

# **Fostering Corporate Reputation and Corporate Brand of a Non-profit Organisation by Developing Communication**

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<p>In 21st century, in the world of social media and internet, where news and information travel very fast and everything what an organisation does is carefully scanned, and where individuals discuss matters related to an organisation with clear link to the organisation's brand name and where an organisation cannot anymore control communication in the way it once was able to do, reputation and brand are increasingly acknowledged as valuable organisational assets. Branding and reputation management are significant functions of an organisation and all organisations whether they are big or small, for-profit or non-profit, need to find means to develop and manage their reputation and brand as well as to protect them since it is easier to build and foster reputation and brand than to recover them.</p> <p>Corporate communication can be used for building, developing, and sustaining a corporate brand as well as a corporate reputation. Organisations can use corporate communication and its different tools as means when communicating and creating attractive and specific images with their stakeholders. Through coherent corporate communication organisations can convey their identity cues and deliver brand signals, and that way have an influence on the perspectives of the stakeholders i.e. on the way how the stakeholders see the organisation.</p> <p>The objective of the thesis is to find out what are the means of corporate communication which can be used for fostering reputation and brand. This thesis is a design research which empirical part consists of a portfolio, a set of three assignments. The topic for this thesis arose at Nyyti ry, which is the workplace of the writer of the thesis.</p> <p>The thesis provides the introduction of the target organisation, Nyyti ry and its operational environment as well an overview of non-profit organisations. The theoretical part addresses corporate reputation, corporate branding, and corporate communication. All of these concepts are viewed also from a non-profit organisation's perspective. The role of communication in fostering corporate reputation and brand is also discussed. The portfolio assignments, which are considered as the means of communication development, form the empirical part of the thesis.</p> <p>The findings indicate that a communication strategy acts as a strategic means of fostering existing reputation and brand of an organisation and that an organisation can influence its reputation by influencing the perceptions of the stakeholders by using the means of communication. It is also indicated that an organisation needs to prepare for and foresee potential crises and compose a crisis communication plan to minimise the potential damage to reputation and brand. The findings also show that corporate brand management needs to concentrate on improving weak and unsatisfactory areas and misconceptions as well as narrowing the possible gaps existing between the organisation's and its internal and external stakeholders' perceptions.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> corporate reputation, reputation management, corporate brand, branding, brand management, corporate communication, crisis communication, non-profit organisation	

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# 1 Introduction

In 21st century, in the world of social media and internet corporate reputation and brand are more and more acknowledged as valuable organisational assets and branding as well as corporate reputation management are considered to be significant functions of an organisation whether the organisation is a non-profit organisation or a commercial one. Corporate branding and corporate reputation among an organisation's stakeholders need to be developed and sustained constantly in a non-profit as well as in a commercial organisation since stakeholders accept and support an organisation which has a strong reputation and brand. If an organisation has a positive reputation and a good brand it may, for example, more easily obtain financing, distribute its goods and services as well as attract, hire, and keep the best employees. Positive reputation and brand have also an influence on collaboration and cooperation with other organisations. (Roper & Fill 2012, xvi-xvii, 9, 23; Cornelissen 2014, 63-64.)

All organisations, big and small, commercial or non-profits, need to find means to develop and manage their reputation and brand as well as to protect them since it is easier to build and maintain reputation and brand than recover them (Roper & Fill 2012, 9; Cornelissen 2014, 42). Corporate communication can be used for building, developing, and sustaining a corporate brand as well as a corporate reputation. Organisations can use corporate communication and its different tools as means when communicating and creating attractive and specific images with their stakeholders. Through coherent corporate communication organisations can convey their identity cues and deliver brand signals and that way have an influence on the perspectives of the stakeholders i.e. on the way how the stakeholders see the organisation. (Dowling 1994 & van Riel 1995 & Fombrun 1996, in van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 36; van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 280; Roper & Fill 2012, 211.)

The objective of the thesis is to find out what are the means of corporate communication which can be used for fostering reputation and brand. This thesis is a design research which empirical part consists of a portfolio, a set of three assignments which the writer of this thesis has completed during her Communication Management -studies. Reasoning behind the decision on research methodology is provided later in subchapter 1.2. A design research as a thesis always complies with the empiria and concerns a "a phenomenon, process or situation" that an organisation or the writer of a thesis wants to improve by development or change and thesis topics often begin to exist at working life and at the workplace of the writer of a thesis, and they are also often related to a profession, a specific type of job. (Kananen 2013, 12-13.) The topic for this thesis arose at Nyyti ry, which is the workplace of the writer of the thesis. This means that there exists a

phenomenon behind this thesis and the writer of the thesis wants to improve it by developing corporate communication.

During 2014 Nyyti ry faced major changes, which influenced the organisation's way to operate. In 2015 Nyyti ry executed surveys among its primary stakeholders, university students and professionals working among students, and organised also a student panel to find out how the stakeholders perceive the organisation and its brand. The respondents of the surveys and the members of the student panel thought that the visual identity was outdated, and the organisation was perceived to be only for depressed and lonely people and for people suffering social exclusion. The prevailing image was totally different from the image desired and targeted by Nyyti ry. Moreover, awareness and conspicuousness of Nyyti ry and its activities were considered to be weak and Nyyti ry and its communication were perceived dull and uninteresting. (Kero 2016, 1-11.)

In the end of 2015 Nyyti ry got its first corporate strategy ever. In the beginning of 2016, on the basis of studies made in 2015 and the new corporate strategy, it was decided that the organisation need to be rebranded. Rebranding was based on Nyyti ry's core ideas: the purpose defined in the rules, mission, vision, and values. Questions like 'Who are we?', 'What do we stand for?', 'What is our core purpose?', and 'What does it mean to be involved in this organisation?' were asked. By executing rebranding the organisation wanted to create an image of Nyyti ry which reflects the idea that Nyyti ry is available and meant for all students and young adults, and that Nyyti ry is credible and expert in promoting the mental health of students. The aim of rebranding was also to increase awareness and conspicuousness of Nyyti ry and its activities. Through rebranding Nyyti ry got a new visual identity. Even the organisation visual identity was defined the tone of voice was left undefined. An implementation plan and a communication plan of the new brand were not formulated (Kero 2016, 1-11.) To reach the objectives set for rebranding the organisation decided that a brand development plan need to be formulated and a communication strategy was needed to support the achievement of corporate goals and vision as well as the fulfilment of its mission. Since Nyyti ry was trying and is still trying to foster its reputation and brand it was decided that a crisis communication plan was also needed in addition to the communication strategy.

The theoretical framework of the thesis concentrates on addressing corporate reputation, corporate branding, and corporate communication to find grounds for the prevailing idea that by developing its communication the organisation can foster its reputation and brand. The empirical part of the thesis is the portfolio of three assignments, which the writer of this thesis has completed during her Communication Management -studies. Assignments

included in the portfolio are: Communication Strategy for 2017-2019, Crisis Communication Plan, Brand's Development Plan. All these assignments the writer has completed within a six-month period and separately for the target organisation of this thesis, Nyyti ry. The assignments present the situation of Nyyti ry at the time of completion. The assignments can be considered as solutions for the research problem.

The thesis has five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction which provides an overview of the topic of the thesis and addresses the backgrounds and the relevance of the thesis. Chapter two provides the introduction of the target organisation, Nyyti ry and its operational environment. It also offers an overview of non-profit organisations. Chapter three addresses corporate reputation, corporate branding, and corporate communication. All of these concepts are viewed also from a non-profit organisation's perspective. The role of communication in fostering corporate reputation and brand is also discussed in chapter three. The portfolio assignments, which are considered as the means of communication development, are introduced in chapter four. The final chapter, chapter five, concentrates on discussing the relationship of the portfolio assignments with the theoretical framework and provides recommendations and development ideas. The final chapter discusses the personal learnings which the writer has gained during the thesis process.

## **1.1 Objectives, research questions and limitations of the thesis**

The objective of this portfolio thesis is to develop corporate communication of a non-profit organisation, Nyyti ry, with a special focus on fostering the organisation's reputation and brand. With the portfolio assignments the thesis aims 1) to provide a framework for coherent and consistent communication which supports and helps to achieve the corporate goals and the organisation's vision as well as fulfil the organisation's mission, 2) to provide a framework and means for protecting as well as for fostering the reputation and brand of Nyyti ry.

The research question was:

What are the means of corporate communication which can be used for fostering reputation and brand?

The theoretical framework is limited on defining the essentials of each subject: corporate reputation, corporate branding, and corporate communication. This means for example that corporate branding does not address the building of a brand or the process of rebranding. The theoretical framework focuses on those elements of each subject which

relate to portfolio assignments and that are considered to be as significant to the organisation in focus.

Time schedule of the thesis has set its own limitations for the research. Measuring results are not available at the time of finalisation of the thesis since the portfolio assignments have been in use less than a year and the organisation have not been able to execute measuring among its stakeholders.

## 1.2 Methodology and methods

The methodology of this thesis is mixed methodology with special approach; a design research approach. The empirical part of the thesis consists of a portfolio, a set of three assignments which the writer of this thesis has completed during her Communication Management -studies.

Table 1. Classification of different research approaches and methods including their characteristics (adapted from Kananen 2013, 29)

Factor	Research Approaches		Researchers with Multiple Approaches Researchers with Multiple Strategies		
	Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research	Case Research	Design Research	Action Research
<b>Relationship between Theory and Practice</b>	Induction or from practice to theory	Deduction or from theory to practice	Abduction	Abduction	Abduction or interaction between theory and practice
<b>Purpose of Research</b>	Understanding	Generalisation Prediction	Understanding	Change	Intervention
<b>Researcher's Role</b>	External participant	External observer	External participant	External participant	Active actor
<b>Research Questions</b>	Open questions Theme interview	Structured questions	Mainly open questions	Mainly open questions	Mainly open questions
<b>Responses</b>	Text descriptive	Numbers quantitative	Open	Open	Open

Table 1 shows the different ways how research methodologies (approaches) and methods can be classified. According to the main classification research methodologies are divided in two different approaches; to qualitative and quantitative. Researches like a case study, design research and action research that have multiple approaches are sometimes considered as research strategies instead of individual research approaches since these researches use both qualitative and quantitative methods. A design research can be considered as a mixed methodology since it is "a group of different research

methodologies that are being used according to a situation or an objective for development”. (Kananen 2013, 20, 26-29.)

Design research, which can also be called “applied action research” is “a bridge between the worlds of the theory and empiria to understand a phenomenon or to solve a problem” where “a theory is a means to conceptualise the empiria”. A design research as a thesis always complies with the empiria and concerns “a phenomenon, process or situation” that an organisation or the writer of a thesis wants to improve by developing or changing matters in question. In other words, “with the help of design research some problem is eliminated or something is developed for the better”. In a design research, thesis topics often begin to exist at working life and at the workplace of the writer of a thesis, and they are also often related to a profession, a specific type of job. (Kananen 2013, 12-13, 47.) Design research was chosen to be the methodology of this thesis since the topic for the thesis arose at Nyyti ry, which is the workplace of the writer of the thesis and there exists an unsatisfying situation, a phenomenon, behind this thesis, and the organisation as well as the writer of the thesis wants to resolve the problem and foster reputation and brand of Nyyti ry. The means for solving the problem and to foster reputation and brand were considered to be the development of corporate communication.

Solutions provided by a design research can be a strategy, a plan, instructions, an action model, a process, a product, or a service (Vilkkä & Airaksinen 2003, 9; Kananen 2013, 22). As Kananen (2013, 18) states a statement or recommendations how to solve the existing problem are not enough in case of a design research. It is essential that a research design provides empirical and appropriate solutions which improve states of affairs (Kananen 2013, 18, 47). In this thesis a portfolio of three separate assignments forms the empirical part of the thesis and these three assignments can be considered as empirical and appropriate solutions for the research problem.

A portfolio is a set of examples of a student’s work, which the student has formulated during his/her studies and which the student has deliberately and according to their relevance organised as a collection or set. Portfolio is understood as a documented expression of professional knowledge of a student’s field of study or professional field. As a thesis, portfolio represents process-oriented procedure, which follows the principles of action research and empirical learning and which uses mainly an exploratory and developing document analysis research method. (Vilkkä & Airaksinen 2003, 46.)

The theoretical framework of this thesis is a literature review. Different kind of written materials, like books, articles, theories, models, researches, and reports were used when



the writer of this thesis formulated the literature review. The used literature was chosen so that it helps the writer to understand the phenomena behind the thesis, to offer tools for different stages of the thesis process and to provide solutions for solving the existing problem as well as to confirm writer's decisions on solutions. Writer used also literature on methodologies to gain understanding of how to conduct a design research in which portfolio assignments are considered as solution to the research problem.

According to Vilkkka and Airaksinen (2003, 56) the writer of an action research or applied action research (a design research) does not need to use any methods. According to Kananen (2013, 26) both qualitative and quantitative research methods are applicable to a design research. When a research concerns the understanding of a new phenomenon then a qualitative research should be used. The qualitative data collecting methods like observation, interviews (especially theme interviews) and various documents are applicable methods. (Kananen 2013, 103.) The writer of the thesis used written materials like theories, models, researches, reports, and clarifications to help her to understand the phenomenon in question and to provide solutions for the existing problem. The current state analyses of portfolio assignments were formulated by using qualitative methods like a document analysis and archive analysis. The reasons for using mentioned qualitative methods was that by executing this thesis the writer was trying to understand new phenomena. No quantitative methods were used.

### **1.3 Credibility measures of the thesis**

The conclusions and findings of a thesis should be credible and reliable as well as correct. Credibility can be considered as "a question of proof that is based on the good documentation of the stages of the research process and the results". Since a design research combines several methods or research strategies of qualitative and quantitative research which are used to solve a problem and develop a solution the credibility can be measured by using the credibility criteria of each used method. (Kananen 2013, 176-182.) The methods used in this thesis were qualitative research methods.

Reliability and validity can be considered as the credibility concepts used for science. Reliability is seen as a good concept to measure the quality of the thesis. Reliability is defined as "the consistency of the research results that has been obtained" and the same results should be obtained in the case the research is replicated. With validity a researcher shows that correct things have been researched and results can be generalised. Generalising results means that the results can be moved to an equivalent situation and the results hold true also in that situation. The used data should be chosen carefully and

logically, and the credibility of the data should be considered already before the data is collected since the credibility of the data cannot be improved later. (Kananen 2013, 188-189.)

The writer of the thesis works for the target organisation and has been and is responsible for the rebranding process of Nyyti ry, fostering reputation and brand of Nyyti ry and for developing communication. The writer of the thesis was able to acquire relevant information and documentation. Top management of Nyyti ry has been very pleased with the portfolio assignment of the thesis. The Board of Directors of Nyyti ry has accepted the communication strategy and crisis communication plan the documents have been taken into use in the organisation. Validity of the results of this thesis can be considered to be good since the results i.e. the portfolio assignments can be used as a basis in an equivalent situation and information provided by the assignments hold true in that situation. The writer of the thesis considers the thesis to be credible, and reliability and validity of the thesis is considered to be good.

## 2 Target organisation: Nyyti ry

In this chapter the target organisation of the thesis, Nyyti ry, is introduced. The chapter presents also Nyyti ry's operational environment. An overview of non-profit organisation is also provided in this chapter.

Nyyti ry is a Finnish non-profit and non-governmental organisation founded in 1984. Its operations are funded by The Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (in Finnish: Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden avustuskeskus STEA). (Nyyti ry 2018a.)

Nyyti ry has eight member organisations. Two of them, Suomen Mielenterveysseura [The Finnish Association for Mental Health] and Ylioppilaiden terveydenhoitosäätiö YTHS [Finnish Students Health Service FSHS] are both non-profit organisations acting in the field of mental health. Two of the members are the main student unions in Finland: Suomen Ylioppilaskuntien Liitto (SYL) ry [The National Union of University Students in Finland] and Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto – SAMOK ry [writer's translation: The Union of University of Applied Sciences Students in Finland]. The rest four members are local student unions: Helsingin yliopiston ylioppilaskunta [Student Union of the University of Helsinki], Aalto-yliopiston ylioppilaskunta [Aalto University Student Union], Svenska Handelshögskolans Studentkår [The Student Union of Hanken School of Economics] and Helsingin Tekniikan Opiskelijat - HTO ry. (Nyyti ry 2018b.)

The mission of Nyyti ry is to strengthen students' mental health and study ability. Nyyti ry's vision is to be an effective and networked promoter of students' mental health. (Nyyti ry 2016a, 3.)

Nyyti ry (2016a, 4) aims to:

- enhance students' skills in maintaining and promoting mental health and study ability.
- ensure that student unions' and communities support social cohesion by enhancing practices and culture of equality in which people care for each other and where experiences of loneliness and externality reduce.
- increase social awareness of students' mental health and study ability and related factors.
- ensure that students' good mental health and social inclusion are seen pivotal success factors in the society.
- ensure that prejudices related to mental health issues reduce.

Nyyti ry's activities are divided into two main categories. There are activities for students and activities for professionals who are responsible for mental health promotion and

problem prevention among students. The activities directed to the students are focused on students studying in universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS). All activities of Nyyti ry are guided by the organisation's values and key principles: *Student orientation*, *Openness/Transparency* and *Working Together*. (Nyyti ry 2016a, 3, 6-7.)

## 2.1 Operational environment of Nyyti ry

World Health Organisation WHO (2014) states that "mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community".

Some of the changes happening in operational environment of the field of mental health are quite well known, like the change in the age structure of Finland's population, climatic change and the growth of uncertainty and insecurity. One has to prepare oneself also for unexpected changes which may be caused by the strengthening of extremist movement or the political instability of the world. (Nyyti 2016a, 4-5.)

The directions of change that have an influence on mental health work are:

- society is becoming more unequal
  - poverty, unemployment, challenges in life management
  - increase in competition and in exclusion
  - people becoming individualist
  - new forms of social support networks
  - new forms of sense of communality opened by digitalisation
  - increase in the amount of people who are living alone
  - increase in the amount of people who are experiencing loneliness
  - the strengthening of consumption culture
  - globalisation
  - migration
  - quick changes in working and study life
  - increase in unpredictability
- (Nyyti 2016a, 4-5; Suomen Mielenterveysseura 2015, 7).

Mental health problems are the most common reason for young adults' inability to study. Mental and intoxication disorders are the most significant health problems students face and about 70,000 students are suffering of them in Finland. Especially, study burnout (exhaustion), minor social support and the feeling that one does not belong to a community form a significant risk for mental health problems, inability to study and the development of social exclusion. (Nyyti 2016a, 4.)

Every tenth student studying in universities or universities of applied sciences are estimated to show so severe mental symptoms that their performance is disturbed (Puusniekka & Kunttu 2011, in Nyyti 2016a, 4). More than every third of the students experiences stress, 10% have depression symptoms and over 4% experiences anxiety on weekly basis (KOTT 2012 & OKM 2012, in Nyyti 2016a, 4). Almost every tenth university student (around 30,000) experiences very obvious or intense exhaustion (KOTT 2012, in Nyyti 2016a, 4).

Every tenth of university students experiences loneliness all the time or often (Opiskelijabarometri 2012, in Nyyti 2016a, 4). The reason for having only few or not at all social relationships and not being able to become attached to a community can be that almost half of the students has experienced bullying during their studies (Kunttu & Pesonen 2012, in Nyyti 2016a, 4). 5 to 10% of university students have experienced bullying (KOTT 2012 & Opiskelijabarometri 2012, in Nyyti 2016a, 4).

According to study executed by Nyyti ry among students and professionals working among students in 2015 students need activities, which offer peer support and which are related to handling study pressure, life skills, anxiety, study motivation and self-esteem. According to the views of the member organisations of Nyyti ry the most pivotal factors threatening the wellbeing of students are mental symptoms, stress, problems with time and life management, social exclusion, loneliness, and bullying. (Nyyti 2016a, 5.)

## **2.2 Non-profits organisations**

A non-profit organisation is an organisation which primary aspiration is to fulfil its mission, not to make profit. Term 'Third sector' is also used when referred to non-profit organisations like associations, trusts, charities, or other type non-profit organisations operated by hired employees or by volunteers or by both of them. Non-profit organisations can also be governmental or municipal, but they do not belong to third sector since they do not use voluntary workforce. (Vuokko 2010, 14-16; Sargeant 2009, 4-5.) The target organisation of this thesis, Nyyti ry, is a third sector organisation.

Non-profits organisations are funded by their members with membership fees, host (parent) organisations, donations, tax revenues and financial institutions like Raha-automaattiyhdistys [Finland's Slot Machine Association] (Vuokko 2010, 21-23), which is nowadays called Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden avustuskeskus STEA [The Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA) in Finland]. STEA "manages the funding granted for projects which are non-profit by nature and promote health and

wellbeing, from the gaming revenue of Veikkaus Oy” (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden avustuskeskus STEA 2016). In 2018 the funds granted by STEA amounted to 358 million euros (Sosiaali- ja terveystieteiden avustuskeskus STEA 2017).

Non-profit organisations have an important role in promoting wellbeing of and generating benefits for the citizens. They are important to the society since they drive issues and provide services which are not offered by the government, municipalities, and private organisations. (Terveystieteiden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos THL 2013.)

According to Sargeant (2009, 7) the strengths of non-profits are:

- Employees or volunteers are directly concerned with the social matters or problems.
- Employees possess professional skills which they have acquired while working.
- Non-profit organisations are agile and innovative and have a great ability to adapt quickly on the contrary to commercial, governmental, or municipal organisations.
- Organisations are devoted to drive their mission.
- Organisations are very cost-effective.

Limited resources (financial, human, management, expertise) can be considered as weaknesses of non-profit organisations. Other weaknesses are: 1) The ability to impact on a cause is minimal, and 2) The ability to understand the big picture i.e. management and employees of a non-profit organisation do not see what the organisation’s role is in making the society better. (Sargeant 2009, 8.)

Because non-profit organisations are driven by their mission, not to make profit, it is important that people working in a non-profit organisation know the purpose of the organisation and to whom its activities are aimed at i.e. they need to know who the stakeholders of the organisation are (Vuokko 2010, 14-15).

