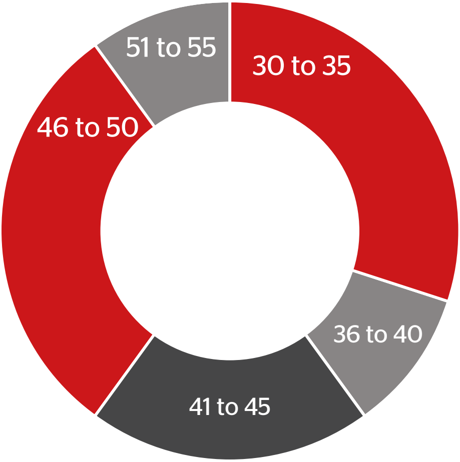
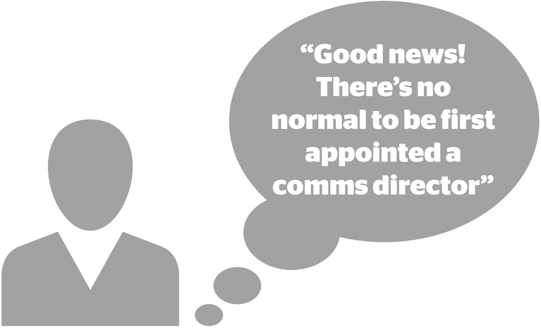
You are not alone.
The changing role of a comms director = an increasingly complex life

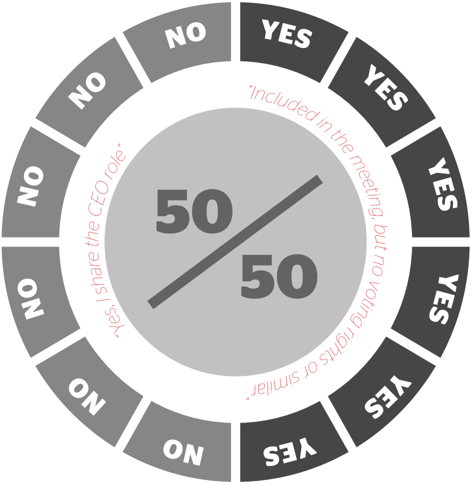
Who are you?

AT WHAT AGE DID YOU BECOME A COMMS DIRECTOR?

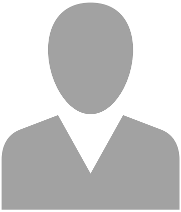



"Good news! There's no normal to be first appointed a comms director"

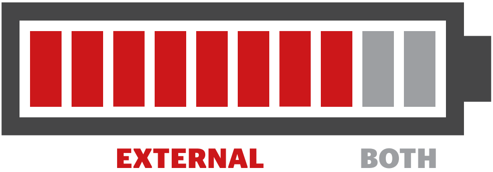
AT YOUR ORGANISATION, DO YOU SIT ON THE EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE?



“You’re not in a minority if you don’t sit on the Exec Committee”



ONLY GOT AN INTERNAL COMMS BACKGROUND? THEN YOU’RE PROBABLY NOT A COMMS DIRECTOR



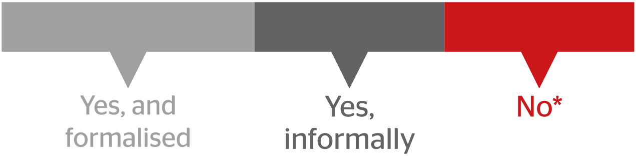
“both, and marketing”

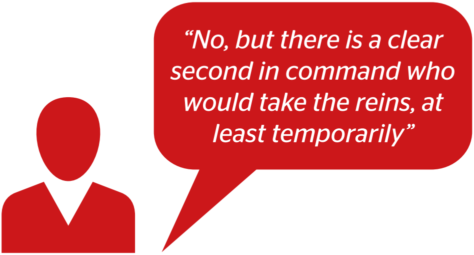
“Started externally, but absorbed the internal”

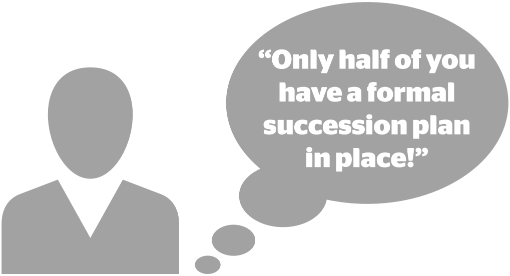
“Comms should join internal and external, and sit between them to gain an overview of the organisation”

Who will you be in the future?

IS THERE A FORMAL SUCCESSION PLANNING PROCESS IN PLACE FOR THE COMMS DIRECTOR?




