha   | Haditha           |           |                   |                           | ← DOS Media Surge (4 Cities) → |

## Messages

- |                       |                           |   |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 1. Unified Iraq       | 4. Capable ISF            | 7. Legitimate Government                        |
| 2. Participate/Vote   | 5. Opportunity for Iraqis | 8. Congratulate Iraqis or<br>Condemn Terrorists |
| 3. Secure Environment | 6. Insurgency Incapable   |   |

# Singapore Total Defence Program

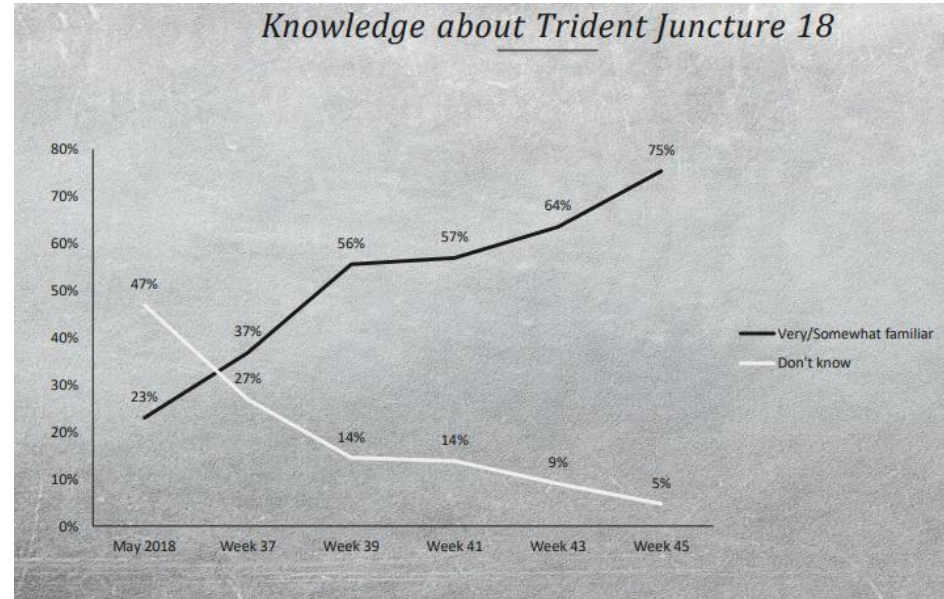
Long term whole-of-society program which includes promotion on:

- Mainstream media
- Social Media
- Co-creation: film, digital animation, docudrama, photo competition, puzzles, card game, song contest.

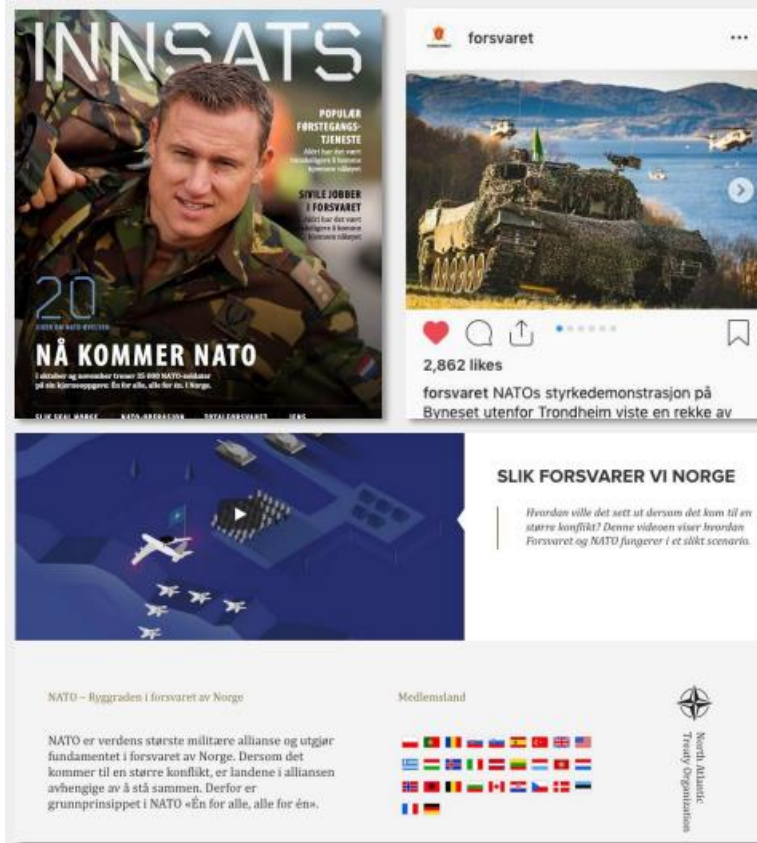


# NATO/Norway – Trident Juncture

- Strategic communication plan to raise awareness of an upcoming NATO exercise over 4 months
- Developed clear goals:
  - Explain the value of NATO without scaring the population
  - Reach more than 50% of the population 5x