### **2.3 Chapter Summary**

Chapter two in its entirety concentrated on introducing the target organisation of the thesis, its operational environment. Also, an overview of non-profits organisations was offered. This chapter did not introduce corporate reputation and corporate branding or corporate communication from the non-profit organisation’s point of view since chapter three which concerns corporate reputation, corporate branding and corporate communication will do that. Corporate reputation, reputation management and the ways how reputation risks can be managed are addressed in subchapter 3.1, corporate branding and brand management in subchapter 3.2 and corporate communication and the role of communication in fostering reputation and brand in subchapter 3.3.

### **3 Corporate reputation, corporate branding, and corporate communication**

In this chapter corporate reputation, corporate branding and corporate communication are addressed. Subchapter 3.1 explores corporate reputation, reputation management and how reputation risks can be managed. These topics are discussed with the intention of creating a general picture of what is meant with corporate reputation and reputation management and how they relate to a non-profit organisation. Writer's intention is also to provide the reader with an understanding of how important it is to manage reputation.

In subchapter 3.2 corporate brand and corporate branding are addressed. This subchapter discusses also brand management. The view of a non-profit organisation is considered while discussing the mentioned concepts. Writer's intention is to create a picture of what is meant with a corporate brand, corporate branding, and brand management. Also, a framework for brand management is provided.

Subchapter 3.3 concentrates on addressing corporate communication in generally and in practice. These concepts are discussed also from the non-profit organisation's point of view. The intention of the writer is to provide an overview of corporate communication and what is meant with it and elaborate what should be included in a corporate communication strategy. The role of corporate communication in fostering reputation and brand is discussed in the subchapter 3.4

#### **3.1 Corporate reputation**

Bernstein (1986, in van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 48) stated already in 1986 that "No company can afford to ignore reputation". In today's 24-hour mass media environment, where news and information travel very fast and everything what the organisation does is carefully scanned, and where individuals discuss matters related to an organisation with clear link to the organisation's brand name the importance of reputation management has even enhanced. A small number of individuals can have a disproportionate effect on an organisation's reputation and an organisation cannot anymore control communication in the way it once was able to do. (Roper & Fill 2012, xvii, 5-10, 24.) Listening and communicating as well as engaging with all various stakeholders have become important to organisations when building and maintaining their reputation (Cornelissen 2014, 42, 55).

Before going any further, it is good to first define what is meant with a stakeholder and also have a look at what is meant with reputation.

Freeman (2010, 46) defines a stakeholder as follows: "A stakeholder in an organisation is (by definition) any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation's objectives."

Bernstein (1986, in van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 48) defines reputation as follows:

Reputation is a representation in the mind. It affects attitudes, which in turn affect behaviour. The impression it creates – consciously or unconsciously, whether it wishes to or not - inevitable affects people who do business with it.

Cornelissen (2014, 276) defines corporate reputation as "The general evaluation of an organisation (compared to its nearest rivals), leading to likeability and preference".

According to Fombrun (1996, in Roper & Fill 2012, 7) corporate reputation can be defined as:

A collective representation of a firm's past actions and results that describes the firm's ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders. It gauges a firm's relative standing both internally with employees and externally with its stakeholders, in both its competitive and institutional environments.

Fombrun's definition summarises well the different interpretations on reputation (Roper & Fill 2012,7).

It is also important to understand that brand and reputation are not the same. Brand is used for differentiating the organisation from competition and it is actively projected by an organisation. A strong brand acts as a promise of the organisation's products and service which the stakeholders consider when making their decisions. Reputation represents an overall quality of an organisation which is seen or evaluated by the stakeholders, not by the organisation. Reputation must be earned, it cannot be projected. An organisation can have a favourable brand but a weak reputation - and vice versa. (Griffin 2014, 2.)

As figure 1 suggests, reputation can, in some extent, be impacted by vision, values, brand, purpose as well as other matters which an organisation has power over. The perceptions of stakeholders form reputation. Stakeholders' perceptions are influenced by their experience of an organisation, their encounters with an organisation and how an organisation acts and behaves and what kind of decisions it makes. Also, the views of the peers of the stakeholders may have an impact on the perceptions of the stakeholders. (Griffin 2014, 2-3.)



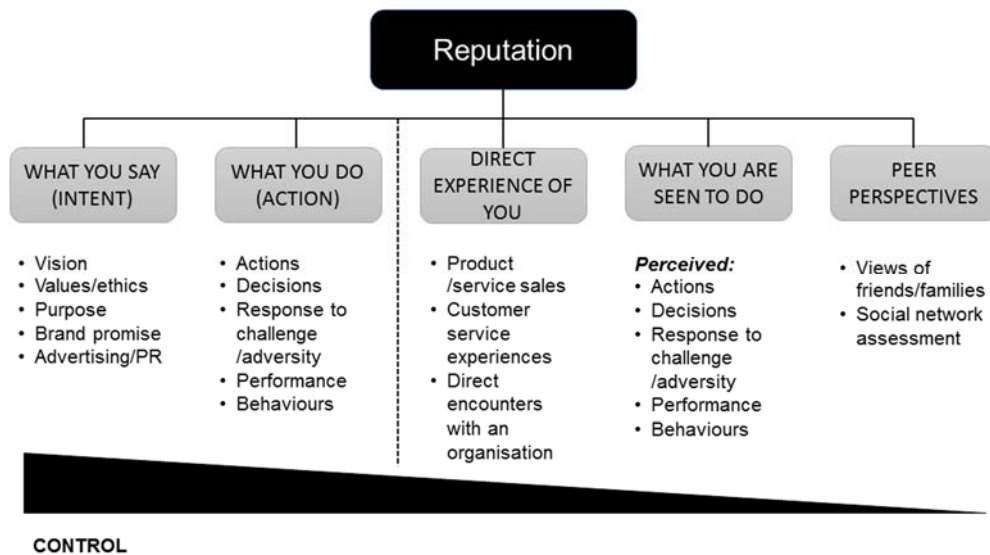


Figure 1. A reputation framework (adapted from Griffin 2014, 3)

A favourable reputation is formed by a promise provided. A favourable reputation can be achieved if the whole organisation follows its values, share them with the stakeholders, makes decisions which support the reputation, and meets and exceeds the expectations of the stakeholders. (Griffin 2014, 4.)

Corporate reputation is as significant for non-profit organisations as it is for commercial organisations. Reputation among an organisation’s stakeholders need to be developed and sustained constantly whether the organisation is a non-profit organisation or a commercial organisation. This is because the views of stakeholders have an influence on any organisation’s future. A positive reputation is a competitive advantage and an organisation having a positive reputation can use it to differentiate the organisation from its competitors. Reputation is also something that is considered by stakeholders when they evaluate the intangible offerings of an organisation. Stakeholders accept and support an organisation which has a strong reputation. A positive reputation also attracts employees and helps to recruit and retain them. A good reputation has an influence on collaboration and cooperation with other organisations. It is vital to manage reputation since it is easier to build and maintain reputation than recover it. Protecting reputation should be one of the most significant strategic objectives of an organisation. (Roper & Fill 2012, xvi-xvii, 9, 23; Cornelissen 2014, 4, 63-64.)

### 3.1.1 Reputation management

As already pointed out, and as Griffin (2014, 8) points out reputation is a valuable asset. If reputation is poorly managed, an organisation can lose it. Fombrun and Rindova (1998, 205-206) describe reputation management as an “inside-out process”. The core of Fombrun’s and Rindova’s reputation management model (figure 2) is ‘Being’ i.e. corporate identity. The model includes four actions - ‘Doing’, ‘Communicating’, ‘Seeing’ and ‘Listening’ - which act as a unified whole. (Fombrun & Rindova 1998, 205-206.)

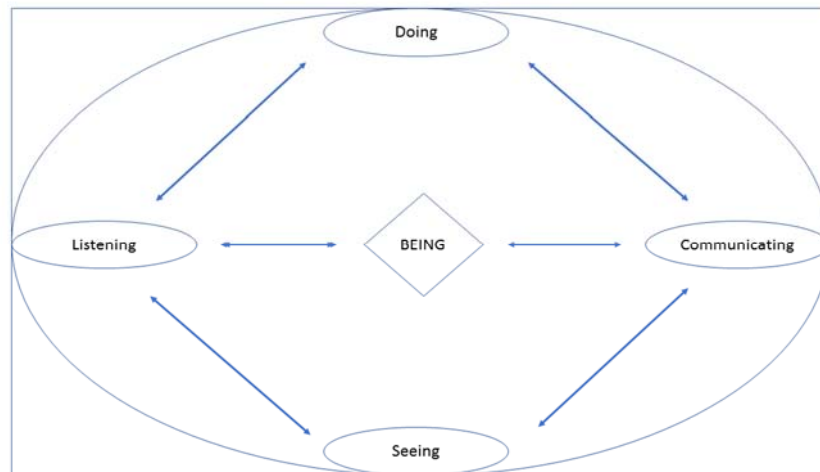


Figure 2. The reputation management model (adapted Fombrun & Rindova 1998, 205)

‘Doing’ includes measures aimed at stakeholders. ‘Communicating’ is the way to disseminate an organisation’s identity to its stakeholders and that way have an influence on the stakeholders’ views. ‘Listening’ refers to the idea that an organisation needs to listen its stakeholders constantly to make sure that the audiences have heard the organisation and have accepted its messages. Listening is also the way to bring the perceptions of the stakeholders and the organisation closer to each other. ‘Seeing’ refers to an organisation’s ability to follow what its stakeholders expect and what is going on in the organisation’s operational environment. An organisation needs to anticipate and prepare itself to unexpected situations which may be a threat to the organisation’s reputation. (Fombrun & Rindova 1998, 205-206.)

According to Fombrun and Rindova (1998, 205-206) an organisation can have an impact on its reputation by communication. Roper and Fill (2012, 35) bring up the importance of communication in managing the reputation by stating that corporate communication is the link that connects corporate personality, brand and image and it can be used for developing and sustaining a corporate reputation. Also, Forman and Argenti (2005, 248)

state that there exists a strong linkage between, branding, corporate reputation, and corporate communication.

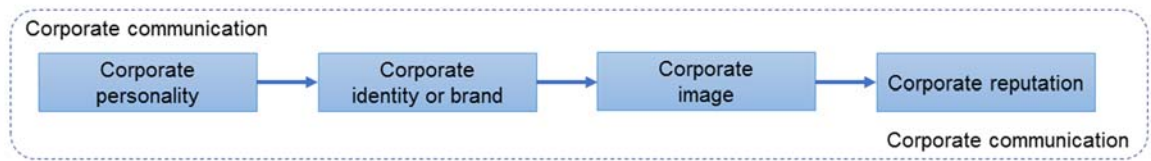


Figure 3. The reputation management process - the building blocks of corporate reputation (adapted from Fill 2009, in Roper & Fill 2012, 35)

Figure 3 introduces a reputation management process which consists of the management of the corporate personality, corporate identity/brand, corporate image, corporate communication, and corporate reputation - the “building blocks of corporate reputation”. In this process a favourable corporate reputation can be achieved by identifying corporate personality, which is the basis of corporate identity/brand, and by managing and communicating a corporate identity/brand to stakeholders effectively. (Roper & Fill 2012, 35, 48-49.)

In this reputation management process corporate personality tells what an organisation is all about. Personality refers to the core ideas of an organisation like vision, mission, values, and corporate culture. (Roper & Fill 2012, 35.) Corporate identity or brand is based on corporate personality and tells how an organization wants to be seen, what it is, what an organisation does and how it does it. Identity/brand “answers questions such as ‘Who are we?’, ‘What do we stand for?’, ‘What is our core purpose?’ and ‘What does it mean to be involved in this company?’”. An organisation uses its identity/brand as a mean by which it can differentiate itself from competition. (Roper & Fill 2012, 35, 149; Olins 1989, in Roper & Fill 2012, 35; van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 61.) Corporate image reflects brand and is the understanding formed by a stakeholder of an organisation. Every stakeholder has its own image of the organisation. Corporate communication is the link that connects corporate personality, brand and image and it can used for developing and sustaining corporate reputation. (Roper & Fill 2012, 35.)

Reputation management requires follow up, analysing and research, and reputation should be managed all the time. Every organisation has reputation even an organisation does not want to have it, since the stakeholders of the organisation build reputation, not the organisation itself. Reputation can be managed so that when making any decision it is considered how the decision is seen from outside of the organisation. For managing reputation, it is also important that all people in an organisation feel that they are

responsible for the organisation's reputation. This sets a requirement for the management of an organisation: the organisation need to be managed well, and the reputation management need to be included in the culture of the organisation. (Roper & Fill 2012, 13; Juholin 2013, 232-233.)

Griffin (2014, 8) argues that instead of reputation management an organisation should concentrate on using a reputation strategy and by that way show to their stakeholders that the organisation wants to actively address the reputation with favourable strategies. Griffin's (2014,8) reputation strategy consists of four parts: "maintain, enhance, protect and utilise".



Figure 4. A reputation strategy looks at pillars (adapted from Griffin June 2014)

An organisation can maintain and enhance its reputation by providing the organisation's identity, vision, values and a brand promise and sharing them with the stakeholders, by making decisions which support the organisation's reputation, and by meeting and exceeding the expectations of the stakeholders. By ensuring that an organisation is "as resilient as possible" the organisation can protect its reputation. Protecting organisation's reputations includes activities related to "crisis, issues and reputation risk management". The last pillar "utilise" addresses the utilisation of a favourable reputation. (Griffin 2014, 8-9.) As stated in the figure 4 by Griffin (June 2014): "A good reputation should be utilised for achievement of strategic goals.". This can be done by using corporate communication programmes (Griffin 2014, 9).

Building, maintaining, and enhancing a positive reputation takes a lot of time but losing it may happen suddenly and unexpectedly. A risk of losing or damaging reputation actualises when an organisation's actions conflict with the expectations of its

stakeholders. A risk may actualise even the organisation has acted legally. The stakeholders may feel that what the organisation does is inappropriate or wrong. In social media news and information spread fast and it is not possible for an organisation to control communication related to the organisation. All this leads to the fact that the organisation needs to be prepared to handle situations threatening its reputation. (Aula 2009, in Juholin 2013, 233; Roper & Fill 2012, xvii, 10.)

### **3.1.2 Managing reputation risks**

The risks to reputation can be categorised being *internal incidents and issues*, as well *external incidents and issues*. *Internal incidents* are risks that concerns safety and are seen to be in the direct control of an organisation. Internal incidents come up suddenly and are often very serious in nature. *Internal issues* are associated with the performance of an organisation. Examples of internal issues are improper behaviour, failure in a product, financing problems. *External incidents* are considered to be risks which an organisation has no power over like security risks, terrorist attacks, sabotage. An instant response of an organisation is required “to protect people, the environment,” and the reputation of the organisation. *External issues* are risks related to issues concerning policy, political or societal matters. An organisation should pay serious attention to communication as well as to policy development, positioning and change to avoid harm, damage, or mistakes. (Griffin 2014, 31-35.)

All reputation risks can cause crises which have an influence on the perceptions of the stakeholders and can that way violate the reputation of an organisation (Coombs 2015, 4). Crises can also harm the brand and relationships which the organisation has with its stakeholders as well as cause financial losses (Cornelissen 2014, 200; Coombs 2015, 4). A crisis has also a potential to disrupt the whole organisation and to lead to unwanted and negative outcomes. In the world of social media and internet, where news and information travel very fast and where the amount of information is huge organisation also face challenges in detecting crises. (Coomb 2015, 4,17-18, 26.) For the online communication Coombs (2015, 28) provides “four basic rules”: “1) be present, 2) be where the action is, 3) be there before the crisis, and 4) be polite”.

Crisis management is a way to manage reputation risks. Crisis management aims to diminish unwanted outcomes of a crisis or ensure that a crisis does not cause any negative outcomes. (Coombs 2015, 5.) According to Cornelissen (2014, 276) crisis management means “the reactive response to a crisis in order to pre-empt or limit damage to the organisation’s reputation”. Crisis management also aims to protect and

care for stakeholders' interest and make sure that the organisation respects and follows social standards as well as policy guidelines regulating the effect of human activity upon the environment and ensuring the safety of the organisation's products, activities or processes (Cornelissen 2014, 200).

In this subchapter a crisis is first defined, and the crisis management process is shortly addressed. The crisis management process is addressed before addressing crisis communication in subchapter 3.1.3 because an efficient and successful crisis communication requires that the process of crisis management is understood (Coombs 2015, 6).

Coombs (2015, 39) defines a crisis as

the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectations of stakeholders related to health, safety, environmental, and economic issues, and can seriously impact an organisation's performance and generate negative outcomes.

Cornelissen (2014, 181) defines a crisis as "an issue that requires not just decisive but also immediate action from the organisation". Another definition giving by Cornelissen (2014, 276) is that "A crisis is a point of great difficulty or danger to the organisation, possibly threatening its existence and continuity, and that requires decisive change". An organisation can seek to prevent incidents and issues from happening as well as it can prepare itself for them. Even an organisation tries to resolve incidents and issues by using issues management they can escalate into crises. (Griffin 2014, 118.)

Coombs' (2015, 6) has introduced a three-stage model to crisis management, which consists of three mutually related stages: "Precrisis", "Crisis Event", and "Postcrisis". *Precrisis* stage consists of three different substages 1) "signal detection" 2) "Prevention" and 3) "Crisis preparation". At *precrisis* stage an organisation proactively listens to i.e. scans and monitors the signs of possible crises. An organisation also engages with stakeholders to listen to and learn from them. It is also important that an organisation listens to and learns from others operating in the same field. An organisation should also assess reputation risks to "understand, quantify and prioritise issues so that actions can be put in place to address or resolve them". After the potential crises are detected then an organisation needs to do it outmost to prevent crises from occurring. During the *precrisis* stage an organisation needs to design a crisis management plan where weak points are diagnosed, a crisis management team including a spokesperson (or spokespersons) is assigned and a crisis portfolio is created. *Precrisis* stage includes also the training of leaders and employees. It is important to raise awareness against agreed "standards,

policies and codes of conducts”. The aim of the training is also to learn how to behave and what to do in time of a crisis. (Coombs 2015, 5-11; Cornelissen 2014, 200-201; Griffin 2014, 118-122.)

As pointed, out a crisis is unpredictable, but it can be expected (Cornelissen 2014, 204). An organisation will face crises, but when that happens that the organisation does not know. Even the organisation itself thinks that it is not in crisis, it is in crisis if its stakeholders perceive so. *Crisis event* stage starts when a crisis begins and ends when issues related to the crisis have been resolved. Crisis event is a very public stage and requires crisis communication with an organisation’s stakeholders, both internal and external. Crisis communication of an organisation includes words as well as actions of the organisation. An organisation needs to provide always a response to a crisis whether it is an incident or an issue in its origin. (Coombs 2015, 3-11, 28, 186; Griffin 2014, 118-122.)

In time of crisis an organisation needs to concentrate on reaching the goals set in the crisis management plan i.e. to reducing the unwanted outcomes since a crisis always affects reputation. The level of harm depends on crisis response. The aim of a crisis response is to reduce the unwanted effect of a crisis on stakeholders and on an organisation and its reputation. The harm to reputation can be reduced if an organisation is the one who first reports about a crisis. In time of a crisis it is good to remember that the crisis need to be mentioned in the organisation’s website as well as in the social media channels that the organisation uses. If it is not mentioned the stakeholders who look for the information will notice the absence of it and due to this the organisation will face criticism of not telling about the crisis and misses a possibility to tell the organisation’s understanding of the crisis. It is good to notice that with a good crisis response, stakeholders’ perceptions of and trust towards an organisation can be reasserted. Crisis response includes also recovery meaning that with a crisis response an organisation tries to restore its operations back to normal as soon as possible. (Coombs 2015, 3-11, 28, 186; Griffin 2014, 240.)

When communicating during a crisis event it is also important to pay attention to the selection of media. An organisation should start crisis communication in the channel where the crisis first occurred. For example: If the crisis occurred in Facebook, then crisis response need to be first placed in Facebook. (Coombs 2015, 28, 186.) It is good to notice that online communication channels should be integrated with traditional communication channels or vice versa, and all the channels need to be used coherently (Wher 2007, in Coombs 2015, 28). During a crisis event it is also important to disseminate information on crisis management to employees (Coombs 2015, 187).

The last stage in the Coombs' (2015, 11) three-stage model to crisis management is a *postcrisis* stage. *Postcrisis* stage starts when the crisis and all issues related to the crisis are resolved and the crisis is seen to be ended. During this stage an organisation needs to analyse what was done and learn from made mistakes. Information on the management of the crisis and the reasons of the crisis, if known, are documented in postcrisis reports. It is also good to identify what was done and should be done differently during the next crisis. The crisis management plan and resources are revised according to findings. During the postcrisis stage an organisation needs also to ensure that the crisis has really ended and that the perceptions of the stakeholders towards the organisation's reputation and brand have stayed positive. If internal or external stakeholders' trust against the organisation has suffered, then the organisation need to concentrate on rebuilding the trust. (Coombs 2015, 5-11; Griffin 2014, 118-122.)

During postcrisis stage crisis communication includes actions which provide follow-up information to stakeholders. It is important to deliver updates and promised information. It is also important to answer all questions the stakeholders pose and interact with them. Postcrisis crisis communication includes also evaluation of how stakeholders have reacted to a crisis and the crisis response provided by the organisation. (Coombs 2015, 29, 187.)

To minimise the potential damage an organisation needs to prepare for and foresee potential crises. An organisation needs to compose a crisis management plan which includes all information needed in managing crises as well as suitable communication strategies for different crisis situations and helps the organisation to meet its stakeholders' expectation and protect the organisation's brand and reputation. (Cornelissen 2014, 200.) Crisis management plan needs to be formulated so that an organisation is able to react and respond quickly after a crisis has emerged. What helps in that is that the document is short, user-friendly, easy-to-use and that everyone in the organisation has an easy access to it, taking into account that the electric devices may not be available, or they cannot be used in time of a crisis. (Coombs 2015, 90-91.)

Crisis management plan is a tool which outlines how a crisis should be management, it does not explain precisely what must be done. All areas, where a crisis may occur, should be identified and considered when a crisis management plan is formulated. The plan should also offer possible solutions for identified areas to help an organisation resolve a crisis quickly. The aim of crisis management plan is to help and provide instructions and guidance as well as reminders in the time of crisis. It also gives a detailed overview of the roles and responsibilities of employees during crisis. The plan also aims to reduce



variability and insecurity amongst the employees and helps to keep employees focused on their work during crisis. (Coombs 2015, 90-92.)