"No, but there is a clear second in command who would take the reins, at least temporarily"


"Only half of you have a formal succession plan in place!"

SHOULD YOUR SUCCESSOR MAINLY HAVE AN INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL BACKGROUND?

40%

External

"Changing over years, but definitely still external"

40%

Both

"Historically it was internal to external, but not anymore"

20%

Balance

"But internal comms experience will matter more in the future"

Where will you go?

"Comms director role with focus on internal comms, doing more writing as well, not relying on journalists so much, generating own thought leadership pieces"

"Quite difficult to see what's beyond, but perhaps management change or a role specifically in cultural change"

Director (CEO)

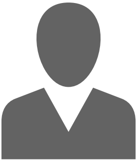
"Move to a global level within the organisation"

"Developing greater expertise in particular comms areas"

Similar comms role, but bigger business

"Public affairs"

"Nothing – this is it"



"Depends on the circumstances – troubleshooter as Director/ Head or consultant for other organisations. Perhaps retirement."

"Possibly join a smaller organisation to have a greater amount of strategic influence"

What are you doing now?

WHAT'S THE PRIMARY CHALLENGE AT YOUR ORGANISATION THAT YOU FACE?

"Reputation of management in face of cuts" (public sector)

"Creating sufficient time for all tasks"

"Consistently reacting in a timely manner with resources available to an issue or crisis"

"Transparency" and "values truly realised"

"More time and budget"

#1

"Demonstrating the value of what we deliver", "As a profession, not great at showing return"

"Coordination across multiple departments"

"Reputation management"

"Monitoring and reporting back on coverage – showing the value of press"

"Ensuring alignment and consistency of messaging across the organisation"

WHICH DEVELOPMENTS IN COMMS HAS MADE YOUR ROLE MORE CHALLENGE OR MORE INTERESTING IN THE LAST 5 YEARS?

"Rise of social media" and "change to the media landscape"

"Business growth and internal governance changes" and "technology to support external comms"

"Speed of comms, social, more legal considerations and competition for peoples' attention"

"Cater for print, broadcast and online – appeal to everything" and "Reliance on PR driven SEO and social media – more digital"

"The wholesale development of digital/online media" and "Twitter"

"Rise of digital" and "squeeze of costs, and consistently proving best possible ROI"

"It's become vital to go beyond just comms, and engage with the whole organisation and its direction"

"The internet – more interesting and more challenging – rise of twitter and social – constantly monitoring and need to be on the ball" and "Economic pressures - needing to prove value and worth."

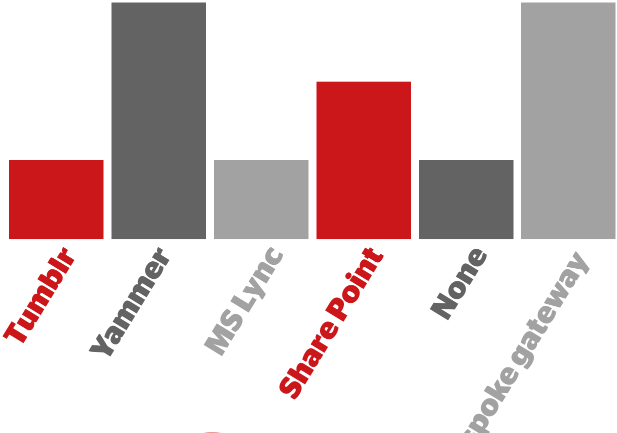
"Demand for content, and creating really engaging content – often on an international level" and "social media, creating an increase in expectations"

"Growth of social and digital channels, and new channels, such as video"

"Commercial aspects, such as creating credible briefs that get straight to the board"

"Speed of comms, social, more legal considerations and competition for peoples' attention"

CAN JIVE SURVIVE?
WHAT SOCIAL INTRANET DO YOU USE?



“Developing an intranet”

“A one way, brochure-ware platform, for publishing news stories”

What needs to change?

“Closer to the business and more attached to the business strategic decisions”

“Less meetings”

“More budget”

"There's a gap in the market for comprehensive monitoring and valuation software and application – currently using a blend of internal and external resources – no one solution/company that fits the bill at present. Challenge as consistently needing to prove value to board."

"Improved evaluation procedure"

"Executive board place"

"To be more involved with marketing team"

"Thirty-four hours in a day instead of twenty-four!"

"I'm not sure there is anything I would add"

"Organisation is really positive about hot desking, working more flexibly – cons are that the PR team don't have fixed desks, more mobile, more agile but difficult for confidentiality – workplace is a challenge, prefer to have fixed desks"