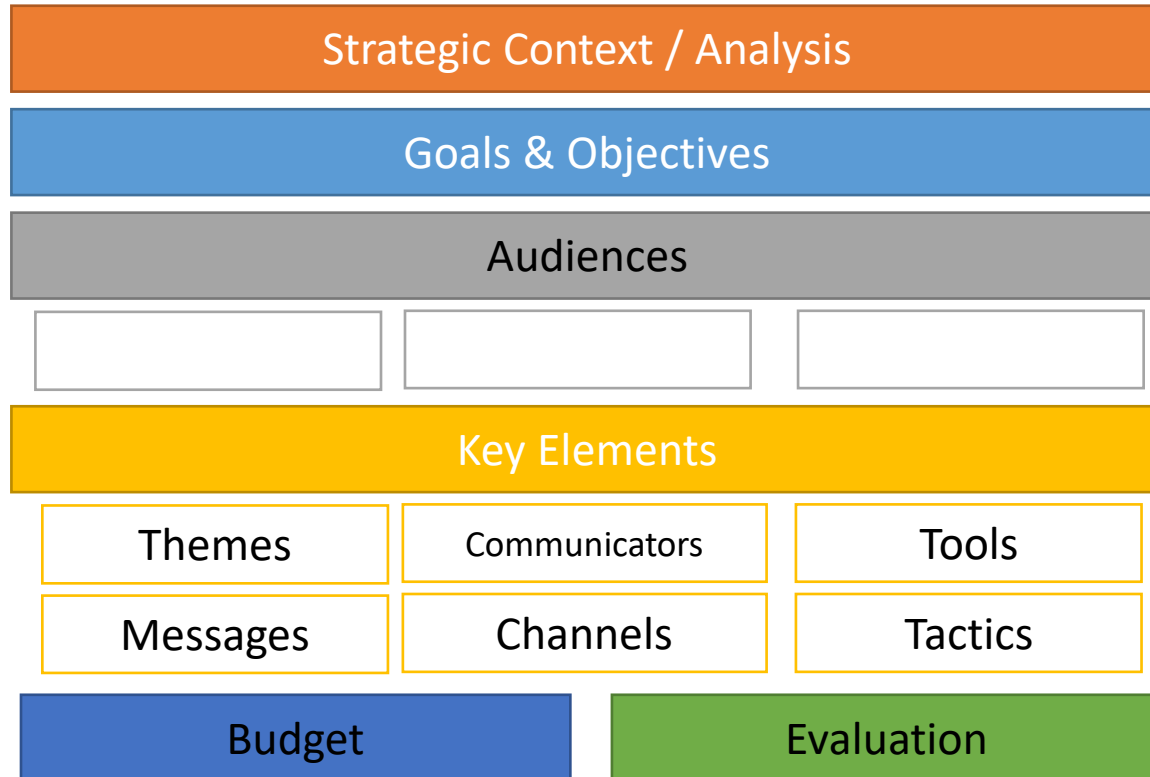
# NATO/Norway – Trident Juncture



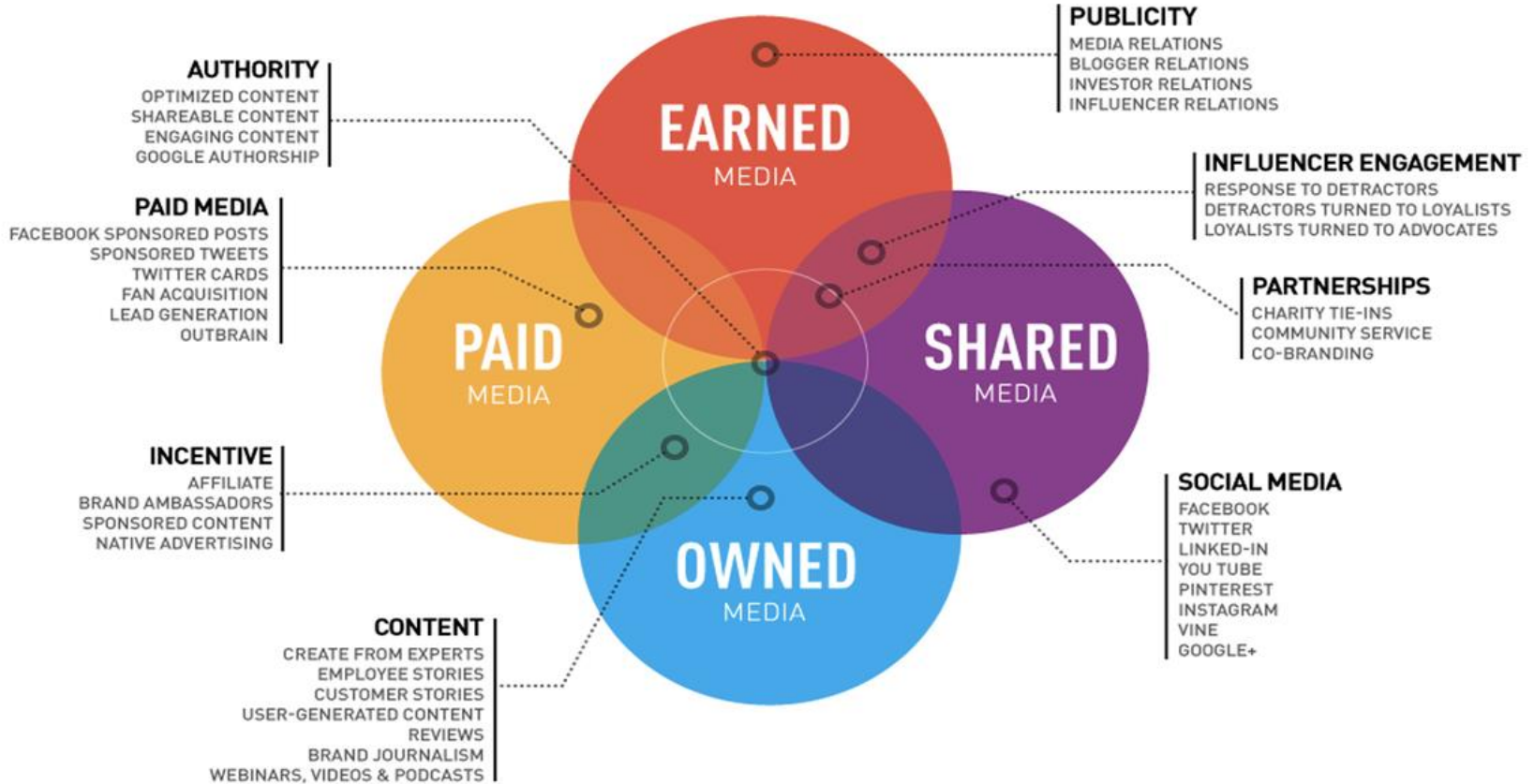
- Utilized various platforms
  - Mainstream Media
  - Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat)
  - Face to Face with community leaders
- Messages/Styles
  - Video, text, stories and animations.
  - How we (Norway and NATO) defend ourselves. And how the NATO Total Defence concept works.