The nature of a crisis management plan is communicational i.e. the plan is a communication document. A crisis communication plan forms a significant part of a crisis management plan. A crisis communication plan addresses information on the ways how to get in touch with stakeholders and among other things a crisis communication plan should include also preformulated messages to save time during a crisis. (Coombs 2015, 90-91, 186.) While planning crisis communication an organisation needs to answer questions like Who we are?, What is our current state?, What is going on outside of the organisation? What are issues and risks for the organisation which can escalate into crises? How can the organisation be prepared to face a crisis? How to act during a crisis? (Sunimento 27 April 2017.)

Sunimento (27 April 2017) states that a crisis communication plan typically includes the elements like: “current state analysis, risk analysis, key messages, roles and responsibilities and spokespeople, stakeholder analysis, approval flow and chain of command, action plan + check list and follow up”.

A broad risk and crisis communication plan consists of the following key components:

- Identification of risks and crises for which crisis communication is needed.
- Identification of crisis team, a spokesperson/spokesperson, a person to be consulted, if needed, and their responsibilities in time of a crisis
- Denomination of persons to be informed on what is happening
- Identification of information procedures like validation, consent, and approval
- Identification of the ways how to cooperate with stakeholders and associates
- Identification of procedures how, what, when information is released and who is responsible for releasing information.
- Identification of professionals with whom one can collaborate during crisis
- Identification of stakeholders
- Identification of communication channels to be used with various stakeholders as well as with associates and public
- Identification of persons responsible for posting information on the website and other channels (like social media channels) of the organisation and keeping information up-to-date
- Identification of the ways how crisis is evaluated and how the plan is revised and updated, including a time frame
- Preformulated messages for different types of crises
- Up-to-date list of media and journalists, including contact information
- Up-to-date list of associates
- List of frequently asked and expected questions and answers to them
- Social media plan
- Checklists of communication tasks to be executed during the first hour and the first two, four, eight, 12, 16, 24, 48 and 72 hours

- Other needed communication information and material, like “fact sheets, question-and answer sheets, talking points, maps, charts, graphics”
- Identification of rehearsal and training procedures, including dates (Sunimento 27 April 2017; Coombs 2015, 91-97; Argenti 2016, 274.)

In the addition to crisis management, crisis communication and a crisis communication plan, the development and protection of reputation requires that an organisation communicates with all of its stakeholders, internal and external ones (Roper & Fill 2012, 17; Cornelissen 2014, 41). The role of communication in fostering reputation and brand will be discussed later in this chapter, in subchapter 3.3.

### **3.2 Corporate branding**

As well as a corporate reputation should a corporate brand be acknowledged as valuable organisational asset in today’s world (Roper & Fill 2012, 136). It is important to notice that a brand is a way to differentiate and that stakeholders’ decisions are driven by a brand. What affects the most on stakeholders’ decisions on choosing one organisation over another is a strong brand. (McKinsey & Company, Marketing and Sales Practice 2013, 4.) Corporate branding is as significant for non-profit organisations as corporate reputation is, and it is seen to be more appropriate to non-profit organisations than product branding. Branding among organisations’ stakeholders need to be developed and sustained constantly also in non-profit organisations since a corporate brand is essential to and makes a contribution to a reputation. (Roper & Fill 2012, 118, 136, 141; Sargeant 2009, 156-157, 164-167.)

Roper and Fill (2012, 108) state that “A brand is a promise, a summary of the mental associations and emotions that are top of mind when a name is thought of or mentioned”. de Chernatony and Segal-Horn (2003, 1100) define a brand as “a cluster of functional and emotional values which promise a particular experience”. According to Podnar (2015, 34) a “corporate brand is the element on which reputation is attached and defines, to a large extent, stakeholders’ trust in what the organisation does and offers”. It is important to notice that even the brand relates to the reputation and vice versa they are not the same thing. An organisation can have a favourable brand but a weak reputation. (Roper & Fill 2012, 129.)

A brand is a central point of the corporate reputation chain (figure 5). It forms a basis to the different views of the stakeholders and the views make a contribution to reputation. A positive brand attracts employees and helps to recruit and retain them. (Roper & Fill 2012, xvi-xvii , 118, 129; Davies, Chun, da Silva & Roper 1993, in Roper & Fill 2012, 118.) It can

be said that an organisation has a strong brand if its stakeholders have favourable perceptions of the organisation (Podnar 2015, 33).

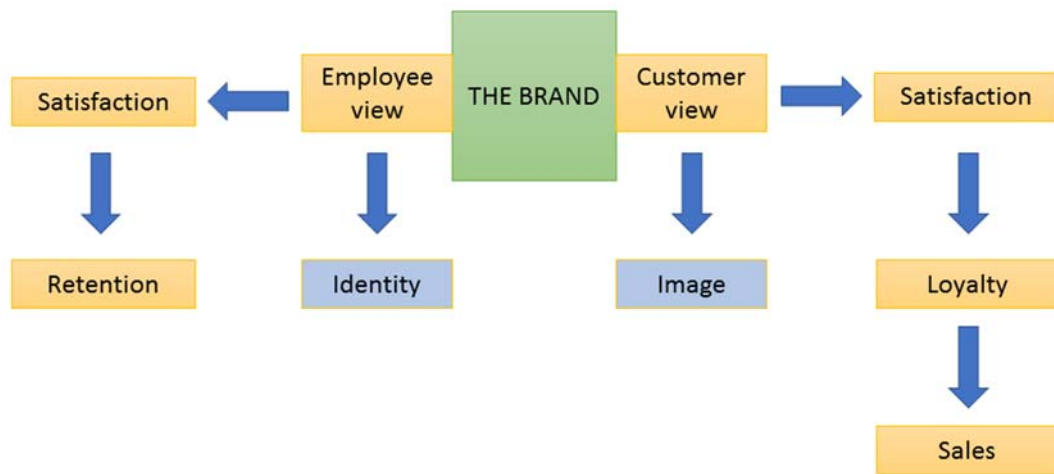


Figure 5. The corporate reputation chain (adapted from Davies et al. 1993, in Roper & Fill 2012, 118)

A corporate brand puts the organisation itself on stand and allows it to highlight the organisation. The idea behind a corporate brand is that it personalises the organisation as a whole and with the intention to create value. (Roper & Fill 2012, 116.) Corporate brand should be used when there exists an unbalanced situation in communication between an organisation and its stakeholders i.e. the stakeholders are not as well informed about the offerings and operations of the organisation as the organisation want them to be. Corporate brand should also be used when the organisation’s characteristics and/or information of the organisation behind the specific service or product influences stakeholders’ decision making and reduces the stakeholders’ risk to buy the product or service. (Podnar 2015, 35.)

According to van Riel (2001, in Einwiller & Will 2002, 101) corporate branding is “a systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining favourable images and consequently a favourable reputation of the company with its constituent elements, by sending signals to stakeholders using the corporate brand”. Corporate branding includes measures executed by an organisation who want to build with its internal and external audiences positive perceptions and favourable reputation and trust towards the brand (van Riel & Fombrum 2007, 107; Roper & Fill 2012 113). Corporate branding includes uniformly planned measures, which an organisation is undertaking to form positive associations about the organisation, favourable relationships, and experiences which the stakeholders of the organisation appreciate. The aim of

corporate branding is a favourable reputation with the internal and external stakeholders of the organisation. This aim can be reached by disseminating coherent messages to the stakeholders. (Podnar 2015, 35.)

The nature of the corporate branding is strategic since a corporate brand is the mirror of an organisation’s mission, vision, values, and organisational behaviour i.e the corporate culture. With corporate branding the organisation’s culture and values can be used as a marketing method or tool. (Roper & Fill 2012, 116, 141, 155.)

The critical factors that influence the success of brands are described in figure 6. To succeed in corporate branding, an organisation must have clear corporate vision, mission, strategies for reaching and fulfilling them. An organisation needs also a corporate culture which outlines the core values and promotes as well as supports desired employee behaviour, and the promise of a brand is defined on the basis of corporate culture. (Balmer 1998, in Roper & Fill 2012, 150; Podnar 2015, 35; de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2003, 1100-1102.)

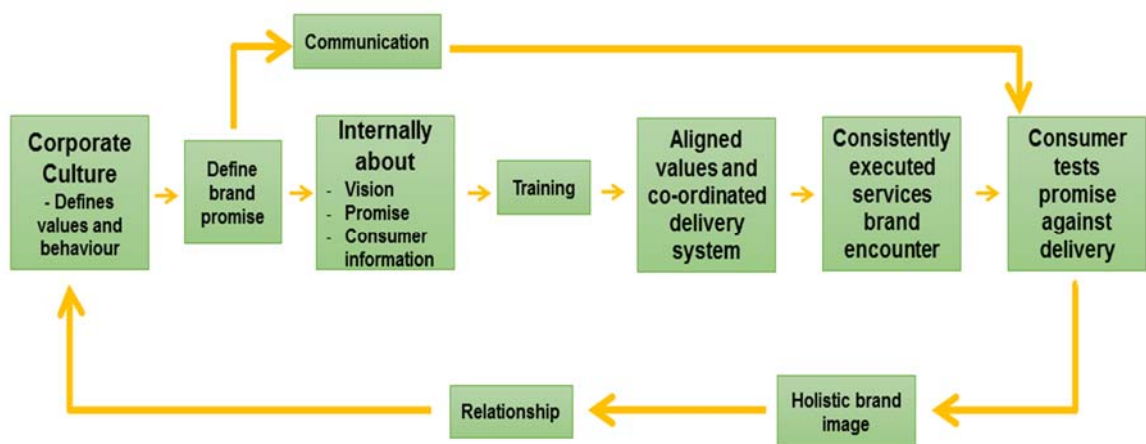


Figure 6. The criteria influencing the success of services brands (adapted from de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2003, 1101)

A corporate brand aims to create value through diverse connections existing between the organisation and its different audiences. Since corporate branding involves several stakeholders all employees are responsible for sustaining the corporate brand. (Roper & Fill 2012, 109-110, 140-143.) Corporate branding requires all employees to work together towards common goals and communicate with one tone of voice. The employees need to understand the meaning and the fundamental nature of the brand and the effect the brand has on the employees’ everyday work. The employees need to be aware of the vision, the

brand promise as well as the expectations of the stakeholders. The way to enhance employees' awareness of these concepts is to train them. Communication plays a vital role in harnessing employees to act as brand ambassadors. (de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2003, 1102.)

A strong brand can be a competitive advantage for the organisation but to use its brand as a competitive advantage an organisation must develop and maintain coherent communication. Coherence of communication cannot occur if the employees of the organisation do not understand the corporate brand, what it is, what it means and what it represents. (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 6; Roper & Fill 2012, 109-110, 140-143.)

### **3.2.1 Brand management**

Corporate brand needs to be carefully managed, since the use of a corporate brand includes also risks. For example, any kind of mistake occurring in the operations of an organisation may harm the corporate brand because there exists a close connection between the brand and the operations of an organisation. (Podnar 2015, 35.)

Brand management should be integrated with the business strategy of an organisation and the first step in managing a brand is to find out how the brand can convey vision, mission, values, and corporate culture of the organisation. It is important for an organisation to know what its brand represents and how the organisation wants to differentiate itself from its competition. The second step in brand management is to find out who are the primary stakeholders of the organisation and what directs their decision making and what drives their associations. It is also important to find out how the stakeholders see the brand. (McKinsey & Company, Marketing and Sales Practice 2013, 8.) During the third step of brand management an organisation needs to decide what kind of a role is assigned to the brand. It is also important to make sure that the brand promise echoes convincingly with the real brand experience offered by the organisation and corresponds to the expectations of the stakeholders. (Roper & Fill 2012, 155; McKinsey & Company, Marketing and Sales Practice 2013, 8.) The fourth step of brand management addresses the internal training and instructions on what kind of a role the brand has in the organisation and how the brand should be used. Also, the mechanisms, like communication and brand visuals, needed to ensure a coherent brand experience need to be decided and formulated. The fifth step of brand management is to decide how the brand will be activated, what kind of touch points are suitable for activating the positioning of the brand and what is needed to reach various audience. (McKinsey & Company, Marketing and Sales Practice 2013, 8.)

It is important to remember that the brand is not fixed and immutable (Podnar 2015, 25). Organisations should be aware of the gaps which exists or may exist between the brand's image and the organisation's vision, mission, values, and culture (Hatch & Schultz 2003, 1058). "The corporate branding tool kit" (figure 7), developed by Hatch and Schultz (2001, 130), presents an integrated model for brand management. To find out the possible gaps, areas with problems, an organisation should answer the questions presented in the model. The more consistency there is between the strategic vision, employees' views (corporate culture) and the perceptions of external stakeholders (image), the more successful and stronger the brand is or will be. (Hatch and Schultz 2001, 130-132.)

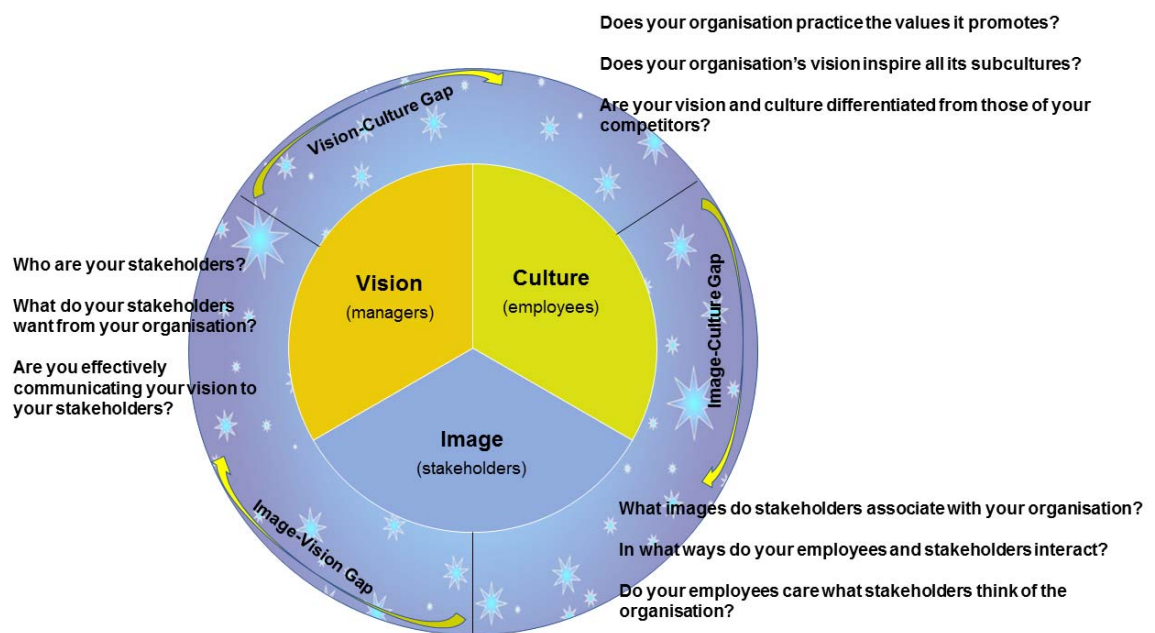


Figure 7. The corporate branding tool kit (adapted from Hatch & Schultz 2001, 131)

de Chernatony and Harris (2000, in Roper & Fill 2012, 117) state that corporate brand management should concentrate on minimising the gaps between the brand identity and the views of employees, and that way develop the consistent identity. "The better employees relate and contribute to the brand identity, the more consistent will be the presentation of the brand identity". A strong brand requires that the corporate brand management also concentrates on minimising the gaps between the organisation's desired image and image formed by its stakeholders. (de Chernatony and Harris 2000, in Roper & Fill 2012, 117.)

When managing a corporate brand, the organisation need to concentrate on improving weak and unsatisfactory areas and misconceptions as well as narrowing the possible gap existing between the organisation's and its stakeholders' perceptions. It is important to

narrow the gaps existing between the brand's internal identity and the external image since those gaps can negatively influence the reputation. The gaps can be narrowed with a coherent expression of the organisation's identity by the means of communication. (Roper & Fill 2012, 31, 129.) The role of communication in fostering a corporate brand and its awareness is discussed more in subchapter 3.3.

### 3.3 Corporate Communication

Harold Lasswell's classical communication model (figure 8) addresses communication with questions like "Who says what, to whom, in which channel, with what effect?". "Who?" concerns a corporate identity and "Says what?" deals with a corporate brand and branding. "To whom?" addresses stakeholder management as well as stakeholder communication. "In which channel (How)?" concerns corporate communication and crisis communication, "With what purpose?" refers to the reputation of an organisation and "With what effect?" deals with "organisational identification" as well as with "organisational commitment and social acceptability". This classical model demonstrates that everything what is done in an organisation begins and finishes with communication or can be looked at from the communication point of view. (Podnar 2015, 3.)



Figure 8. The classical communication model by Harold Lasswell (adapted from Podnar 2015, 3)

Andreasen and Kotler (2008, 23) claim that communication is much more difficult for non-profit organisations than it is for commercial organisations. Reasons for that are for example the following:

- Communication of a non-profit organisation differs from communication of a commercial organisation when it comes to social marketing i.e. communication which influences behaviours that benefits individuals. Sometimes stakeholders are asked to embark on ideas and behaviours that they disagree with or which are not benefiting themselves like ideas and behaviours related water and energy consumptions. Instead of influencing people's behaviour commercial organisations promote their products and services. (Juholin 2013, 261; Andreasen & Kotler 2008, 23.)

- A non-profit organisation is not often able to modify its offerings so that they meet the needs of a stakeholder like a commercial organisation is able to do. The commercial organisation is able to identify a specific customer while a non-profit has a group of stakeholders to address. (Andreasen & Kotler 2008, 23-24.)
- Measuring the effectiveness of corporate communication of a non-profit organisation is often more difficult than measuring the effectiveness of corporate communication of a commercial organisation since the non-profit organisation cannot find out the benefits which occur after the change in behaviours or in attitudes has taken place (Andreasen & Kotler 2008, 232).

Already in 1986 Blauw (1986, Podnar 2015, 4) defined corporate communication as “an integrated approach to all communication produced by an organisation, directed to all relevant target groups”. van Riel and Fombrun (2007, 25) define corporate communication as “the set of activities involved in managing and orchestrating all internal and external communication aimed at creating favourable starting points with stakeholders on which the company depends”. Cornelissen’s (2014, 5) definition of corporate communication complies with the other mentioned definitions:

“Corporate communication is a management function that offers a framework for the effective coordination of all internal and external communication with the overall purpose of establishing and maintaining favourable reputations with stakeholder groups upon which the organisation is dependent”.

The term ‘corporate’ is derived from term ‘corporation’ which is derived from ‘corpus’, the Latin word meaning a body or a whole (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 22). Due to this sense, the term ‘corporate communication’ can be used, by commercial, for-profit, organisations as well as for example by non-governmental organisations, non-profit organisations and public organisations (Podnar 2015, 5).

As earlier provided definitions indicate, corporate communication is an integrative function with a focus on the whole organisation and with the intention of developing communication on the basis of an integrated strategic framework with a coherent approach. Corporate communication can be considered as a framework (figure 9) since it surpasses all specialised disciplines of communication and requires that communication is managed with a strategic and integrated approach. (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 14, 22; Cornelissen 2014, 4-10.)



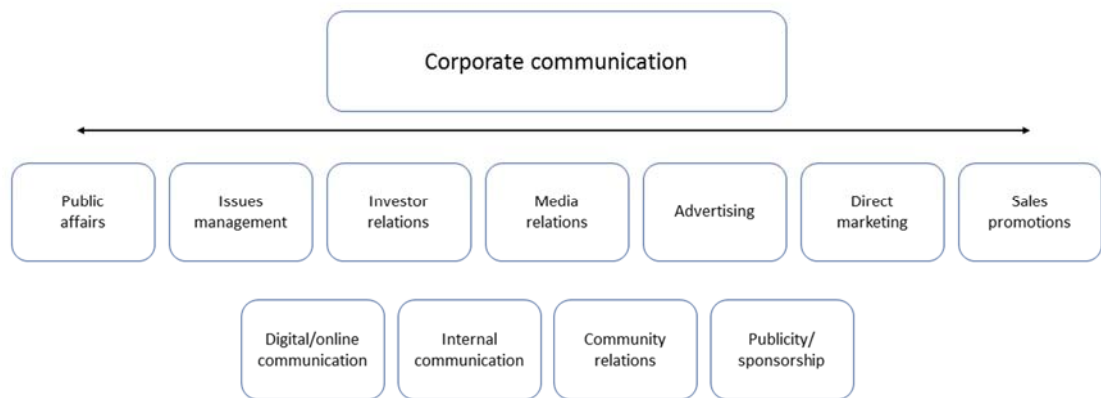


Figure 9. Corporate communication as an integrated framework for managing communication (adapted from Cornelissen 2014, 28).

The idea behind corporate communication is that the success as well as sustainability of an organisation is dependent on how it is perceived by its stakeholders, and that communication plays the main role in building, sustaining, protecting the identity/brand and reputation of an organisation. (Cornelissen 2014, 5; Podnar 2015, 10.) The focus of corporate communication is to examine the associations existing between corporate identity/brand, image and reputation. Corporate communication is related to corporate branding and reputation and acts as a link between them. (Podnar 2015, 10.)

One of the central ideas and objectives of corporate communication is stakeholder management. The development and protection of reputation requires that an organisation communicates with all of its stakeholders. To succeed in stakeholder communications an organisation needs to address the different stakeholder groups according to their interests and the specific stake each group hold. To be able to do that an organisation needs to identify and analyse its various stakeholders as well as their interest and effect in the organisation. (Cornelissen 2014, 41-46.) While executing a stakeholder analysis an organisation needs to list all those stakeholder groups with which it communicates either directly or indirectly (Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 7).

Another central idea of corporate communication is how various types of communication can be harmonised and co-ordinated so that they produce coherent messages. Coherent communication provides and sustains unified and integrated identity and image. (Podnar 2015, 9.)

