



**amec**



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**3rd European Summit on Measurement**

# Setting goals and preparing for measurement

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# Barcelona Measurement Principle 1

- “Goal setting and measurement are fundamental aspects of PR programmes”

# Workshop

- The workshop will have an emphasis on:
  - Setting goals and objectives
  - Tenets of measurement and evaluation
  - Basic methodology
  
- 1000 to 1200

# Why plan?

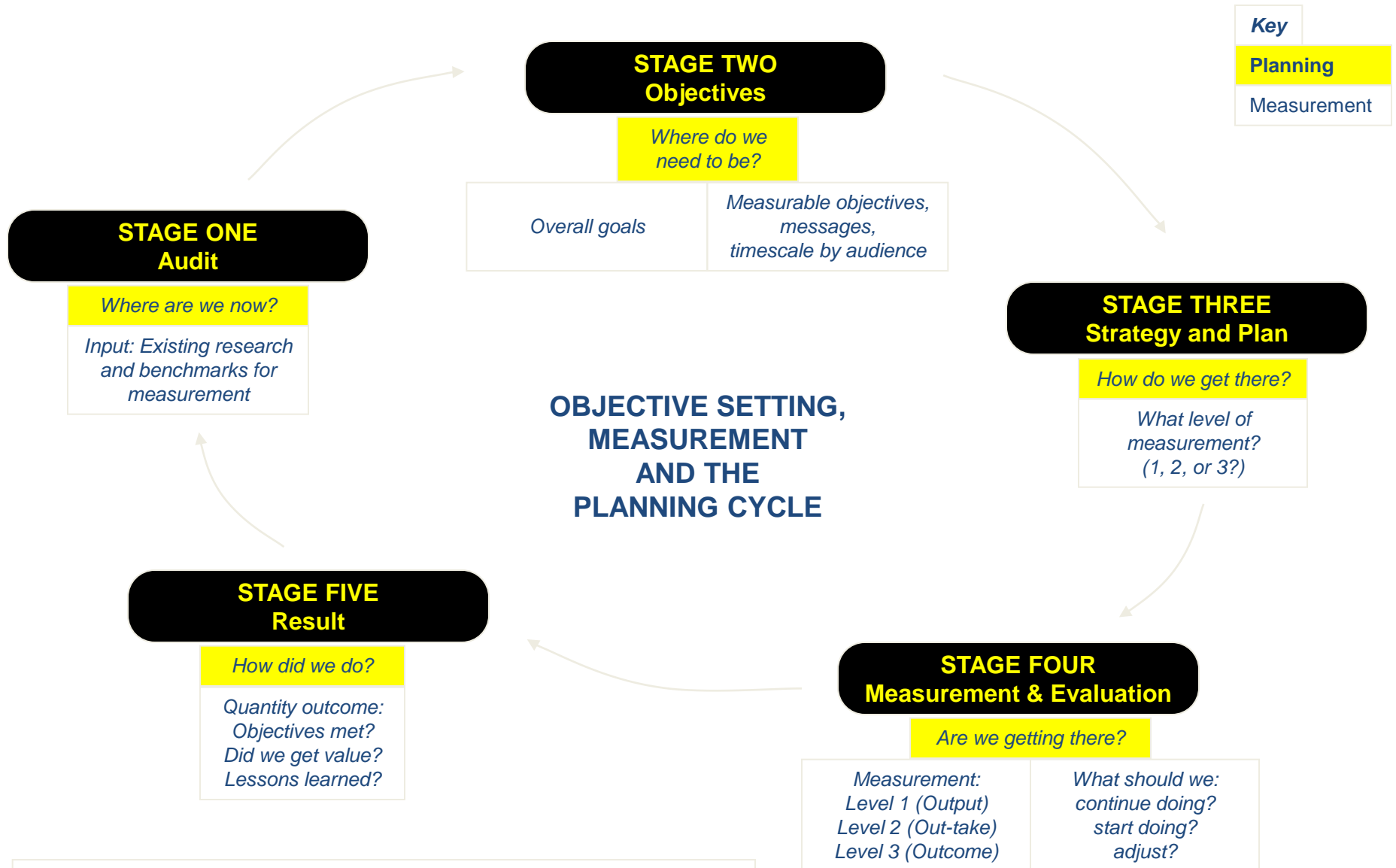
- Focuses effort
- Encourages a long term view
- Assists proactivity
- Improves effectiveness
- Reconciles conflicts
- Minimises mishaps
- Demonstrates VFM

# Planning cycle

1. **Audit** – where are we now?
2. **Objectives** – where do we need to be?
3. **Strategy and Plan** – How do we get there?
4. **Measurement and Evaluation** – Are we getting there?
5. **Result** – How did we do?

Continuous process

# Measurement and evaluation in the planning cycle



Level 1, output – production of public relations effort, for example messages sent  
 Level 2, out-take – understanding, retention of messages by publics  
 Level 3, outcome – the effects on attitudes, opinions and behaviours

# Setting objectives

- Where are we starting from?
- Which audiences to reach?
- What are the messages and channels of communications?
- How do we want audiences to respond?
- When do we need them to react?
- How and what do we measure?

# Objectives into strategy

- Focus to discover answers to key questions
  - ...which result in clear and measurable communications objectives
- Strategy follows on

# Strategy into actions

- What do we know from experience and know-how?
- Test assumptions or messages for clarity (don't trust hunches)
- Pilot questionnaires or campaign ideas
- Study existing media coverage
- Review case studies; experience of others

# Audiences

- Who do you want to reach?
- What actions will you prompt?
- Each audience may need:
  - Different message, response and timetable
- Don't forget secondary audiences
- Assign priorities

# Planning messages

- List them by audience
- Make them as specific as possible
- Be realistic – are they communicable?
- Is the message credible?
- What are the best media or method to carry the message?
- Can message distribution and reception be measured?