# Elements of a Strategic Communication Plan



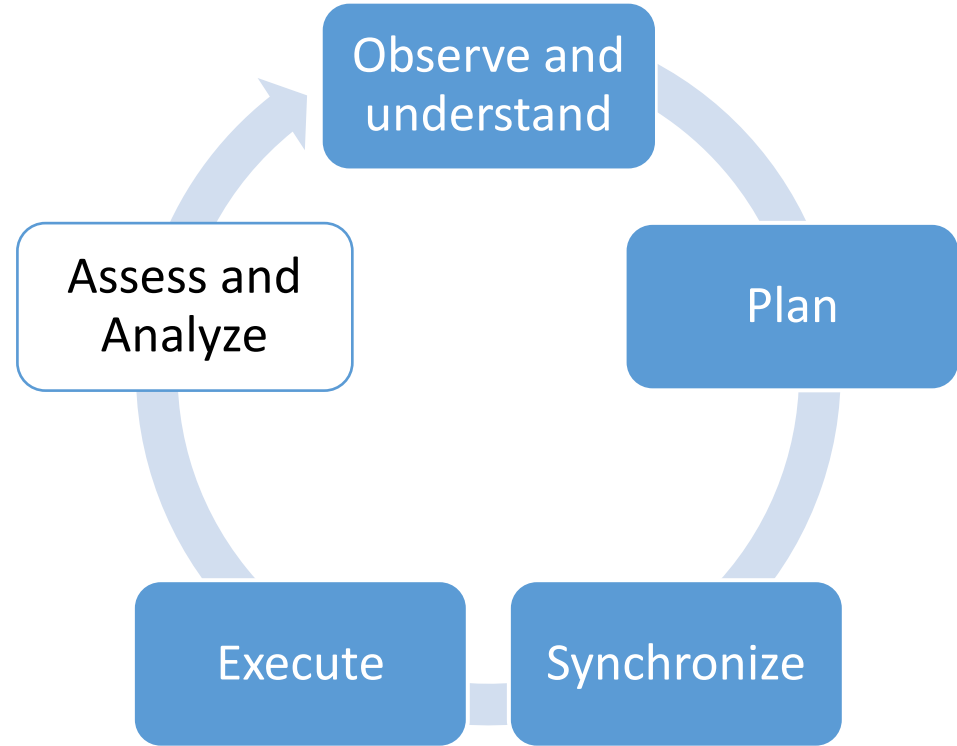
# The PESO Model





# Assess and Analyze

- Figure out how you are going to assess before you begin your plan.
- How much money do you have for this?
- Use feedback throughout to adjust messages.
- Post-event analysis and lessons learned should be shared and USED for future planning.



# Measures of Effectiveness

## Barcelona Principals

- Define your goals
- Understanding stakeholders
- Define your benchmarks
- Define your metrics
- Select right data collection
- Use the data to make better decisions

For more info:

<https://prguidetomeasurement.org/guide/>



# Strategic Disinformation

**White  
(Overt)**

Government Propaganda  
Outright messaging campaigns by non-state actors

**Gray  
(Uncertain)**

- Unknown intentions
- Trolls/Hackers/Bloggers

**Black  
(Covert)**

- Government Influence Operations
- State Funded Troll Farms
- Non-state actors

# State-to-State Disinformation Goals

- ▶ Undermine citizen confidence in democratic governance;
- ▶ Foment and exacerbate divisive political fractures;
- ▶ Erode trust between citizens and elected officials and democratic institutions;
- ▶ Popularize policy agendas within foreign populations;
- ▶ Create general distrust or confusion over information sources by blurring the lines between fact and fiction

# Priming or Grooming - Laying the groundwork for mistrust

- Set the stage by first building trust
- Plant “seeds”
- Feed upon anxiety and collective stress
- Repeat information frequently
- Use various sources to “validate” and support
- Use a variety of media to get the message across.

## Chinese State Media Misleading Taglines

Chinese state media outlets are active on global social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and Instagram, which are blocked in China. They have accrued large followings, thanks in part to promotional ads and deceptive descriptions that obscure their state-run origins.

| Media outlet   | Facebook self-identification   | Actual identity   | Facebook Followers (Main account, December 2019) |
|--|--|---|--|
| <br>People's Daily                  | “The biggest newspaper in China”   | Official mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party                    | 72 million                                       |
| <br>Xinhua News Agency              | “The first port of call for the latest and exclusive China and world news” | Official Chinese state-owned news wire                                | 70 million                                       |
| <br>China Global Television Network | “China's preeminent 24-hour news channel”                                  | International arm of state-owned broadcaster China Central Television | 90 million                                       |
| <br>China Daily                     | “The leading English-language news organization in China”                  | Chinese state-owned English-language newspaper                        | 84 million                                       |

# Five Strategies to Fight Disinformation

- **Education & capacity building** (media literacy, inoculation)
- **Adding friction to dangerous narratives** (product intervention – nudges, injecting relevant content)
- **Counter narratives** (humor over rumor, exposing and defanging narrative, use key opinion leaders and storytelling, community PSAs, hack & leak (anonymous))
- **Threat disruption** (targeted removal, moderation, cluster of accounts, policy enforcement)
- **Reorientation of operations** (redirection, preemption, pivoting – ex. Ukraine biolabs)



# References

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- **Communications for Leaders in a Crisis (CDC publication)** - <https://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/manual/index.asp>
- **UN StratCom Booklet** - [http://www.cendevcom.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Booklet\\_FINAL\\_3.25.02.pdf](http://www.cendevcom.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Booklet_FINAL_3.25.02.pdf)
- **WHO Strategic Communication Guide** - <https://www.who.int/about/communications>

Questions?