Corporate communication is as significant for non-profit organisations as it is for commercial, for-profit, organisations since corporate communication provides the means

for creating and sustaining the associations with their audiences. It is important to succeed in establishing and nurturing the associations since the success of an organisation as well as its sustainability, depends on the views of the key audiences of an organisation. (Cornelissen 2014, 9,15.) Through communication a non-profit organisation can raise the awareness of the organisation (brand) and its services, to become respected partner as well acquire new members, followers, and financing. All these apply also to the objectives of communication of a for-profit organisation. (Juholin 2013, 26.)

### 3.3.1 Corporate communication strategy

Communication need to be coordinated so that the corporate identity is coherently and constantly communicated with all internal and external stakeholders (Cornelissen 2014, 7) and corporate communication must always be grounded on the organisation's business strategy (Podnar 2015, 9). To manage corporate communication an organisation needs a communication strategy (Cornelissen 2014, 89). Argenti (2016, 31) states that "whether an organisation is trying to enhance its reputation through social media..., or convince shareholders that the company is still worth investing in, it is critical to use a coherent communication strategy".



Figure 10. The link between corporate strategy and communication strategy (adapted from Cornelissen 2014, 93)

The most important task set to a communication strategy is that it represents the corporate strategy (Juholin 2013, 137). Figure 10 addresses the dynamic which exists between a corporate strategy and a communication strategy. It is important that corporate objectives and goals are translated into communication objectives, goals and strategies. It is also important that corporate communication provides information on the stakeholders and reputation of the organisation to corporate strategy level. Top management needs this information since it can have an influence on the formulation of corporate strategy and

vision. To achieve corporate goals and objectives set in the corporate strategy the organisation needs to have a communication strategy, which supports the attainment of corporate goals and helps to achieve the organisation's vision and fulfil its mission. A vision i.e. a desired image tells how an organisation wants to be perceived by its various stakeholders. A communication strategy relates to a desired image of an organisation and acts as a strategic means of bringing the perception of stakeholders in line with the image desired by an organisation. A communication strategy acts also as a strategic means of fostering existing reputation and brand of an organisation. When having a strategic intent, a communication strategy provides communication methods and measures which aim to have an influence on the stakeholders' awareness, attitude, behaviour, and knowledge of an organisation. (Cornelissen 2014, 90-93.)

The aim of a communication strategy is to act as a directional guide for corporate communication. It provides a foundation for the design of communication. Communication strategy aligns the fundamental policies of corporate communication and supports the attainment of the strategic goals and objectives of an organisation. (Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 4-5; Cornelissen 2014, 109.) Delineation of communication must be in line with the aims and goals of the organisation. By planning what is communicated and how and what kind of messages are used an organisation can have an influence on stakeholders' views. If an organisation wants to influence the perceptions of stakeholders, then it must have coherent and continuous communication. (Juholin 2013, 241-243.)

The content of a communication strategy is elaborated in table 2. A corporate communication strategy starts with background information of the organisation and continues with current state analysis. If these matters are already mentioned in a corporate strategy they can be referred to and left out from a communication strategy. (Juholin 2013, 137.) Background information can be gathered by using qualitative research methods like document archive analyses and interviews. Before identifying its stakeholders, an organisation needs to execute a current state analysis. Communication objectives and goals cannot be set without knowing where the organisation is right now. (Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 6.)

Table 2. Content of Communication Strategy (formulated on the basis of Juholin 2013, 137-140; Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 5-12; Cornelissen 2014, 89-97; Sunimento 11 November 2017; Goodman & Hirsch 2012, 55).

COMMUNICATION STRATEGY			
	TOPIC	QUESTION	REMARKS
1.	Background, Current state of an organisation	What is communication needed for? How it relates to the activities and and future of an organisation?	Background information and current state analysis can be left out and refer to a corporate strategy Appropriate tools: PESTLE- and SWOT-analyses
2.	Current state of communication	What is regarded as communication? What kind of activities it includes? What works and what does not? What kind of challenges there are in communication?	Appropriate tool: SWOT-analysis Different functions of communication: - Employee communication - Reputation management / Crisis communication - Corporate image and identity - Financial communication / Investor relations - Marketing communication - Government relations / Public affairs - Influence communication - Community relations - Corporate social responsibility etc.
3.	Principles or values	What is communication like? What it should be?	Principles/values can be based on laws, regulations, organisation's own values, ethics, or social responsibility.
4.	Stakeholders	Identification of stakeholders: - Who are they? - How they can be grouped? - What are they the needs and challenges of each group?	Other terms for stakeholders: target groups, audience, constituencies
5.	Determination/Description of content and visuals	How does an organisation express itself in words (tone of voice) - messages, stories, themes - and visually?	
6.	Objectives and goals of communication	What kind of influence is expected from communication?	Does communication need separate objectives and goals or is it embedded in an organisation's operation?
7.	Monitoring	How communication and its influence is evaluated, monitored, and measured?	Limit the number of indicators. Pay special attention to the validity.
8.	Formulation of communication strategies	How will these objectives and goals be reached? What kind of communication strategies should be used to reach the objectives and goals?	
9.	Roles and responsibilities, Cooperation	What kind of roles there exists in communication? How communication is organised? Who is responsible for what? Does an organisation have any cooperation/partnerships?	Responsibilities need to be mentioned in job description. Cooperation and partnerships are important especially in a crisis situation
10.	Resources	How communication and its influence is evaluated, monitored, and measured?	Typical resources: - human - knowledge and know-how - tools and devices - financial
	Other policies, guidelines, process descriptions etc.	What different kind of policies, guidelines, instructions, process description is already in use?	
	Notes	When and how was the strategy formulated? When it was accepted at the first time? When it has been and should be updated?	Earlier versions need to be archived.

An appropriate tool for executing a current state analysis of the organisation's external environment is PESTLE-analysis (Sunimento 11 November 2017). PESTLE analysis, where P stands for Political, E for Economic, S for Social, T for Technological, L for Legal and E for Environmental, is used for analysing the environment where the organisation is operating in. Many different factors can have an influence on the organisation and its activities. These factors can also be considered as opportunities. (Team FME 2013, 6-9.) In addition to external environment analysis, an organisation needs to analyse and identify its internal and external factors that are favourable or unfavourable to reaching the objectives set in a corporate strategy. An appropriate tool for this is SWOT-analysis, which is a strategic planning tool that can be used for examining and identifying an organisation's strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T) related to competition or the planning of a project as well. (Cornelissen 2014, 185.)

A current state analysis needs to be executed also for communication. Communication objectives and goals cannot be set without knowing where the organisation's communication is right now. The current state analysis of communication helps also the planning of communication. When executing a current state analysis an organisation needs to evaluate its internal and external image and internal information flow as well as its interaction with different stakeholders. SWOT-analysis can be used also for the evaluation of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an organisation's communication. (Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 6-8.) Current state analysis of communication includes also description of what is considered as communication in an organisation (Juholin 2013, 137). The main communication functions are:

- Employee communication
  - Reputation management / Crisis communication
  - Corporate image and identity
  - Financial communication / Investor relations
  - Marketing communication
  - Government relations / Public affairs
  - Influence communication
  - Community relations
  - Corporate social responsibility
- (Goodman & Hirsch 2012, 55).

The third step in formulating a corporate communication strategy is the determination of the principles and values of communication to which an organisation is committed. Principles and values can be based on laws, regulations, organisation's own values, ethics, or social responsibility. (Juholin 2013, 137-140.)

The fourth step in formulating communication strategy is to identify stakeholders. To be able to manage corporate communication an organisation needs to identify and prioritise all of its stakeholders. The literature provides various ways to execute stakeholder mapping. (Podnar 2015, 83.) One way to map stakeholders is to categorise them according to their importance to primary and secondary stakeholders (Podnar & Jančič 2006, in Podnar 2015, 83). Primary stakeholders' (individuals or groups) stake in an organisation and the success of the organisation is direct. Secondary stakeholders can have an influence on the reputation of an organisation. The stake of secondary stakeholders is considered to be more representational than direct. (Podnar 2015, 83.)

Another way to identify and prioritise stakeholders is Rawlins' (2006, 1-14) stakeholder prioritising model (figure 11), which consists of four different steps:

- 1) "Identification by relationship to organisation"
- 2) "Prioritisation by attributes"
- 3) "Prioritisation by situation"
- 4) "Prioritisation by communication strategy"

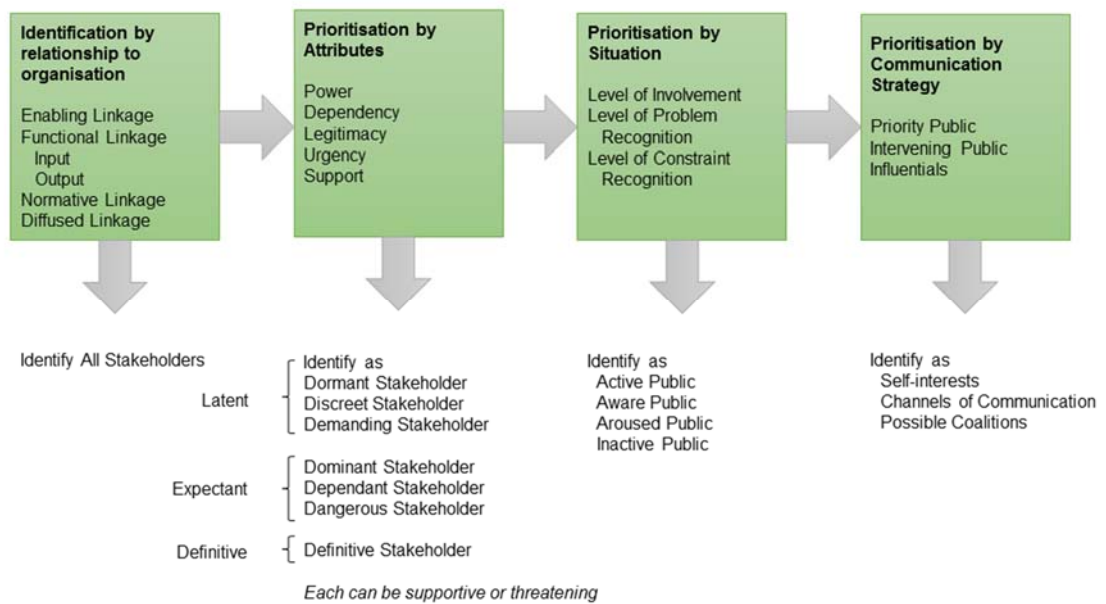


Figure 11. Stakeholder prioritising model (adapted from Rawlins 2006, 13)

During the first three steps of the stakeholder prioritising model stakeholders are identified according to linkage they have with an organisation, categorised according to their salience in the organisation, and prioritised on the basis of their "level of involvement", "level of problem recognition" and "level of constraint recognition". The model which Rawlins uses during the first step is called "Linkage model", which is modified from the model of Grunig and Hunt. Model used in step three is based on Grunig's Situational theory and types of publics determined in that theory. (Rawlins 2006, 1-14.) The fourth

step concerns the selection of the proper communication approach for each stakeholder group (Rawlins 2006, 12). After the stakeholders have been identified and prioritised the organisation can compose suitable communication strategies for each stakeholder group (Cornelissen 2014, 51).

Cornelissen (2014, 50) presents the power-interest matrix (figure 12) as one of the mapping devices. In this matrix, stakeholders are categorised “on the basis of the power that they possess and the extent to which they are likely to have or show an interest in the organisation’s activities” (Cornelissen 2014, 50). By using the matrix an organisation can find out the order of importance of its stakeholders as well as the power of influence of each stakeholder group. When an organisation maps its stakeholders according to the importance and influence they have to the organisation then it finds out the intensity level of communication i.e. the organisation finds out which stakeholders can only be kept informed and with whom it needs to communicate actively and continuously. **Key players** include stakeholders with whom an organisation needs to communicate constantly since they possess high power and high level of interest in the organisation’s activities. **Keep informed** is a group of stakeholders which needs to be kept informed to ensure that people in the group stay engaged with the organisation and disseminate favourable information to others. It is important to communicate also with stakeholders belonging to group **Keep satisfied** since they are the ones who can use their power of influence as countermeasure to a specific decision or a measure taken by an organisation. (Cornelissen 2014, 51.)

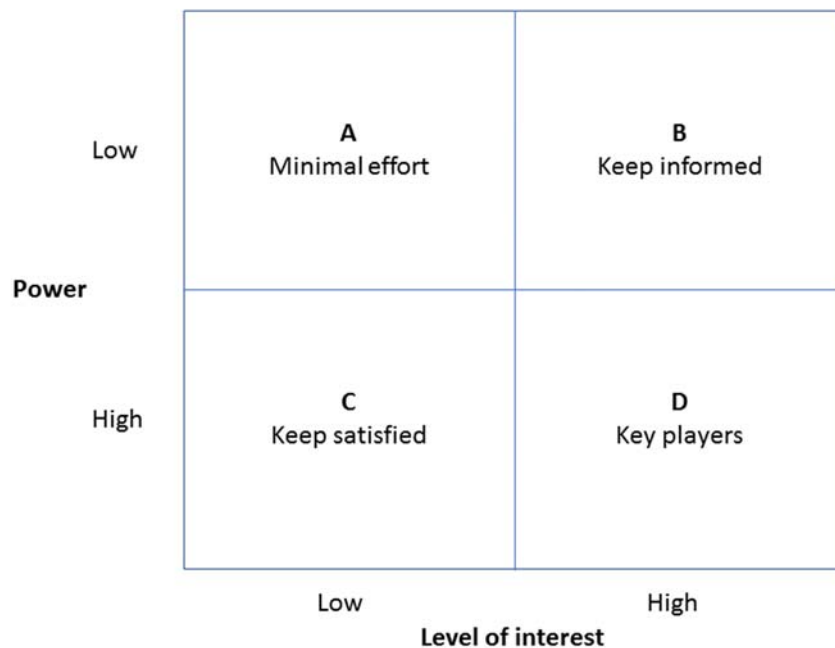


Figure 12. The power-interest matrix (adapted from Cornelissen 2014, 50)

Only after the current state analysis is executed and the identity of the organisation is clarified the organisation can start to consider the brand's visual as well as verbal identity. Visual identity refers to logos, colours, typography and brand design, and verbal identity refers to brand's tone of voice. (Roper & Fill 2012, 34, 248, 250.) Organisations put efforts and resources for planning their visual identity, but they often forget to determine their tone of voice. It is as important to determine organisation's tone of voice as it is to formulate the visual identity since tone of voice is an excellent way to create a real meaning and an emotional bond between the brand and its stakeholders. (Vuori 21 February 2018.) An organisation needs to determine or describe in a corporate communication strategy how does it express itself visually as well as in words meaning tone of voice and messages, stories, themes. An organisation needs to determine its core message towards each stakeholder group. Also, themed messages might be needed. (Juholin 2013, 137; Cornelissen 2014, 112.)

When an organisation knows its current state and has identified its stakeholders it can start to think what it wants achieve with its communication and what kind of influence it expects communication to have. Usually an objective of communication is to generate changes and impacts in the stakeholders of the organisation. An organisation may also pursue to increase information or change in attitudes. When executing a current state analysis an organisation may have found out that its stakeholders are not enough aware of the organisation and its activities or that the stakeholders have negative or critical perceptions of the organisation. Then objectives may be to increase satisfaction towards internal and external communication, functionality of information flow, applicability of communication channels, visibility of corporate values as well as increase possibilities to interact. (Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 9-10.) Goals and objectives of communication need to be set so that they specify what an organisation wants to achieve; does it want a change in brand awareness or change of reputation or to increase involvement. Goals and objectives need to be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic. (Cornelissen 2014, 110-112.) When setting goals and objectives also a time-frame for achieving them need to be set. Normally goals are set for strategy period and objectives are set for shorter time. Goals and objectives can be set according to communication functions or they can be formulated on the basis of the goals and objectives of a corporate strategy. (Juholin 2013, 138.)

As already stated, goals and objectives need to be measurable (Cornelissen 2014, 112). An organisation needs to decide how communication and its influence are evaluated, monitored, and measured (Juholin 2013, 140). Objectives that are measurable are well-articulated, they have a specified time-frame and specified indicators have been set. On



the basis of time-frame and specified indicators an organisation can evaluate and decide if goals and objectives are met or not. (Cornelissen 2014, 112.)

Table 2. Stakeholder communication: from awareness to commitment (adapted from Cornelissen 2014, 51)

<i>Stakeholder effects</i>	<b>awareness</b>	→	<b>understanding</b>	→	<b>involvement</b>	→	<b>commitment</b>
<i>Tactics</i>	Newsletters		Discussion		Consultation		Early incorporation
	Reports		Meetings		Debate		
	Memos		Advertising and educational campaigns				Collective problem-solving
	Free publicity						
<i>Type of strategy</i>	<b>Informational strategy</b>		<b>Informational/persuasive strategy</b>		<b>Dialogue Strategy</b>		

After setting objectives and goals an organisation needs to figure out how to reach them (Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 10). As table 2 shows, the communication strategy differs on the basis what kind of effects an organisation wants on its stakeholders. By using different communication strategies an organisation can either raise the stakeholders' awareness by disseminating information (informational strategy), change and adjust the stakeholders' knowledge and attitude as well as their behaviour to be more positive to the organisation (persuasive strategy), or enter into a dialogue with the stakeholders with the intention to "mutually engage in an exchange of ideas and opinions" (dialogue strategy). The use of strategies depends on stakeholders' salience and power-interest and how actively an organisation wants to engage stakeholders to create long-lasting and continuous relationship and to offer them opportunities to link with the organisation. (Cornelissen 2014, 51-52.)

Figure 13 presents Cornelissen's models for communication flowing between organisation and communication. When an organisation uses an informational strategy, its communication consists of dissemination of information and making information available to stakeholders. Communication flows only one-way, from the organisation to its stakeholders. An organisation does not gather any feedback neither listens to its stakeholders. However, an organisation has symmetrical relationships with its

stakeholders which means that information is reported objectively, and stakeholders are not persuaded to change their attitudes, behaviour or knowledge. (Cornelissen 2014, 51-52.)

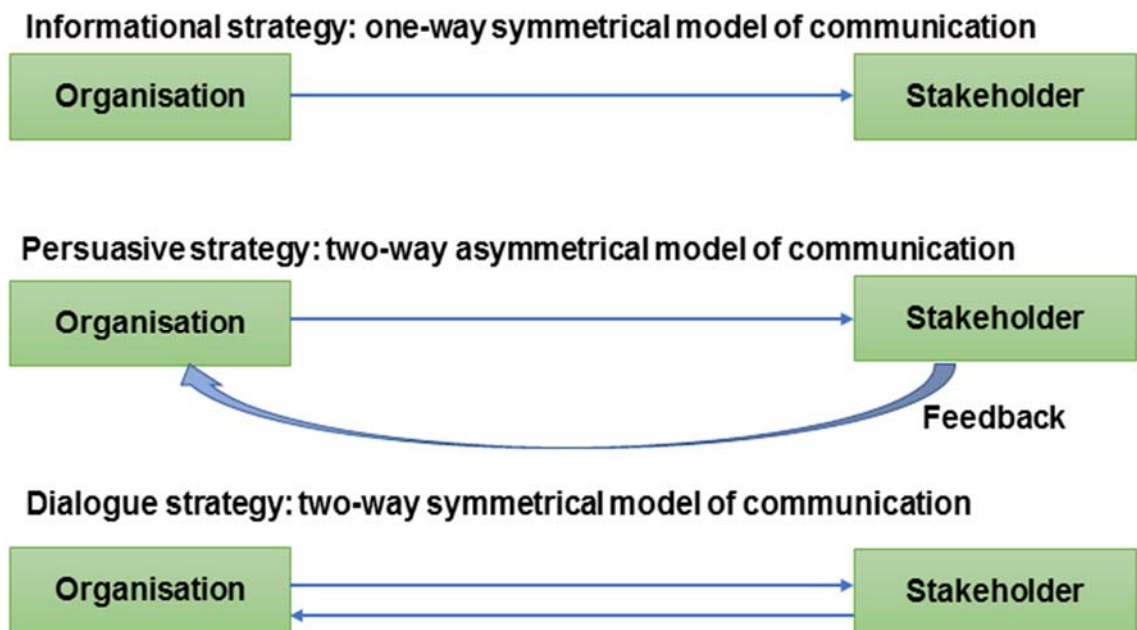


Figure 13. Models of organisation-stakeholder communication (adapted Cornelissen 2014, 53)

When using a persuasive strategy, the aim of an organisation is to alter and adjust stakeholders' behaviour and perceptions to be positive and advantageous to the organisation and its image. In this model communication is considered to be two-way, but asymmetrical because even though stakeholders' perceptions and understanding of the organisation are gathered there exists an unbalanced situation in the effects of communication; communication with stakeholders does not change the organisation, but the organisation tries to alter and adjust the attitudes and behaviour of the stakeholders. (Cornelissen 2014, 52-53.)

When using dialogue strategy an organisation is actively involved with its stakeholders. The organisation consults with its stakeholders, ask their opinion, incorporates them into an organisation's decision-making process to reach a shared understanding and common decisions. In this model communication is two-way and symmetrical. Communication is based on having dialogue with stakeholders and the aim of the organisation is to reach a common understanding with stakeholders. (Cornelissen 2014, 52-53.)

An appropriate tool for formulating different strategies, a corporate strategy or a strategy for a team, or communication strategies, is called TOWS matrix:

- 1) SO strategies: "Strategies that use strengths to maximize opportunities."
- 2) ST strategies: "Strategies that use strengths to minimize threats."
- 3) WO strategies: "Strategies that minimize weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities."
- 4) WT strategies: "Strategies that minimize weaknesses and avoid threats."  
(MindTools.com 2016.)

In a corporate communication strategy, an organisation needs to describe also what kind of roles there exists in communication, how communication is organised, who is responsible for what and does an organisation have any cooperation/partnerships in communication (Juholin 2013, 140). When the human resources are mapped it is good to consider what is reasonable and economical to do inside organisation and what can be bought outside (Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 11). Besides human resources, resources include also technology, time as well as money (Argenti 2016, 32).

When formulating a corporate communication strategy, it is good to pay attention to what different kind of policies, guidelines, instructions, process description is already in use. In the end of communication strategy, it is necessary to be describe when and how the strategy was formulated, when it was accepted at the first time and when it has been and should be updated. (Juholin 2013, 138-140.)

### **3.4 Role of corporate communication in fostering corporate reputation and brand**

The success of an organisation as well as its sustainability, depends on the views of the key audiences of the organisation (Cornelissen 2014, 9). Corporate communication is used for identifying and classifying of stakeholders, developing relationships with stakeholders and for creating a linkage between an organisation and its internal and external stakeholders as well as for influencing the perceptions of the stakeholders. Corporate communication has also a strategic role since corporate communication supports the organisation in reaching its vision and strategic objectives and in fulfilling its mission. (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 14; Roper & Fill 2012, 214-216; Podnar 2015, 11.)

Corporate reputation and branding as well as rebranding are examples of activities which corporate communication contributes to. With corporate communication an organisation can reinforce its identity, brand, and reputation. Corporate communication is responsible for the expression and voicing of the corporate identity and desired image of an organisation as well as the expression and voicing of the corporate brand and organising

communication. The responsibility of corporate communication includes also brand architecture and the coordination of it. (Rosenbaum-Elliott, Percy & Pervan 2011, 248-249; Podnar 2015, 11.)

Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. (2011, 110) claim that no brand exists without marketing communication. Cornelissen (2014, 4-9) as well as Sargeant (2009, 175) state that corporate communication plays an important part when an organisation, a commercial or a non-profit organisation, is building, sustaining, and protecting its reputation and brand. Corporate communication is also used for differentiating an organisation from competition and for creating and fostering a competitive advantage (Roper & Fill 2012, 216). The tasks of corporate communication are also “to externally raise awareness of, inform or educate key stakeholders, and to defend or explain a company’s actions”. Corporate communication is also responsible for: 1) telling what kind of the organisation is behind the brand and 2) minimising the gap between the organisation’s desired image and image formed by audiences of organisation (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 23). The mission and values of an organisation are internally explained, reinforced, and refreshed by using the corporate communication. (Roper & Fill 2012, 233.)

The role of corporate communication in developing and sustaining brand is to increase brand equity 1) by placing brand signals in to mind of audiences of an organisation 2) by linking associations of audiences to the brand, and 3) by ability, opportunity, and motivation of the stakeholders to regain brand related information from their memory when necessary, for example when making a recommendation or a brand choice. The purpose of corporate communication related to brand is to actuate on connotations connected to the brand as well as to form an image of the brand. (van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 8) The role of communication is vital in corporate branding since if audiences are not aware of the brand of an organisation then “the organisation does not have a brand at all” (Roper and Fill 2012, 113).

Corporate communication can be used for ensuring that stakeholders remember the brand (Rosebaum-Elliott et al. 2007, 120). Through corporate communication organisations can convey their identity and deliver brand signals and have an influence on their stakeholders’ perspectives on organisation. Corporate communication can also be used for developing and sustaining a corporate reputation as well as a corporate brand. (Dowling 1994, van Riel 1995 & Fombrun 1996, in van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 36; Roper & Fill 2011, 36, 211.) Corporate communication provides links that connect corporate personality, brand, and image and it can be considered as the means used when organisations communicate with their different stakeholders (Roper & Fill 2011, xix, 36).

Corporate communication is also used for internal and external stakeholder communication and crisis communication is associated with corporate communication. It is important that corporate communication can be adapted to and used flexibly in different situations. (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al. 2011, 248-249.)

Juholin (2013, 231) states that communication in its different forms either strengthens or impairs reputation. For example, corporate reputation can be damaged with inconsistent and contradictory messages. If an organisation wants to present co-ordinated and integrated corporate communication, it must come out with one voice. Coherent messages and one voice contribute to fostering reputation. (Roper & Fill 2012, 13.)

A crisis may create a financial threat and/or cause damage to reputation and brand. An organisation can also lose its stakeholders, or the stakeholders may turn against the organisation and start to spread negative news about the organisation. The extent of possible damage or threat can be lessened with an appropriate crisis communication. Crisis communication is a discipline of corporate communication which is executed by communication specialists according to a crisis communication plan. The role of crisis communication is to protect the reputation of the organisation and through that to limit the harm to the organisation's brand. The role of crisis communication is also to disseminate information and communicate about the actions of the organisation honestly and openly, and to address the concerns of the stakeholders, especially those who are directly influenced by the crisis, as well as to engage the stakeholders in dialogue. (Cornelissen 2014, 204-205, 214.)

As Podnar (2015, 12) states:

“Corporate communication is a tool that helps the organisation to articulate its identity, manage its communications, fortify the commitment of stakeholders, create recognisable and persuasive images in the minds of individuals and groups, develop a powerful corporate brand and increase the intangible capital, as a consequence of a good reputation.”

### **3.5 Chapter summary**

This chapter in its entirety concentrated on creating a picture of what is meant with corporate reputation, corporate branding, corporate communication. Corporate reputation, reputation management and how reputation risks can be managed were explored. Corporate brand corporate branding and brand management were addressed. Corporate communication in generally and in practice as well as the role of corporate communication in developing and

sustaining reputation and brand were elaborated. These concepts were discussed also from the non-profit organisation's point of view.

The next chapter, chapter four, will introduce the three portfolio assignments which form the empirical part of the thesis.

## 4 Portfolio assignments: Means of communication development

The empirical part of the thesis is the portfolio of three assignments, which the writer of this thesis has completed during her Communication Management -studies. Assignments included in the portfolio are: Communication Strategy for 2017-2019, Crisis Communication Plan, Brand's Development Plan. All these assignments the writer has completed within a six-month period and separately for the target organisation of this thesis, Nyyti ry. The assignments present the situation of Nyyti ry at the time of completion. The assignments can be considered as solutions for the research problem.

### 4.1.1 Communication strategy for 2017-2019 of Nyyti ry

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(The page numbers mentioned in the table of contents refer to the page numbers of actual communication strategy and do not relate to the page numbers of the thesis.)

The communication strategy was scoped to external communication and it did not include social media strategy, even it would be relevant since before writing the social media strategy this communication strategy needed to be accepted by the Board of Directors of Nyyti ry.

# 1 Background

Nyyti ry is a Finnish non-profit and non-governmental organisation founded in 1984. Its operations are funded by Finland's Slot Machine Association.

Nyyti ry has eight member communities. Two of them, Suomen Mielenterveysseura ry and Ylioppilaiden terveydenhoitosäätiö YTHS, who are both members of Nyyti ry, are both non-profit organisations acting in the field of mental health. Two are the main student unions - The National Union of University Students in Finland SYL and University of Applied Sciences Students in Finland – SAMOK. The rest four members are local student unions: Student union of University of Helsinki, Aalto University Student Union, Student Union of Hanken School of Economics and Helsingin Tekniikan Opiskelijat - HTO ry. (Nyyti ry 2018b.)

The mission of Nyyti ry is to strengthen students' mental health and study ability and the vision is to be an effective and networked promoter of students' mental health (Nyyti ry 2016a, 3).

Nyyti ry (2016a, 4) aims to:

- Enhance students' skills in maintaining and promoting mental health and study ability
- Ensure that student unions' and communities support social cohesion by enhancing practices and culture of equality in which people care for each other and where experiences of loneliness and externality reduce.
- Increase social awareness of students' mental health and study ability and related factors.
- Ensure that students' good mental health and social inclusion are seen pivotal success factors in the society, and that prejudices related to mental health issues reduce.

Nyyti ry's activities are divided to two main categories. There are activities for students and activities for professionals who are responsible for mental health promotion and problem prevention among students. The activities directed to the students are focused on students studying in universities and universities of applied science (UAS).

Nyyti ry's activities are guided by Nyyti ry's values and key principles: *Student orientation*, *Openness/Transparency* and *Working Together* (Nyyti ry 2016a, 3).



## Stakeholders

Nyyti ry's primary and secondary stakeholders are presented in stakeholder map in figure 1. The organisation considers its primary stakeholders to be employees, member communities, students, student unions and communities and professionals in charge of mental health promotion and problem prevention among students. The secondary stakeholders are media, policymakers, influencers and opinion leaders, competitors, and financiers. (Nyyti ry 2016a, 7-8.)

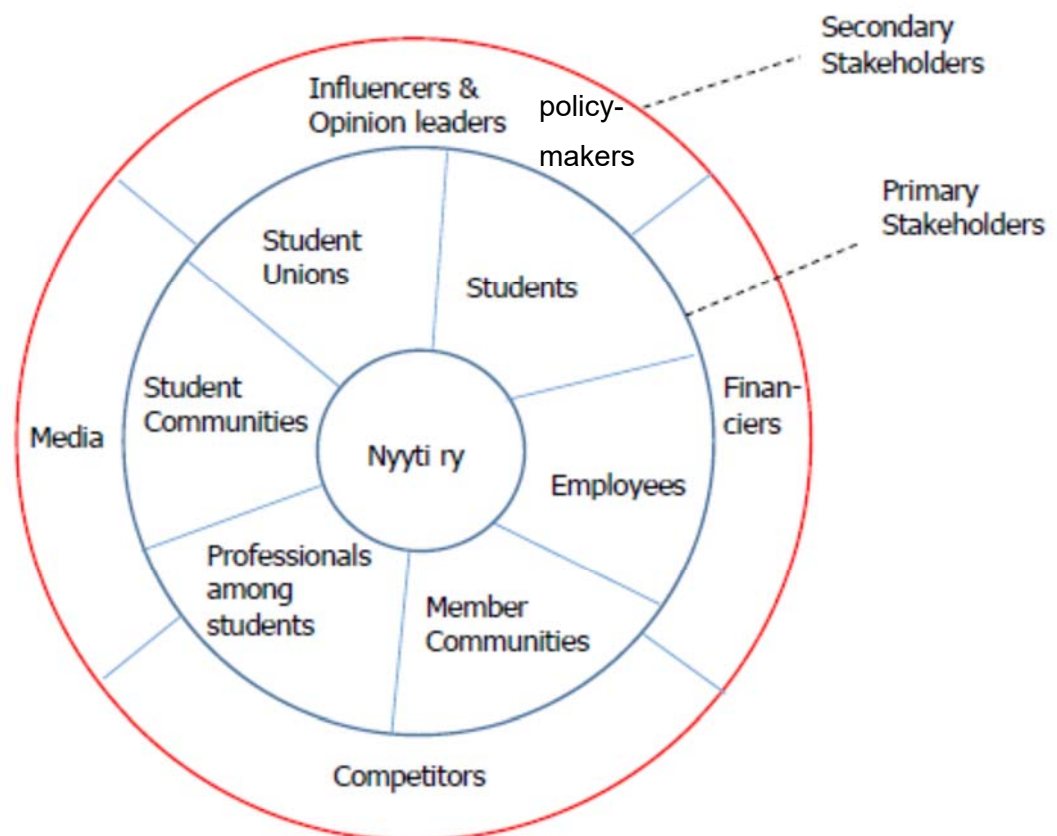


Figure 1. Stakeholder Map of Nyyti ry (The figure is modified after Freeman, R. E., Harrison J.S., Wicks, A. C., Parmar, B.L. & De Colle, S. 2010, 24)

In the Chapter 2, the stakeholders are mapped by using the power-interest matrix. This is done because it will be easier to formulate communication strategies when it is clarified to whom the organisation needs to communicate constantly and to whom less frequently.

## 2 Reasons for Communication

In this chapter, it is discussed for what communication is needed and how it is linked to the organisation's activities and future. However, at first, stakeholders are presented more precisely to better understand for what communication is needed in the organisation. Challenges of each stakeholder group are also discussed when a stakeholder group is identified.

### 2.1 Stakeholder Identification

Stakeholders of Nyyti ry's are categorised by using the power-interest matrix (Figure 2) with which stakeholders can be divided on the basis of power they possess and the extent to which they are likely to have or show an interest in the organisation's activities (Cornelissen 2014, 50).

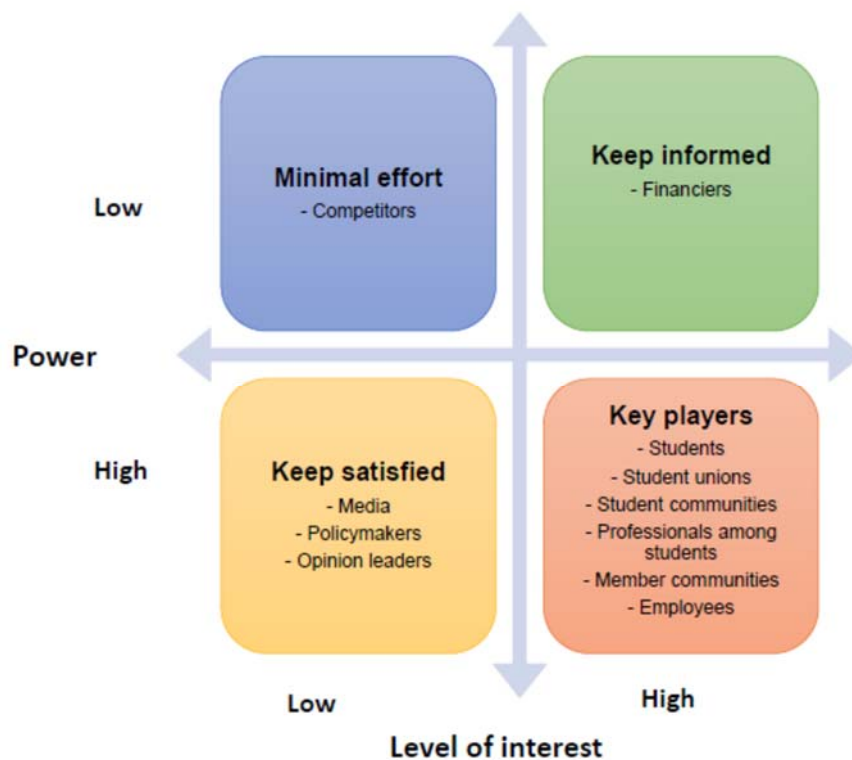


Figure 2. The Power-interest Matrix of Stakeholders of Nyyti ry (The figure is modified after Cornelissen 2014, 50)

#### Key players

Key players are stakeholders who need to be constantly communicated with since they possess high power and high level of interest in the organisation's activities (Cornelissen 2014, 51). In Nyyti ry's case, key players are: students, student unions and communities,

professionals who are responsible for mental health promotion and problem prevention among students, member communities and employees.

### *Students*

are the biggest stakeholder group of Nyyti ry. In 2015, this group included approx. 280,000 students who are between 18 and 29 years old and are studying in universities and universities of applied sciences (UAS).

A challenge related to this stakeholder group is the size of the group relative to minor communication resources of Nyyti ry. The size of the group of students is huge and only minor part of it can be reached with the organisation's own actions and resources. Wider part of the group can be reached only by having working communication cooperation with student unions and by communicating with the help of and through them.

Another challenge is that students and people in general do not recognise the need of information on and activities of mental health and study ability issues when everything is going well.

### *Student unions*

In Finland, we have two main student unions, which are interest organisations defending and improving the educational, financial, and social benefits and rights of the students. These two are The National Union of University Students in Finland SYL, which represents 138,000 students studying in 17 universities, and University of Applied Sciences Students in Finland – SAMOK, who represents close to 140,000 students studying in universities of applied science (UAS) (Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liitto (SYL) ry 2016; Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto – SAMOK ry 2016). Both of these student unions are a member of Nyyti ry. In addition to these two main student unions the stakeholder group of student unions includes also local student unions for university students, totally 17 unions, and local student unions for UAS students, totally 26 unions.

A challenge with this group is that people in boards of directors of student unions change yearly. To secure the dissemination of information on how to maintain mental health and study ability as well as the dissemination of information on Nyyti ry's activities it is important to find ways how to engage the student unions in communication cooperation year after year.

### *Students communities*

Stakeholder group of student communities includes universities and universities of applied sciences. In Finland, we had totally 15 universities and 26 universities of applied sciences in 2016 (Suomi.fi 2016).

A challenge related to this stakeholder group is that Nyyti ry's cooperation with has been them at very low level and with limited resources it is difficult to find the correct person or department who to contact.

Professionals working among students are also considered to be key players. This stakeholder group includes teachers, study psychologists, church's student workers, professionals working in health and social services in student communities and in student healthcare units as well as almost 350 instructors of NYYTIN ELÄMÄNTAITOKURSSI® (writer's translation: Nyyti ry's Course on Skills of Life) which are educated by Nyyti ry.

A challenge with professionals is that they are extensively spread out and working in many different communities. It requires a lot of resources to keep in track of them and to reach them.

### **Keep informed**

Keep informed is a group of stakeholders which needs to be kept informed to ensure that people in the group stay committed to the organisation and "spread positive word-of-mouth to others" (Cornelissen 2014, 51). Nyyti ry's financier - Finland's Slot Machine Association – is considered to a member of the group of "Keep informed".

### **Keep satisfied**

It is important to communicate also with stakeholders categorised in Keep satisfied -group since they are the ones who can "exercise their power in reaction to a particular decision or corporate activity" (Cornelissen 2014, 51). If the organisation's communication does not reach them then the power executed in reaction to a particular decision or corporate activity may cause harm of even damage to the organisation. In Nyyti ry's case, Keep satisfied -group includes media, policymakers and opinion leaders.

A challenge with this stakeholder group is that Nyyti ry has neither established relationships with journalists from key media outlets or with policymakers, influencers and opinion leaders. Another challenge is that media as well as the other stakeholders in the group do not consider Nyyti ry as an expert of students' mental health and study ability issues.

## 2.2 Why Communication

In Nyyti ry, communication is part of all activities and actions. Communication and how the organisation succeeds in it have a great impact on the organisation's future. If the organisation does not manage to increase awareness and enhance image and reputation, the stakeholders will not find its information and activities. This means that the organisation will not be able to reach its vision and fulfil its mission. All this may then have effects on the organisation's financial situation.

Communication is needed for

- strategic communication and achieving strategic goals.
- stakeholder communication
- marketing communication like:
  - enhancing Nyyti ry's brand, image, reputation, and awareness.
  - increasing stakeholders' awareness of brand and what the brand has to offer and how stakeholders can fulfil their needs and interests.
  - increasing stakeholders' awareness of mental health and study ability and related factors.
  - increasing social awareness of students' mental health and study ability and related factors.
- ensuring that student communities support social cohesion.
- engaging student unions in communication cooperation.

Communication is also needed for

- building organisational culture.
- engaging and motivating employees.
- media relations.
- financial communication.
- building social relations.
- lobbying.

Current situation of communication in Nyyti ry is analysed in the Chapter 3.

### 3 Current State Analysis

This chapter presents the current state. PESTLE analysis is used for analysing the environment of the organisation, SWOT analysis is used for analysing the four important elements (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) of the organisation's communication. The TOWS-matrix is used for strategy formulation.

#### 3.1 PESTLE Analysis

PESTLE analysis, where P stands for Political, E for Economic, S for Social, T for Technological, L for Legal and E for Environmental, is used for analysing the environment where the organisation is operating in. As can be seen from the analysis (Figure 3) many different factors can have an influence on the organisation and its activities. These factors can also be considered as opportunities.



Figure 3. PESTLE-analysis on Environment of Nyyti ry.

### 3.2 SWOT-analysis

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of Nyyti ry's communication were analysed by using SWOT analysis (Figure 4). Awareness is included among strengths as well as among weaknesses. This is because awareness, reputation, and image of Nyyti ry and its activities are at good level among professionals in the field of mental health and among student unions, but, unfortunately, awareness of Nyyti ry and its activities are at weak level among the students who do not know what is Nyyti ry and why Nyyti ry exists.

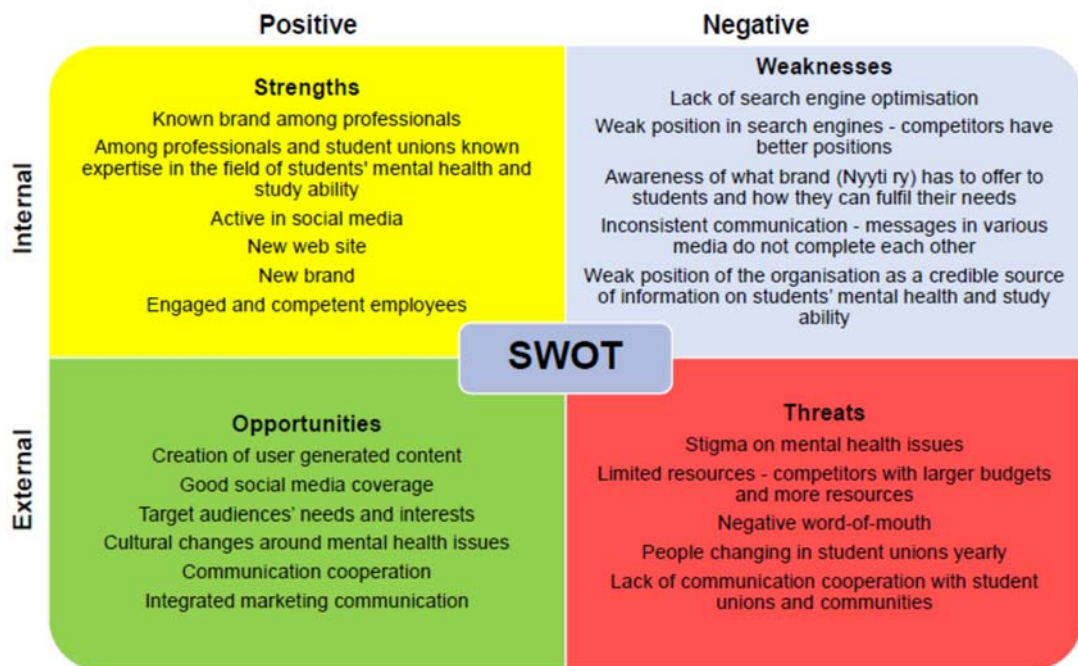


Figure 4. SWOT-analysis on Nyyti ry's Communication.

### 3.3 TOWS matrix

TOWS matrix is used for formulating for different types of strategies:


- 1) SO strategies: "Strategies that use strengths to maximize opportunities."
- 2) ST strategies: "Strategies that use strengths to minimize threats."
- 3) WO strategies: "Strategies that minimize weaknesses by taking advantage of opportunities."
- 4) WT strategies: "Strategies that minimize weaknesses and avoid threats."

(MindTools.com 2016.)

Table 1 presents the TOWS matrix of Nyyti ry. The main points that can be seen from the matrix are that Nyyti ry's needs to concentrate on increasing brand awareness and awareness of mental health and study ability issues as well as engaging student unions and professional in communication cooperation. The organisation also needs concentrate

on changing and tuning the knowledge, attitude, and behaviour of the stakeholders as well as on engaging stakeholders in mutual exchange of ideas and opinions.

Table 1. TOWS matrix of Nyyti ry.

<p><b>TOWS matrix</b></p>  <p><b>NYTYI RY</b></p>	<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Known brand among professionals</li> <li>- Among professionals and student unions known expertise in the field of students' mental health and study ability</li> <li>- Active in social media</li> <li>- New web site</li> <li>- New brand</li> <li>- Engaged and competent employees</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of search engine optimisation</li> <li>- Weak position in search engines - competitors have better positions</li> <li>- Awareness of what brand (Nyyti ry) has to offer to students and how they can fulfil their needs</li> <li>- Inconsistent communication - messages in various media do not complete each other</li> <li>- Weak position of the organisation as a credible source of information on students' mental health and study ability</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creation of user generated content</li> <li>- Good social media coverage</li> <li>- Target audiences' needs and interests</li> <li>- Cultural changes around mental health issues</li> <li>- Communication cooperation</li> <li>- Integrated marketing communication</li> </ul>	<p><b>SO strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Acquire information of target audiences (professional and students) needs and interest</li> <li>2. Recruit students as volunteer content creators through professionals and via social media</li> <li>3. Create brand awareness and brand image</li> <li>4. Engage professionals and student unions into communication cooperation and to act as Nyyti ry's ambassadors</li> </ol>	<p><b>WO strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Promote the brand and what brand has to offer to reach students</li> <li>2. Establish a relationship with journalist from key media.</li> <li>3. Create consistent messages and make the brand heard by using means of integrated marketing communication</li> <li>4. Pay attention to content creation to increase search engine optimisation and enhance the position in search engines</li> </ol>
<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stigma on mental health issues</li> <li>- Limited resources - competitors with larger budgets and more resources</li> <li>- Negative word-of-mouth</li> <li>- People changing in student unions yearly</li> <li>- Lack of communication cooperation with student unions and communities</li> </ul>	<p><b>ST strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reduce stigma by increasing (social) awareness of mental health with the help of professionals and student unions</li> <li>2. Engage professionals and student unions into communication cooperation and to act as Nyyti ry's ambassadors</li> <li>3. Securing transfer of information between old and new actors of student unions by means of communication</li> </ol>	<p><b>WT strategies</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase (social) awareness of mental health and study ability</li> <li>2. Promote and highlight expertise</li> <li>3. Enhance positive word-of-mouth</li> <li>4. Engage professionals and student unions into communication cooperation</li> <li>5. Concentrate on consistent communication</li> </ol>

Nyyti ry's strategies includes three different types strategies for stakeholder communications: Informational strategy, Persuasive strategy, and Dialogue strategy. When using informational strategy, the organisation is just informing its stakeholders about something. With persuasive strategy, the aim of the organisation is to "change and tune the knowledge, attitude, and behaviour of the stakeholders in a way that is



favourable to the organisation”. A dialogue strategy is a “two-way symmetrical model of communication where both sides (organisation and stakeholders) are engaged in mutual “exchange of ideas and opinions”. (Cornelissen 2014, 52.)

Chapter 4 presents Nyyti ry’s communication goals and objectives which are derived from the strategic goals of Nyyti ry.

## 4 Communication Goals and Objectives

Nyyti ry's renewed business strategy for years 2017-2019 was accepted by the Board of Members in the beginning of December 2016. The strategy includes Nyyti ry's renewed vision and mission:

<b>Mission</b>	is to strengthen students' mental health and study ability.
<b>Vision</b>	is to be an effective and networked promoter of students' mental health.

(Nyyti ry 2016a, 3.)

The strategy includes three main strategic goals. In this chapter, communication objectives and strategies as well as related key stakeholders under each strategic goal.

### **Strategic goal 1:**

Students' awareness of how to maintain mental health and study ability increases and students' resources to maintain mental health and study ability strengthens, and students receive peer support when they are facing challenges related to mental health and study ability (Nyyti ry 2016a, 7).

### **Communication goals**

- 1) Students' awareness of Nyyti ry and its activities increases
- 2) Students' awareness of issues affecting mental health and study ability increases
- 3) Students' awareness of how to maintain mental health and study ability increases
- 4) Salience of mental health and study ability issues and related factors increases among students
- 5) Students' attitudes and beliefs towards mental health issues become positive and stigma related to mental health issues reduces
- 6) Students are convinced that they are capable to take care of their own mental health and study ability
- 7) Students are aware of peer activities available to them

### **Communication objectives**

By the end of year 2017

- increase by 50% the presence of messages about how to maintain one's own mental health and study ability in the media used by the students.
- increase by 20% the number of stakeholders who have heard of Nyyti ry
- increase by 20% the number of stakeholders who can identify at least one issue that Nyyti ry is working on
- increase by 30% the number of readers of articles on mental health and study ability published on Nyyti ry's website.
- increase by 20% the number of people visiting Nyyti ry's website

By the end of year 2018

- increase visibility of mental health and study ability issues in societal discussion.

By the end of year 2019

- convince students that taking care of one's mental health and study ability is a real and important matter.
- increase students' awareness of peer activities develop during the ongoing strategy period.

### **Strategic goal 2:**

Student unions and communities promote students' mental health and study ability (Nyyti ry 2016a, 8).

### ***Communication goals***

- 1) Student unions' and communities' interest in and knowledge of promoting mental health and study ability enhances.
- 2) Cooperation between students, student unions/communities and professionals working among students increases.

### ***Communication objectives***

By the end of year 2017

- enhance student unions' and communities' interest in and knowledge of mental health and study ability and issues affecting them.
- define what is needed to succeed in engaging student unions/communities in communication cooperation with Nyyti ry year after year.

By the end of year 2018

- engage student unions' and communities in permanent communication cooperation in disseminating information on how to maintain mental health and study ability as well as in disseminating information on Nyyti ry's activities.

**Strategic goal 3:**

Awareness of the meaning of students' mental health and study ability and factors which have an influence on these matters will strengthen in the society. (Nyyti ry 2016a, 8).

***Communication goals***

- 1) Social awareness of the meaning of students' mental health and study ability and factors which have an influence on these matters enhances.
- 2) Lobbying for the matters affecting students' mental health and study ability positively on the basis of proved information, perceptions of expert network and students' experience.

***Communication objectives for the whole strategy period***

- Enhance social awareness of the meaning of students' mental health and study ability and factors which have an influence on these matters
- Use communication means for lobbying for the matters affecting students' mental health and study ability positively.

Chapter 5 discusses communication guidelines of Nyyti ry.

## 5 Communication guidelines

In this chapter, it is defined principles, values, and tone of voice of Nyyti ry's communication. It is also discussed how Nyyti ry tells about itself visually.

### 5.1 Principles, values, and tone of voice

Nyyti ry's brand was renewed during spring of 2016 and the new visual identity was built as the result of brand renewal. The renewed brand and the new visual identity were published together with totally new website in the middle of September 2016. The new brand and the new visual identity have received excellent feedback.

The corporate strategy and the brand renewal document form the basic principles for Nyyti ry's communication. Communication must the organisation's values and key principles which are, as earlier mentioned, *Student orientation*, *Openness/Transparency* and *Working Together* (Nyyti ry 2016a, 3). The communication must reflect also Nyyti ry's brand's personality i.e brand's tone of voice.

The tone of voice is youthful, fresh, and positive as well as accessible and approachable. It can be characterised also with words 'professional', 'affirmative', 'interesting' and 'inspiring'. (Kero 2016, 7.) Written language is simple and not too formal. The purpose of the tone of voice is to engage, inform, inspire, and encourage. The same tone of voice is used in all communication, except in formal connections, which requires more formal language to be used.

### 5.2 Visuals

Visuals like logo and photos have an important role in visual identity and in communication of Nyyti ry. Nyyti ry has two logos – one which is used for official purposes (Image 1) and one which is used for marketing purposes (Image 2).



Image 1. The official logo of Nyyti ry



Image 2. The marketing logo of Nyyti ry

Photos must include a message of positive attitude towards life and they need to stand out. Characters related to photos are fresh, atmospheric, memorable, inspiring, and youthful.

Themes related to visuals are categorised in three different categories: feeling, serene and challenges. (Nyyti ry 2016b, 23.) Characters related to each category are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Characters of each visual category of Nyyti ry. (Nyyti ry 2016b, 24-26.)

Category	Related characters
Feeling	togetherness, friendship, living in the moment, jubilation, adventures, experiences, joy
Serene	tranquillity, balance, mental wellbeing, relaxation, nature
Challenges	loneliness, sorrow, stress, bullying, challenges in life management

### 5.3 Key Messages

The key messages are derived from Nyyti ry's vision, mission, strategic goals and communication goals. Overall key message is that *Nyyti ry is an effective and networked promoter of students' mental health who aims to strengthen students' mental health and study ability.*

Individual key messages are created for external stakeholders:

The key message for students is:

*Students are provided with information on how to maintain their own mental health and study ability and how to use peer activities when having challenges with mental health and study ability. Take care of your mental health and study ability - let us provide you with information on mental health and study ability and peer activities available for you.*

The key message for student unions, student communities and professionals working among student as well as for member communities is:

*Nyyti ry enhances student unions' and communities' interest in and knowledge of promoting mental health, and promotes cooperation between students, student unions student communities, and professionals. Let's work together towards better mental health and study ability of students.*

The key message for media, policymakers, influencers, and opinion leaders is:

*Nyyti ry enhances social awareness of what means for the society that students' mental health and study ability is taken care of. Use your power of influence for the good of better mental health and study ability of students.*

#### **5.4 Responsibilities and Resources**

Totally seven people are employed by Nyyti ry. This number includes Executive Director, Organisation Planner (writer of this strategy), Coordinator for Development, four Planners who are responsible for developing and executing the activities.

The tasks of Organisation Planner are divided between tasks related to general management and financial matters and communication. Organisation Planner is responsible for developing communication and oversee that communication is executed according to strategic guidelines, brand guidelines and plans. Planners and Coordinator for Development execute the actual everyday communication. Responsibilities of social media channels are divided between Executive Director, Coordinator for Development, and Organisation Planner. Organisation Planner is included in dominant coalition.

The organisation has limited resources and a small budget for communication. Any exact amounts of money cannot be revealed in this document.

## 6 Monitoring

This communication strategy has been written in December 2016. The implementation will start immediately after baselines for each communication objectives are set. The effectiveness of communication and chosen strategies will be constantly evaluated during the strategy period. The strategy will be revisited quarterly and revised when necessary and, at least, if and when the corporate strategy is revised.

Improvement will be measured towards the goals and the objectives.

Brand awareness will be researched among the stakeholders by using a survey. Stakeholders awareness of Nyyti ry's activities will be measured by stakeholder group. The NetPromoterScore will also be included in the survey.

Web analytics are used for analysing online behaviour of the organisation's stakeholders. This is done to optimise website use and increase awareness and engagement. Both off-site and on-site web analytics are performed. Off-site web analytics is used for seeing what is happening on the internet as a whole and which are online trends. On-site web analysis is used for analysing the organisation's own website. By using web analytics, the organisation wants to know the number of visitors on Nyyti ry's website, who are they, how the website was found by them, what search terms was used, what pages are visited / are not visited and what is the time spend on the website. (Marr 2016, 178-179.)

With social media analytics, the organisation wants to know what the stakeholders are saying about the brand and its activities, who is reading the posts the organisation publishes, the number of pageviews, likes/favourites, followers, pass-alongs/retweets the organisation has on the social platforms its uses. If the organisation wants to engage the audience to use its activities and information, it needs to know how many of the followers belong to its stakeholder groups. (Marr 2016, 182-183.) Social media metrics will include all stages: Exposure, Engagement, Influence, and Action.

Other metrics to be used:

- the number of student unions who have disseminated the information
- the number of people among students who have been exposed by the message disseminated by the student unions
- the number of student unions who have changed their views and behaviour in a favourable way towards the organisation
- the number of websites including information on Nyyti ry's services and/or information how to maintain mental health and/or study ability
- the number of people registered as users of Nyyti ry's activities



- the number of communication exchanges with journalist (increase in number indicates increased interest by journalists)
- the number of organisation information referenced in key media
- the number of quotes of the organisation's spokesperson in key media

## Key concepts

Some of the key concepts and their definitions are the following:

**Strategic communication** – “Communication aligned with the company’s overall strategy, [intended] to enhance its strategic positioning” (Argenti, Howell & Beck 2005 in Argenti 2016, 29).

**Reputation** – “The sum of the images the various constituencies have of an organisation” (Fombrun, C. 1996 in Doorley & Garcia 2015, 4).” The Sum of Images = Performance + Behaviour + Communication” (Doorley & Garcia 2015, 4).

**Non-governmental organisation** – An organisation which “possess a non-profit status and operates independent of government” (Kinzey 2013, 203). “A highly imprecise term which usually refers to the subset of ‘third sector’ organisation involved in poverty reduction, human rights and environmental concerns” (Lewis 2006, 276).

**Non-profit organisation** – “The term commonly used in the United States for ‘third sector organisation’, so labelled because it is distinguished from the culturally dominant model of profit-making organisation” (Lewis 2006, 276).

“Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community” (World Health Organisation 2014).

**Stakeholder** - “Any person or group that is able to make a claim on an organisation’s attention, resources or output, or who may be affected by the organisation” (Lewis 2006, 277). “A stakeholder in an organisation is (by definition) any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives (Freeman 1984, in Freeman 2010, 206).

**Student union** in the meaning of “opiskelijakunta” is a public entity, which members are students studying in university of applied sciences (Wikipedia 2015). In the meaning of “ylioppilaskunta”, student union is a public entity laid down under law on Universities Act and Decree on Student Union. Each university in Finland has a student union. A membership of student union is compulsory for every student studying in an university. (Wikipedia 2016.)

“**Study ability** is a student’s work ability. Study ability is relevant for study results, student well-being, and study progress.” (Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liitto (SYL) ry 2016b.)

#### 4.1.2 Crisis communication plan of Nytyi ry

This crisis communication was formulated during the studies of the writer of thesis. It was originally written in Finnish since it was written for the use of Nytyi ry.

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(The page numbers mentioned in the table of contents refer to the page numbers of actual crisis communication plan and do not relate to the page numbers of the thesis.)

## Introduction

“A crisis is the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectations of stakeholders related to health, safety, environmental, and economic issues, and can seriously impact an organisation’s performance and generate negative outcomes” (Coombs 2015, 3).

A crisis is an abnormal, often sudden and unpredictable event for an individual, a community or a larger group of people, requiring quick solutions and immediate response. The crisis can also be about what people think happened, that is, it can also be based on rumours. If stakeholders feel that the organization is in crisis, then it is a reality for them.

Defining common policies before the crisis makes it easier to work during crisis event. Crisis management consists of three mutually related stages: Precrisis, Crisis Event, and Postcrisis. Each of these stages requires planned crisis communication. Crisis communication should be quick, clear, reliable and open. Crisis communication does not solve the crisis or make it disappear, but it helps to minimise unnecessary distrust and suspicions. It is important that communication is properly targeted so that information reaches the right target audience, i.e. the communities and people affected by the crisis and who are told about the crisis. Communication should not provoke panic, but it should not undermine any problems either.

It is important that Nyyti ry publishes information about the crisis quickly after the event, preferably during the first 60 minutes. Fast and honest communication is important for reputation and appropriate operation. In a crisis situation, Nyyti ry must be able to communicate credibly, consistently, ethically and with respect to the privacy of the individual. Communication should begin in the early stages of the crisis and end with postcrisis communication. The more urgent the event is and the longer it takes, the longer the crisis communication is needed. All abnormal situations must be treated equally seriously.

In a crisis situation, one must not forget the significance of nonverbal communication. Nyyti ry must strive to build a sense of trust. In talk situations, one should be prepared for various emotional reactions and aim to use precise vocabulary.

Internal communication needs to be especially well served to ensure seamless crisis communication. It is also important to keep in touch with the authorities and other stakeholders so that different bodies are able to make right solutions based on the

information received. Stakeholder engagement through media outreach, online communications, and direct contact is essential to maintaining trust during a crisis event and aftercare.

The specific goals of Nyyti ry's crisis communication are:

- Respond to the information needs of stakeholders and the media
- Increase one's sense of security
- Provide instructions to cope with a crisis situation
- Prevent harmful activity
- Protect Nyyti ry's reputation and increase confidence in Nyyti's operations

At first, this plan addresses crisis communication and related responsibilities as well as the organisation of crisis communication. The plan describes the communication chains of crisis communication, stakeholders, and contact information in the event of a crisis. The plan also goes through how to act in the event of a crisis. The remainder of the plan focuses on the analysis and presentation of any potential crises that Nyyti ry may face, as well as on how to communicate in each crisis situation.

## 1 Nyyti ry

Nyyti ry (hereinafter Nyyti) was founded 33 years ago in 1984 to offer alternative mental health models for students at the University of Helsinki and to awaken a critical discussion of the prevailing mental health forms. Today, Nyyti ry is a nationwide and non-profit organisation promoting student mental health. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health supports the organization's operations at Veikkaus' earnings. The purpose and mission of Nyyti's operations is to strengthen students' mental wellbeing and study ability. The vision is to be an impressive and networked student mental health promoter. The guiding values are student focus, openness, and collaboration.

At the societal level, Nyyti seeks to influence students' wellbeing and study ability. The stakeholders are students, professionals working among students, study communities.

The focus of activities aimed at students is on online activities that can be implemented in group-based activities that promote mental well-being and the ability to study. For professionals and communities, the focus is on strengthening mental health skills.

Nyyti's membership consists of eight member communities, which can be considered as owner of Nyyti ry.

## 2 What is crisis communication

Crisis communication is a way of communicating solutions in situations where an unforeseen, often unexpected event creates a need for information inside the organisation or in the environment. Crisis communication seeks to prevent the emergence of negative perception and images by means of information dissemination and to direct the effects of public debate to the positive direction.

Tasks of crisis communication

- prepare for crisis management,
- anticipate situations, prevent crises and prepare for activities in crisis situations,
- keep in touch with the people and communities who are or feel to be involved in the crisis during the crisis,
- provide the media with adequate and correct information.

The main goals of crisis communication are

- to create the right picture of the situation in public
- to raise messages so that publicity takes into account Nyyti's point of view
- to safeguard Nyyti's operating conditions and continuity of operations
- to provide enough information and be in constant interaction with Nyyti's top management, executive director, employees, and those affected.

Other goals of crisis communication:

- anticipation,
- speed,
- initiative,
- openness,
- providing accurate and accurate information
- accountability and
- humanity.

Principles of crisis communication:

- Information on the crisis is provided adequately and frequently enough
- More information will be provided when something new happens or when new information is available
- One cannot always tell everything, for example, legislation and professional confidentiality and secrecy may prevent it
- Keep in touch with facts, speculations, guesswork or lying is never taken.
- At each stage of the crisis, it is important to find out to whom and what information is to be communicated
- Persons responsible for publishing information will be helped to anticipate crises by obtaining and providing them with sufficient information on potential crises
- The end of a crisis situation is communicated, and the necessary conclusions are made on communication
- The crisis situation is immediately informed internally.
- External communication is started immediately after the crisis has been communicated internally. An external message will only be initiated if the crisis situation so requires.



- Crisis communications must begin within 60 minutes of the occurrence.

The communication channels of crisis communications to be use are Nyyti's web pages and social media channels, newsletters as well as bulletins and briefings and, if necessary, information sessions.

### **3 Responsibilities of crisis communication and organisation in events which require crisis communication**

#### **3.1 Responsibilities and communication chains in crisis events and consultation**

In crisis communication, responsibilities are divided as follows:

##### **Chairman of the Board**

If the Executive Director is prevented, then Chairman of the Board acts as a representative of Nyyti and is responsible for providing information both internally and externally

##### **Vice Chairman of the Board**

If the Chairman and the Executive Director are prevented, then Vice Chairman of the Board acts as a representative of Nyyti and is responsible for providing information both internally and externally

##### **Executive Director**

acts as a representative of Nyyti and is responsible for providing information both internally and externally

##### **Organisation Planner**

Responsible for crisis management measures such as gathering and certifying information and approval of information as well as the actual crisis management

Subordinate: Development Coordinator

##### **Planners and Development Coordinator and Project Manager**

Perform crisis response measures according to the instructions given

Organisation Planner is responsible for keeping the media and suppliers list up-to-date and the topicality of the background information being shared with the media. Executive Director and the Organisation Planner, as well as all other persons involved in the crisis, take notes of events during the crisis. After the crisis, Organisation Planner will formulate a report of the crisis on the basis of these notes.

Figures 1 and 2 presents the communication chains of Nyyti's internal and external crisis communication.

**Communication chain, Internal Communication**

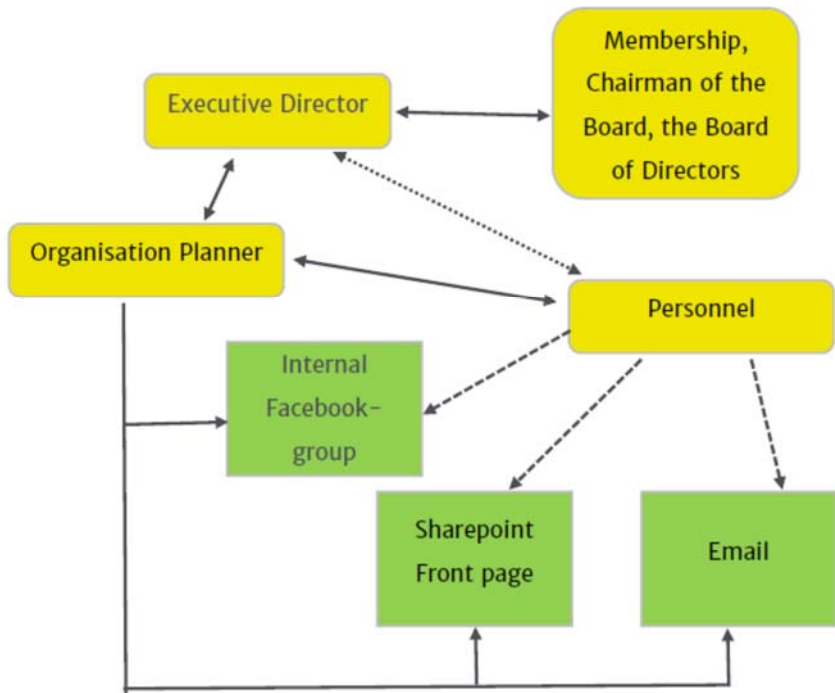


Figure 1. Communication chain, internal crisis communication, Nyyti ry

**Communication chain, External communication**

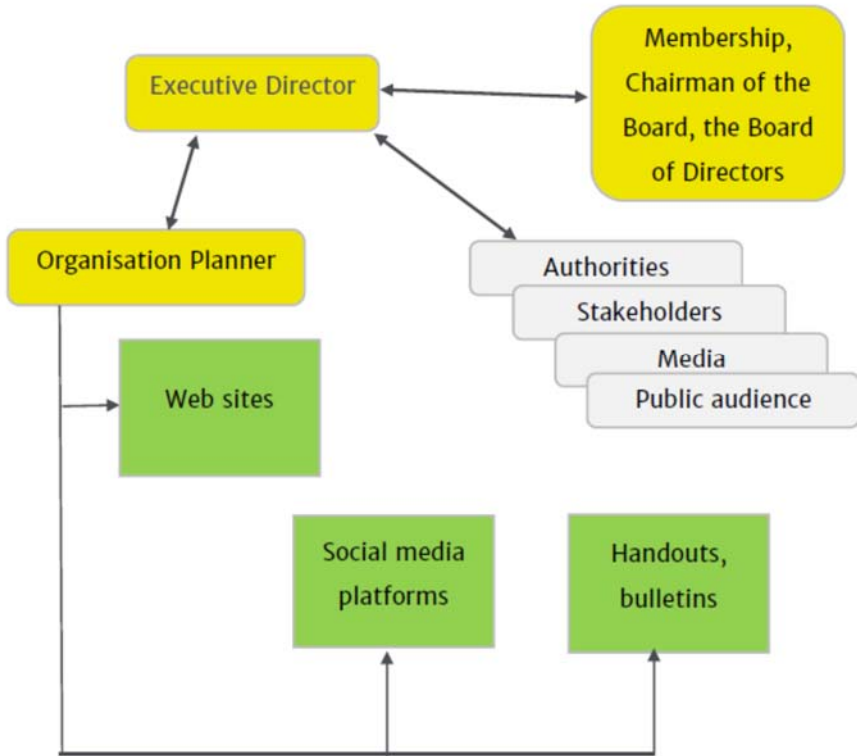


Figure 2. External communication chain, crisis communication, Nyyti ry

If media are in contact with employees during a crisis, the employees direct the contacts to Executive Director. This ensures that communication in a crisis situation remains consistent and coherent. Chairman and the Board of Directors are consulted when needed during the crisis. If there is a need to be in contact with a membership, partners, or public authorities, the responsibility for contacting is with Organisation Planner.

### **3.2 Data collection and approval**

Organisation Planner assembles the necessary information and makes sure that the person representing Nyyti has up-to-date and reliable information about the situation. The social media debate is followed by Organisation Planner or by the nominated employee(s).

Responses to open pieces / letters to editor are prepared by Executive Director together with Organisation Planner. Executive Director approves the outgoing information. If Executive Director is prevented, then Chairman of the Board approves information. If Chairman of the Board is prevented, then Vice Chairman of the Board approves information. If the entire top management (Executive Director and the Board of Directors) is prevented, Organisation Planner accepts information together with the representative of the members.

### **3.3 Stakeholders in crisis communication**

Here is the list of stakeholders that should be contacted in case of a crisis.

- individuals concerned
- family, relatives, close relatives of the individuals concerned (responsibility for contacting lies with Executive Director, a need to contact to be evaluated separately)
- other parties concerned (including employees and volunteers involved),
- healthcare
- insurance Companies
- authorities
- partners
- other stakeholders
- suppliers
- media
- public audience

### 3.4 Contact information in case of crisis

<i>Emergency call number</i>	112
<i>Chairman of the Board of Directors</i>	(name, phone number and email are not published in this thesis)
<i>Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors</i>	(name, phone number and email are not published in this thesis)
<i>Executive Director</i>	(name, phone number and email are not published in this thesis)
<i>Organisation Planner</i>	(name, phone number and email are not published in this thesis)
<i>Employees</i>	(names, phone numbers and emails are not published in this thesis)

Organisation Planner is responsible for keeping this information up-to-date.

### 3.5 Measures to be taken in crisis events

Emergency Response Centre and / or Police are contacted immediately, if needed, after that

- 1) The crisis is reported to Organisation Planner.
- 2) Organisation Planner contacts Executive Director who contacts Chairman of the Board.

The following steps need to be taken into account and executed:

- 1) In situations where immediate help is needed, a person who is the first at the place is responsible for needed contacts. This person is also responsible for informing Executive Director and Organisation Planner.
- 2) Executive Director makes decisions on publishing information and communicates internally and externally. All inquiries are directed to Executive Director or to a nominated person.
- 3) Organisation Planner is responsible for contacts with journalists as well as for press releases and press conferences. Materials to be disseminated are approved by Executive Director.
- 4) Authorities are responsible for their own information. Executive Director and Organisation Planner cooperate with the authorities. Contacts with family and authorities are at the responsibility of Executive Director.

- 5) Stop all social media channel timings and check the content that has been shared over the past few days on different channels. What kind of perception they provide to a reader now in the light of a crisis?
  
- 6) In the crisis of social media, first formulate an answer to the channel in where the crisis started to spread. Make sure that your answer fits to the channel culture. Be sure to disseminate information quickly and transparently in all organisational channels.

## 4 Current state analysis

Current state analysis was executed by using SWOT and PESTLE-analyses. SWOT is a simple and easy-to-use strategic planning tool that can be used for examining and identifying an organisation's strengths (S), weaknesses (W), opportunities (O) and threats (T) related to competition or the planning of a project as well.

### Strengths

- Known brand in the field of mental health and among professionals
- Engaged and competent employees

### Weaknesses

- Weak awareness among students
- Among media, weak position as a credible source of information on students' mental health and study ability

### Opportunities

- Size of stakeholder groups
- Good relationships with partners and other organisation in the field
- Activities are up-to-date
- Interesting mission

### Threats

- Limited financial resources and possible decrease of them
- Financing comes from only one financier
- Not enough resources to keep up operations in the current extent and develop them
- Employee turnover, knowledge leakage, knowledge becomes obsolete
- Activities will not target as wanted
- Stakeholders are not reached
- Activities are perceived uninteresting and useless
- Activities are overlapping with activities of other organisations in the field.
- Activities do not provide expected benefits and impact for stakeholders and impacts are minor or even harmful.
- Content is not credible and relevant.

PESTLE-analysis (figure 3) where P stands for Political, E for Economic, S for Social, T for Technological, L for Legal and E for Environmental, is used for analysing the environment where the organisation is operating in.



Figure 3. PESTLE-analysis on operational environment, Nyyti ry



## 5 Risk analysis

Based on the SWOT and PESTLE analyses, the potential crises and risks associated with Nyyti are divided into three categories: 1) Accidental events or service breaks 2) Crime, hostile or violent acts or threats 3) Risks related to reputation.

### 5.1 Sudden accidental events and service breaks

Sudden accidental events that call for urgent crisis communication are fires at the premises of Nyyti as well as at the landlord's premises and events affecting Nyyti's activities. Sudden accidental events include also theft events in the premises or property of Nyyti as well as events related to telecommunication and information security and an accident on the employee during one's free time or at work and a sudden serious illness or death of an employee. Service breaks are the sudden distribution problems of water, heat, or electricity. (Table 1)

In case of a fire event or at the event occurring at the premises of the landlord information need to be disseminated first internally. Service breaks or interruptions require internal communication about the duration of interruption or disturbance, as well as the ability to work, for example, at a distance. If the events have an impact on the organisation's activities, for example, there are service cuts, then the situation is communicated externally to the stakeholders affected by the event. If events involve injuries or loss of life, it is also necessary to communicate where employees receive mental help and support. In addition, Nyyti's personnel must be instructed to act as desired.

Table 1. Sudden accidental events and service breaks

Sudden accidental events and service breaks	Communication	
	External	Internal
Fire at own or landlord's premises	X	X
Service breaks of water, heat, or electricity at Nyyti's premises	if it affects outwardly visible activity	X
Theft events in the premises or property of Nyyti		X
Events related to telecommunication	if it affects outwardly visible activity	X
Events related to information security	if it affects outwardly visible activity	X
Hazardous material leaking from the landlord's premises which throats into the ventilation or otherwise causes a hazard such as a risk of explosion		X
An accident on an employee during one's free time or at work		X
A sudden serious illness or death of an employee		X

## 5.2 Crimes, hostile or violent acts or threats

Employees may be involved in some sort of hostile or violence-related incident chain or violence can occur, for example, in premises where they are working at that time – for example at a university or polytechnic. Violence can also occur in Nyyti’s own premises. An employee may also be subjected to hostile or intimidating violence. In such situations, employees may experience their own basic security shaky, requiring strong internal communication and measures to increase the sense of security. Nyyti cannot inform any background information of an individual, only the general principles can be dealt with in public. (Table 2)

There may also be hostile or violent acts involving students, the stakeholders of Nyyti. As an example of these kind of events can be considered shooting happening at the premises of learning institutions. In these cases, Nyyti’s communication focuses on disseminating information on where to get help and what each person can do to ensure mental wellbeing of one's friend or loved one as well as one's own mind.

Nyyti as an organization may also be subject to a crime. In this case, crisis communication focuses on internal communication. External communication will be executed only if necessary to revoke rumours and false information, for example.

Table 2. Crimes, hostile or violent acts or threats

Crimes, hostile or violent acts or threats	Communication	
	External	Internal
Employees may be involved in some sort of hostile or violence-related incident chain or violence can occur, for example, at premises where they are working at that time – for example at a university or polytechnic.	X	X
Hostile or violent acts involving students, the stakeholders of Nyyti, for example, shooting happening at the premises of learning institutions.	X	X
Violence occurring at Nyyti’s own premises. An employee is subjected to hostile or intimidating violence.		X
A self-destructive person is involved for example in a chat session.		X
Nyyti as an organization is subject to a crime.	if needed	X

### 5.3 Reputation risks

It is also important to prepare for crises associated with Nyyti's reputation. A reputation related crisis may, for example, originate from dissatisfaction with Nyyti's activity, or it may be generated by an employee, for example, due to an unintentional error, an unjustified statement, dissatisfaction with personnel management solutions or bullying, harassment, or unequal treatment at work. The reputation can also be affected by decisions made by a financier - for example, a sudden reduction in funding or a complete cessation of funding. This group may also include, for example, sudden food poisoning of participants of training organised by Nyyti or several participants becoming ill at the same time. Risks related to reputation are listed more precisely in table 3.

Table 3. Reputation related risks

Reputation related risks	Communication	
	External	Internal
Originating from dissatisfaction with Nyyti's activity or from somebody questioning Nyyti's activities or sayings	X	X
Arsing from event where Nyyti or its employee is subject to unjustified accusations or intimidation	X	X
Generated by an employee, for example, due to an unintentional error or an unjustified statement	X	X
Generated by an employee, for example, due to dissatisfaction with personnel management solutions or bullying, harassment, or unequal treatment at work	X	X
A crime committed by an employee		X
An event that is unjustifiably associated with the activity of Nyyti (e.g. inappropriate behaviour by volunteers)	X	X
A risk caused by a management or communication culture	X	X
Arising from Nyyti being adversely affected by a partner, supplier, or service provider who has been targeted by negative publicity	X	X
Sudden food poisoning of participants of training organised by Nyyti or several participants becoming ill at the same time	X	X
Decisions made by a financier - for example, a sudden reduction in funding or a complete cessation of funding due to which there is not enough resources to maintain activities at the current level or in the current extent	X	X
Risks arising in social media	X	X

The main ways to deal with risks related to reputation is to be transparent and take responsibility. Long-lasting and transparent operations, consistent personnel policy and systematic construction of the employer's reputation will ease reputation management.

Through social media, rumours and false perceptions may reach large audiences quickly. In this case, the significance of the facts is emphasized.

#### 5.4 Magnitude and likelihood of risks

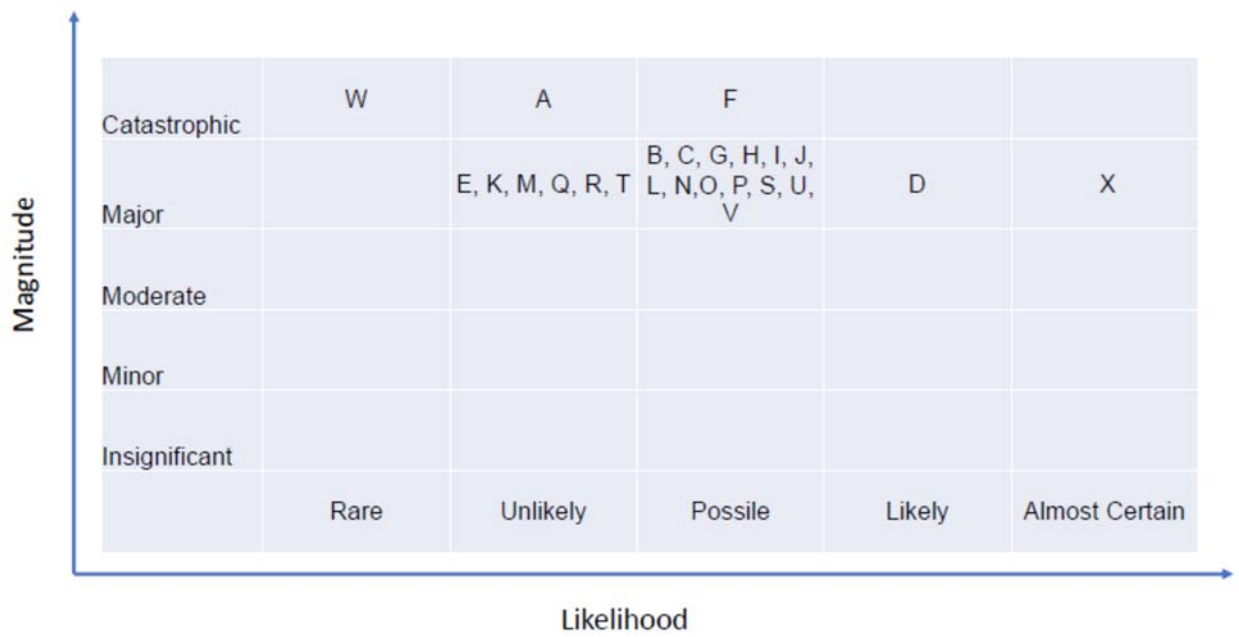
The following is an assessment of the importance and probability of risks. The risks described in table 4 are listed in table 5 on the basis of their magnitude and likelihood.

Table 4. Types of risks

Code	Type of risk	Code	Type of risk
A	Fire at own or landlord's premises	M	Nyyti as an organization is subject to a crime
B	Service breaks of water, heat, or electricity at Nyyti's premises	N	A reputation related crisis originating from dissatisfaction with Nyyti's activity or from somebody questioning Nyyti's activities or sayings
C	Theft events in the premises or property of Nyyti	O	A reputation risk arising from even where Nyyti or its employee is subject to unjustified accusations or intimidation
D	Events related to telecommunication	P	A reputation risk generated by an employee, for example, due to an unintentional error or an unjustified statement
E	Events related to information security	Q	A reputation risk generated by an employee, for example, due to dissatisfaction with personnel management solutions or bullying, harassment, or unequal treatment at work
F	Hazardous material leaking from the landlord's premises which throats into the ventilation or otherwise causes a hazard such as a risk of explosion	R	A reputation risk caused by a crime committed by an employee
G	An accident on an employee during one's freetime or at work	S	An event that is unjustifiably associated with the activities of Nyyti (e.g. inappropriate behavior by volunteers)
H	A sudden serious illness or death of an employee	T	A risk caused by a management or communication culture
I	Employees may be involved in some sort of hostile or violence-related incident chain or violence can occur, for example, at premises where they are working at that time – for example at a university or polytechnic.	U	A reputation risk arising from Nyyti being adversely affected by a partner, supplier, or service provider who has been targeted by negative publicity
J	Hostile or violent acts involving students, the stakeholders of Nyyti, for example, shooting happening at the premises of learning institutions.	V	A reputation risk caused by sudden food poisoning of participants of training organised by Nyyti or several participants becoming ill at the same time
K	Violence occurring at Nyyti's own premises. An employee is subjected to hostile or intimidating violence.	W	Decisions made by a financier - for example, a sudden reduction in funding or a complete cessation of funding due to which there is not enough resources to maintain activities at the current level or in the current extent
L	A self-destructive person is involved for example in a chat session.	X	Risks arising in social media

Table 5.

Risk types according to magnitude and likelihood



Problems/crises arising in social media are seen to emerge almost certainly and are considered major of their magnitude. Telecommunications disruptions are seen likely and major. Most of the risks are seen as possible and important. Unlikely, but catastrophic, is seen fire at own premises. There are many risks which are seen unlikely, but major. Financial problems are seen as rare, but if occurring, they will be catastrophic.

## **6 Post-crisis activities and monitoring**

Crisis communications need to be continued as long as it is considered that the crisis is over. Post-crisis communication aims at restoring communication to the normal level and to ensure the organisation's reputation and positive image. Social media channels are regularly monitored.

The events will be documented and handled with participants of crisis communication. It is important to consider and document what went well and what could have been done better.

### 4.1.3 Development plan of the brand of Nyyti ry

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(The page numbers mentioned in the table of contents refer to the page numbers of actual crisis communication pla and do not relate to the page numbers of the thesis.)

## Introduction

Nyyti's brand development process is presented in chapter 1. The Brand Analysis is based on the document Rebranding Nyyti ry, which is written by Arja Kero in February. Chapter 2, the Brand Development Plan, discusses how brand implementation should be developed. Proposals for development are also presented in chapter 2. A headline level listing of development proposals can be found in appendix 1.

Nyyti ry (hereinafter Nyyti) was founded 33 years ago in 1984 to offer alternative mental health models for students at the University of Helsinki and to awaken a critical discussion of the prevailing mental health forms. Over the years, the focus has been on face-to-face and online life management skills as well as on group-based activities that promote the wellbeing of the mind. At that time, Nyyti profiled heavily as a spokesman for student events not including any intoxicants as well as an organisation which is only meant for depressed and lonely students.

Today, Nyyti ry is a nationwide and non-profit organisation promoting student mental health. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health supports the organization's operations at Veikkaus' earnings. The purpose and mission of Nyyti's operations is to strengthen students' mental wellbeing and study ability. The vision is to be an impressive and networked student mental health promoter. The guiding values are student focus, openness, and collaboration.

The stakeholders are students, professionals working among students, study communities. At the societal level, Nyyti seeks to influence students' wellbeing and study ability. The focus of activities aimed at students is on online activities that can be implemented in group-based activities that promote mental well-being and the ability to study. For professionals and communities, the focus is on strengthening mental health skills.



# 1 Brand analysis

The development of the organisational image of Nyyti was executed at the first in 2006. At that time, the development of the image of the organisation was more understood as activities executed only through website, so it was decided to renew the web pages. The research, carried out by an external researcher, investigated the functionality of the front page of Nyyti's website, the information value of the customer groupings, the associations generated by the image and colour schemes, and what kind of perception Nyyti's website delivered.

The need for rebranding emerged in 2015 at the time when communication and online services were developed. Students' and professionals' perception and insights about Nyyti, its reputation and visual expression were studied in connection with the development survey of online services in early 2015. In addition, students' perceptions and views were explored in the spring 2005 in a focus group formed from university and university of applied sciences students. As a result of the investigations, it was found that the views of the stakeholders of Nyyti did not match the target image of the organisation and that the visual appearance of the organisation was felt to be old fashion. The visual expression contributed to an incorrect and outdated image of Nyyti.

Based on the surveys made, it was decided to launch a brand development process in the autumn of 2015, when the writer of this development plan was set to lead the process. The main goals of the brand development process were set: 1) Changing the perception related to Nyyti to match the target image 2) Increasing awareness of stakeholders about the brand (Nyyti) and its activities 3) Increasing conspicuousness of Nyyti. The second level goal was to redesign visual look to match the target image. By developing its brand, the organisation also aimed at a clearer and more modern brand that helps stakeholders to find Nyyti.

At the beginning of the process it was stated that the brand is not just a visual image - a logo, a slogan, or anything else of what the organisation can be recognised externally. Visibility is just the brand surface layer. The brand was seen and is still seen as a sum of all the experience, perception and information that stakeholders have about Nyyti and its activities. The most important part of the brand was seen and is still seen to be found at the core of the brand. A brand must have a genuine core and a firm and lasting base. Nyyti's mission, vision, and values are the foundation stones of the brand. In the core is the basic promise of the organisation, that is, why it exists and what benefits it provides. In

addition, at the beginning of the process it was stated that the brand should be visible in all activities, since what we tell = how we work = how we look.

Nyyti's personnel (a total of seven people) were included in the brand development process right from the start. A common start-up meeting for staff was held in December 2015. The purpose of the meeting was to bring the staff to a common starting line. During the event, brand-related issues, such as what is a brand, what does different brand related concepts mean, and what are a brand's tasks. During the event it was also pondered how the organisation's values and strategy are related to the brand and whether the process is only intended to strengthen an existing brand or whether the brand is to be renewed. Brand management was also addressed during the personnel meeting. Based on the made surveys and discussion it was decided that the brand need to be renewed.

The following steps of the development process of a brand where also introduced and discuss during the start-up meeting held with the personnel of Nyyti.

- 1) Decision on the launch of the brand development process and nomination of person responsible for the process
- 2) Target setting
- 3) Current state analysis (self, competitor, and customer analysis)
- 4) Identification of stakeholders
- 5) Defining a brand identity and target image
- 6) Brand positioning and personalisation
- 7) Designing visuals
- 8) Planning of implementation
- 9) Implementation of brand, internally and externally
- 10) Continuous maintenance, monitoring and evaluation of the new brand
  - Surveys and opinion polls
  - Comparing achieved results to objectives
  - Conspicuousness among desired stakeholders

Current state analysis was executed at the beginning of the development process. Current state analysis included customer, competitor and self-analyses. When executing self-analysis the following questions we asked: 'Who are we?', 'What do we stand for?', 'What is our core purpose?', 'What do we do?', 'Whom do we cooperate with?', 'What kind of tone of voice we use? How do we appear to stakeholders? How are we felt by stakeholders?'. When executing current state analysis also feedback received from customer, partners, and other stakeholders as well as the results of surveys executed in 2015 were analysed. The stakeholders of Nyyti were defined next.

The brand identity of Nyyti ry were seen to consists of group of perception – expert, cooperative, positive, supportive, and interesting – perceptions that describe what ba

brand represents and promises to stakeholders. Brand's identity was seen to in the core of the brand. Nyyti's brand promise is *Mental wellbeing for students*. It was desired that there will be a strong link between the brand identity and the brand's values. Nyyti's brand personality brand is youthful, fresh and positive as well as open and easy to approach.

The target image was defined as follows: Nyyti ry is a credible and knowledgeable expert and practitioner of students' mental health who is most accessible to students and is intended for all students / young adults. Nyyti wanted to be remembered and well-known, cooperative, positive, encouraging, and interesting. Perceptions were desired to match what Nyyti is factually doing and how it works.

All information was gathered in a document called Rebranding Nyyti ry by the writer of this development plan in February 2016. The design of new visual identity of Nyyti was based on this document. As stated in the document that simply changing the visual look would not be enough to renew the brand and to guarantee the brand's success. The personnel of Nyyti was seen and is still seen to play a major role in the brand's implementation and success.

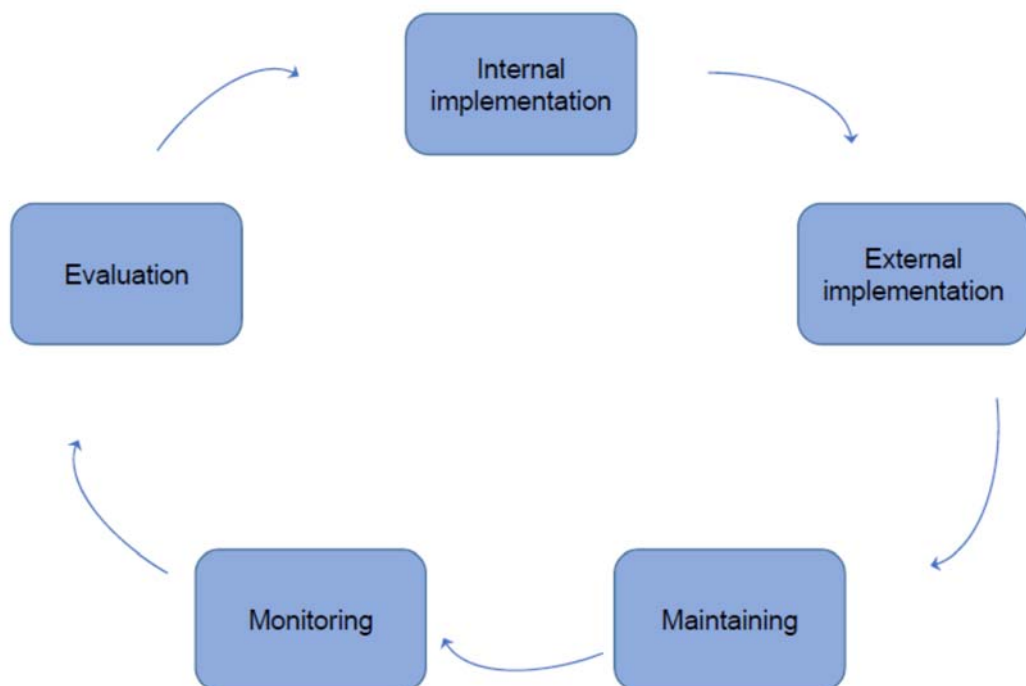


Figure 1. Brand's implementation process

## **Implementation of brand**

Rebranding Nyyti ry -document addressed also implementation of the renewed brand. It was stated that the implementation of the renewed brand must be executed as carefully as the rebranding. It was emphasised that if the organisation wants to succeed in implementation and if it wants the brand to succeed then all activities, including internal and external communication must be coherent and consistent. The implementation process of a brand is described in figure 1.

The implementation of the brand was started from the personnel. A second joint event for the personnel was held in April 2016. The event clarified why and for what Nyyti exists. The objectives of rebranding, brand's tasks were addressed again. The renewed brand and its characteristics as well as the target image were discussed in this second joint event. Internal implementation aimed to direct the organisation's activities to follow the renewed brand comprehensively. Even though the whole process was led and is still led by one person, every employee is considered to be a brand ambassador. Top management of Nyyti is also committed to the renewed brand and supports the implementation of the brand by its own actions.

The renewed brand and new visual appearance were implemented and communicated externally by means of communication in September 2016. External stakeholders were introduced to the brand and to the new visual identity through practical activities.

Communication plays an important role in both implementation of a brand and maintaining a brand. Due to this and for the stakeholders to recognise that messages come from Nyyti communication needs to be coherent and consistent.

## **Maintaining, monitoring, evaluating**

Nyyti as an organisation recognises that brand development is a systematic and long-term process. In Nyyti, brand's development has only just started and much remains to be done. It is also common knowledge that during the brand development process, problems may arise from time to time, so the plan needs to be reviewed constantly and regularly and, if needed, corrective moves need to be executed. Ensuring the brand's continuity has also been taken into account in the development process. Measures taken to maintain the brand need to be continuous and brand-strengthening tasks that aim to keep Nyyti's brand in the consciousness of stakeholders. The main task of the brand evaluation is to provide information on the success and the needs to re-develop the brand.

Careful observance of the brand document and graphic guidelines is important for maintaining the brand. Guidance on the use of the brand and the visual appearance can be used for strengthening the renewed brand. In addition to communication, the personnel of Nyyti is considered to be very concrete and important element when maintaining the new brand. By their actions, the employees of Nyyti can influence the emergence of perceptions.

Leslie de Chernatony and Susan Segal-Horn (2001, 1101) discuss in their article "The criteria for successful services brands" how critical factors influence the success of a service brand (figure 2).

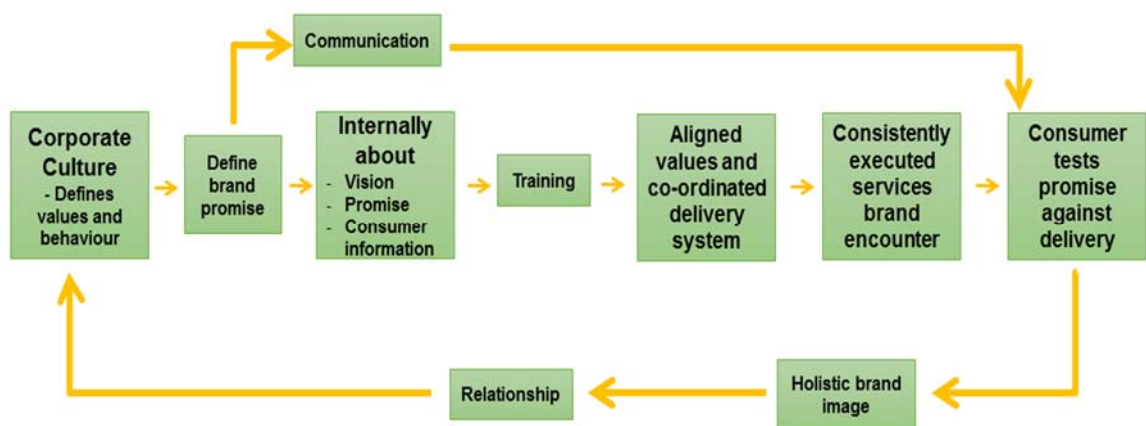


Figure 2. The criteria influencing the success of services brands (adapted from de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2003, 1101)

The process presented in figure 2 is based on a corporate culture which defines core values. According to this model employees can better act as builders of a brand when they are told about the brand promise and the expectations and needs of customers. It is also important to train the employees on brand related issues. (de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2001, 1100-1102.) The brand development process executed in Nyyti ry is very similar to the one shown in figure 2.

## **2 Brand's development plan**

The process of rebranding Nyyti has so far flowed without difficulties. However, at least there exists a need to develop the brand's positioning and personalisation/differentiation, internal and external implementation, maintenance, follow-up, and evaluation.

### **Development Proposal 1: Refining the positioning of the brand**

The brand makes a promise of certain features and these features are associated with brand by positioning. Positioning affects the creation of perceptions in the minds of stakeholders. It was stated in the Rebranding Nyyti ry -document, that Nyyti does not have any real competitors, so the positioning of the brand in relation to competitors was negligible.

However, Nyyti has competition. In the field of mental health, The Finnish Association of Mental Health has been profiled as an expert in mental health issues for people of all ages. It is a strong, old, and well-known brand. Youth Mental Health Association – Yeesi is a lesser known fresh brand, yet it is one of the most important competitors of Nyyti in the field of positive and preventive mental health work.

The positioning of Nyyti's brand in the minds of people should be continued and further refine. When thinking about positioning, it is good to keep in mind what stakeholders consider to be important and what it is that Nyyti can offer to the stakeholders which is who is more valuable than the ones offered by competitors.

### **Development Proposal 2: Improving brand's personalisation/differentiation**

Brand personalization is a tool for positioning. A brand should be attentive and distinctive, remembered, and recognisable. Stakeholders should be able to tell a feature or a characteristic with which Nyyti stands out from its competitors.

Attention should be paid to the personalisation of the brand, because, at present, Nyyti does not yet quite differentiate from its competitors. Nyyti must differentiate its brand from its competitors and thus seek to offer more value to stakeholders than its competitors,

**Development Proposal 3:****Continuing of internal implementation / Training of personnel**

After being “alive” for six months the brand has faced difficulties internally, because the personnel of Nyyti does not follow brand guidelines as such. Since the brand's success is largely attributed to the fact that the personnel performs the brand in all their activities, internal implementation requires continuous and ongoing training of current personnel as well as potential new employees. Brand training should also be provided to the Board of Directors so that the top management of Nyyti can better act as brand ambassadors.

**Development Proposal 4:****Development of communication and brand management plans**

When implementing the new brand externally Nyyti should communicate in a multichannel and unified way of communication according to the values the brand wants to highlight. It is important to use themes and campaigns in the communication. Through them the brand creates credibility in the right group and on the right channel.

It is important that stakeholders know what Nyyti's brand promises, so the organisation should seek to redeem its brand promise. The brand should be able to implement it in all its activities. By redeeming the promise, the loyalty of the stakeholders and their trust in the brand develops and grows. If Nyyti cannot redeem its brand promise, the organisation can lose its credibility very quickly, causing the stakeholders to disappear.

Building a brand requires everyday communication. Important issues for development include visibility and networks to maintain positive publicity. Brand management must be systematic, and the organisation must use different means when striving to stand out from competitors and to seek recognition and desires among the stakeholders.

To guarantee the organised planning and coherent communication, it is proposed to develop and implement a communication plan. In addition, It is also a good idea to set up a brand management plan that takes into account the training of the personnel and how the various activities of the organisation will continue to follow the guidelines of the brand. Due to the scarcity of resources, the management plan should also take into account novel and inventive means of getting attention and maintaining the brand.

**Development Proposal 5:****Monitoring and evaluation of brand's development and success**

The achievement of the target image of the brand and the increase of awareness/conspicuousness should be monitored and evaluated by carrying out a relevant study among stakeholders in autumn 2017. The research should be carried out regularly, e.g. annually. In addition, the organisation will need to collect and analyse received feedback.

It is advisable to check the management plan according to the results of the research and the analysed feedback.



## **5 Conclusions**

The literature review indicates that all organisations whether they are big or small, for-profit or non-profit need to find means to develop and manage their reputation and brand as well as to protect them since it is easier to build and foster reputation and brand than to recover them (see e.g. Roper & Fill 2012, 9; Cornelissen 2014, 42).

As it was discussed in the thesis, the topic for this thesis arose at Nyyti ry after the organisation had gone through major changes which led to rebranding of the organisation. After rebranding the organisation needed to figure out how to implement the new brand and how to increase the awareness of the new brand as well as how to influence the perceptions of stakeholders so that they start to perceive the brand i.e. Nyyti ry and its activities positively and as desired by the organisation. In addition, Nyyti ry needed to figure out how to influence the perceptions of stakeholders so that the gap existing between the views of the stakeholders and the image desired by the organisation is narrowed. The literature indicates that corporate communication plays an important role when an organisation is building, sustaining and protecting its reputation and brand (see e.g. Roper & Fill 2012, 216). The literature also indicates that the means of corporate communication can be used for influencing the perceptions of the stakeholders (see e.g. van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 14; Roper & Fill 2012, 214-216; Podnar 2015, 11). That was also understood by Nyyti ry and because of that this thesis was set out to find out what are the means of corporate communication which can be used for fostering reputation and brand.

The main findings related to each portfolio assignments will be discussed next.

### **5.1 Main findings**

As indicated in the literature, everything what is done in an organisation begins and finishes with communication or can be looked at from the communication point of view (see e.g. Podnar 2015, 3). The literature also indicates that corporate communication surpasses all specialised disciplines of communication and requires that communication is managed with a strategic and integrated approach (see e.g. van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 14, 22; Cornelissen 2014, 4-10). According to Podnar (2015, 9) and Juholin (2013, 137) corporate communication must always be grounded on the organisation's business strategy. To manage corporate communication and to achieve corporate goals and objectives set in the corporate strategy an organisation needs a communication strategy, which support the attainment of corporate goals and helps to achieve the organisation's

vision and fulfil its mission (e.g. Cornelissen 2014, 89-93). The portfolio assignment communication strategy for years 2017-2019 of Nyyti ry is based on the corporate strategy of Nyyti ry and it was formulated for managing corporate communication. The communication goals and objectives mentioned in the communication strategy are derived from the goals and objectives of the corporate strategy and set so that they support the attainment of corporate goals and help to achieve the organisation's vision and fulfil its mission. These ideas and elements of Nyyti ry are very well in line with the ideas and elements indicated in the literature.

The content of Nyyti ry's communication strategy for years 2017-2019 of Nyyti ry follows very well the content of communication strategy aligned by the literature (see e.g. Juholin 2013, 137-140; Ylenius & Keränen 2007, 5-12; Cornelissen 2014, 89-97; Sunimento 11 November 2017; Goodman & Hirsch 2012, 55). In the communication strategy of Nyyti ry stakeholder identification has been executed by using the power-interest matrix introduced by Cornelissen (2014, 50-51). The power-interest matrix was considered to be the most appropriate way for Nyyti ry to identify its stakeholders for communication even the literature indicates several other models for identification of stakeholders (see e.g. Rawlins 2006, 13).

Nyyti ry's communication strategy for years 2017-2019 was first written in English, but since the corporate language of Nyyti ry is Finnish the strategy was written also in Finnish. As indicated in the strategy document the communication strategy was written in December 2016 and implementation was started immediately even the Board of Directors of Nyyti ry accepted the Finnish version of the strategy in Autumn 2017. Top management of Nyyti ry considers the communication strategy to be excellent and supporting very well the achievement of the strategic goals and objectives of the organisation.

As the literature indicates, no organisation can afford to ignore reputation (see e.g. Bernstein 1986, in van Riel & Fombrun 2007, 48). This is even more true now, in today's 24-hour mass media environment, where news and information travel very fast and everything what the organisation does is carefully scanned, and where individuals discuss matters related to an organisation with clear link to the organisation's brand name and where an organisation cannot anymore control communication in the way it once was able to do (see e.g. Roper & Fill 2012, xvii, 5-10, 24). To manage its reputation an organisation needs to be prepared for handling situations threatening its reputation (see e.g. Aula 2009, in Juholin 2013, 233; Roper & Fill 2012, xvii, 10). The literature indicates that to minimise the potential damage an organisation needs to prepare for and foresee potential crises. An organisation needs to compose a crisis management plan which includes all

information needed in managing crises as well as suitable communication strategies for different crisis situations and helps the organisation to meet its stakeholders' expectation and protect the organisation's brand and reputation. The nature of a crisis management plan is communicational i.e. the plan is a communication document. A crisis communication plan forms a significant part of a crisis management plan. (see e.g. Cornelissen 2014, 90-92, 186.) After having the communication strategy, the writer of the thesis understood that the next step in developing communication with focus in fostering reputation and brand of Nyyti ry must be the formulation of crisis communication plan.

The literature indicates that a crisis communication plan includes the elements like current state analysis, risk analysis, key messages, roles and responsibilities and spokespeople, stakeholder analysis, identification of information procedures like validation, consent, and approval, chain of command, identification of procedures how, what, when information is released and who is responsible for releasing information as well as action plan including check list. Also, information on follow up need to be included in a crisis communication plan. (see e.g. Coombs 2015, 91-97; Argenti 2016, 274.) More precise list of various elements to be included in crisis communication plan can be found on pages 22-23 of this thesis. The content of the crisis communication plan of Nyyti ry includes those elements which were the most appropriate for the activities of Nyyti ry and it can be said that it follows well the content aligned by the literature. What left missing was the action plan i.e. the specific communication instructions. In Nyyti ry, the formulation of the crisis communication plan started a process where all risks were analysed and a risk management plan including specific action plans for each risk was formulated. During that process the action plan was attached to the crisis communication plan. The crisis communication plan was first written in Finnish with the permission of the lecturer and then translated for the thesis into English by the writer of the thesis. Top management of Nyyti ry considers the crisis communication plan to be excellent and supporting very well the communication and reputation management of Nyyti ry.

The literature indicates that when managing a corporate brand, the organisation needs to concentrate on improving weak and unsatisfactory areas and misconceptions as well as narrowing the possible gap existing between the views of the organisation and its internal and external stakeholders' perceptions. The gap can be narrowed with a coherent expression of the organisation's identity by the means of communication. (see e.g. Roper & Fill 2012, 31, 129.) The brand's development, the third portfolio assignment of this thesis, consists of the brand analysis and the actual brand's development plan. The brand analysis includes background information and the current state analysis, and the actual

brand's development plan includes five development proposals. The development proposals were formulated on the basis of a gap analysis as indicated in the literature.

The literature indicates that managing corporate brand requires that all employees work together towards common goals and communicate consistently with one tone of voice. Managing corporate brand requires also that the employees understand the meaning and the fundamental nature of the brand and the effect the brand has on the employees' everyday work as well as that the employees understand their responsibility for sustaining the brand. The literature indicates that the way to enhance employees' awareness of these concepts is to train them and communication plays a vital role in harnessing employees to act as brand ambassadors. (see e.g. de Chernatony & Segal-Horn 2003, 1102.) Continuing of internal implementation / training of personnel is one of the development proposals and as indicated by the literature it is very important.

The literature part of the thesis supports very well the empirical part of the thesis i.e. the portfolio assignments: Communication Strategy for 2017-2019, Crisis Communication Plan, Brand's Development Plan. The portfolio assignments answer very well to the research problem since as the literature indicates that

- a communication strategy acts as a strategic means of fostering existing reputation and brand of an organisation (see e.g. Cornelissen 2014, 90-93).
- an organisation can have an impact on its reputation by influencing the perceptions of the stakeholders through communication (see e.g. Griffin 2014, 2-4; Fombrun & Rindova 1998, 205-206).
- an organisation needs to prepare for and foresee potential crises and compose a crisis communication plan to minimise the potential damage to reputation and brand. A crisis communication plan includes all information needed in managing crises as well as suitable communication strategies for different crisis situations and helps the organisation to meet its stakeholders' expectation and protect the organisation's brand and reputation. (see e.g. Cornelissen 2014, 90-92, 186.)
- to manage a corporate brand the organisation needs to concentrate on improving weak and unsatisfactory areas and misconceptions as well as narrowing the possible gaps existing between the organisation's and its internal and external stakeholders' perceptions (see e.g. Roper & Fill 2012, 31, 129).

## **5.2 Development ideas**

The portfolio assignments of this thesis cover the strategic development of reputation, brand and communication and provide the basis for further development. In the future Nyyti ry can concentrate on developing the planning of communication and the content of communication. The development areas include:

- 1) the formulation of annual communication plan
- 2) the formulation of content marketing plan
- 3) the formulation of social media plan

Since the writer of this thesis is responsible for the communication development she will be the one who is responsible for executing all mentioned development process.

### **5.3 Learning outcomes**

The portfolio assignments of the thesis have contributed towards organisational learning in Nyyti ry as well as the writer's personal learning. The writer has experienced the growing demand for corporate communication information during the planning and conducting of the portfolio assignments and the thesis itself. The thesis has contributed significantly to the writer's own professional learning by offering a wider perspective to corporate reputation and reputation management, to corporate branding and brand management as well as to corporate communication and managing corporate communication. During this thesis process the writer has been able to enhance her own knowledge base and understanding of these concepts. The thesis has enhanced the writer's skills and knowledge to plan, execute and develop communication. The writer will continue to work with communication development and will develop Nyyti ry's communication further. The writer believes that the gained knowledge and experience will benefit in her career.

### **5.4 Suggestions for further research**

To develop Nyyti ry's communication further a study on how the stakeholders of Nyyti ry could be engaged in communication cooperation would be interesting to execute. The stakeholders of Nyyti ry include all student unions in Finland and to reach most of the students belonging to Nyyti ry's stakeholders the organisation needs to have communication cooperation with the student unions. The problem which lies with the student unions is that turnover rate of people working for the unions and their Board of Directors is high and it is difficult to engage these persons in cooperation. The purpose of a further study could be to find out how the student unions can be engaged year after year in communication cooperation to disseminate information on mental health and study ability related issues.

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