# Planning responses

- The *effect* of the message is more important than sending or receiving
- List desired response by audience
- Decide how to measure responses

*Determine desired responses first and devise messages to achieve them*

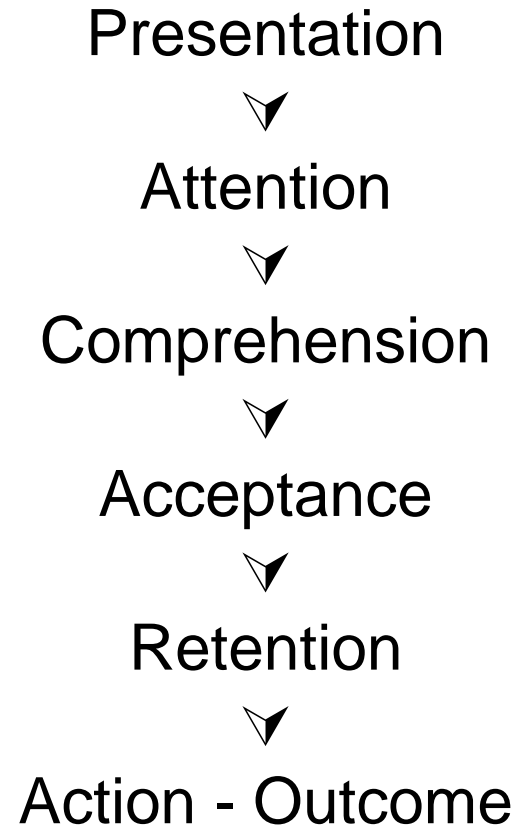
# Changing attitudes

- When do we need people to react? Track attitudes to judge response
- Short-term programme (*available now*) needs different approach to long-term change of attitudes (*relationships*)

# Basics of evaluation

- Psychology of communication
- Evaluation structures and levels (1-3)

# Communications process



McGuire (1984)

# Communication and evaluation

Presentation

**Output (L1)**

Attention

Comprehension

**Out-take (L2)**

Acceptance

Retention

Action

**Outcome (L3)**

Lindenmann 1993

# Levels of evaluation

- Level 1: **Output** – production of public relations effort; e.g. messages sent
- Level 2: **Out-take** – understanding, retention of messages by publics
- Level 3: **Outcome** – the effects on attitudes, opinions and behaviours

# A new Level

- **Outflow** is proposed – “the creation of value by building up reputation, stable relations to important stakeholder, room for manoeuvre and other intangibles”

Zerfass 2005

# What is evaluation?

- “...any and all research designed to determine the relative effectiveness of a public relations program, strategy, or activity, by measuring the outputs and/or outcomes of that PR program against a predetermined set of objectives.”

Walter Lindenmann

# Why evaluate?

- Answer questions like these:
  - Are campaigns having the desired effect?
  - Can we change them “in progress”?
  - What impact is there on consumer and opinion-leader awareness, understanding, retention, attitude and behaviour levels?

# Types of evaluation

- Summative – final impact
- Formative – “in progress” assessment
- Should be integrated into all stages of programs

# What can be measured?

- Message distribution and reception
- Understanding, favourability and acceptance
- Trends
- Success or failure of strategy

# What else?

- Internal
  - Staff attitudes; value of newsletters, video, team briefings
  - SWOT
- External
  - Issues management and prediction
  - Stakeholder attitudes
  - Sponsorship impact

# Evaluating PR

- “PR is concerned with ill-defined problems. It cannot be evaluated by a single method or metric because it does not deal with simple issues ...”
- “Likewise, business in general recognises that a simple, single financial measure does not give an accurate reflection of a company’s true worth.”

Gregory & Watson (2008)

# Problematic

- Measurement and evaluation are difficult in all areas of management. Complexity is a key factor.
- In business, it is difficult to separate out the effect of one area of management, such as public relations, but it is important to do so

## But ...

- PR can be measured and evaluated in terms of:
  - Achievement of programme outcomes
  - The contribution of individual practitioners
  - Contribution to social and economic development and performance
  - Aiding better decision-making and avoidance of mistakes

## More on measures

- Media evaluation (Output)
- Audience/target change in attitudes (Out-take)
- Financial/sales measures (Outcome)
- Achievement of objectives (Outcome)
- Quality of relationships (Outflow)
- Reputation factors (Outflow)

# Techniques

- Media metrics and content analysis
- Quantitative data collection
- Qualitative tracking of attitudes
- Multiple-stakeholder analysis for reputation judgements
- Scorecards

# Basic media evaluation techniques

# Raw material

- Press cuttings
- Broadcast transcripts
- Online reports
- Blogs, wikis, web forums

# Six steps

1. Define objectives
2. Determine criteria
3. Choose a benchmark
4. Select a measurement tool
5. Compare results to objectives
6. Modify campaign

# Define objectives

## **Suggestions:**

- Increased exposure for name or product
- Wider dissemination of messages
- Educate publics
- Generate leads
- Sell product

# Determine criteria

## IMPACT mnemonic

- Influence or tone
- Message communicated
- Prominence
- Audience reached
- Consultant/spokespeople quoted
- Type of article

# Choose a benchmark

## Where to start?

- Quarterly, monthly or weekly repetition
- Daily or weekly in a crisis or highly competitive situation
- Create period-on-period comparisons

# Measurement tools

## Measuring Output

- Volume of cuttings shows *Output*
- Content analysis tracks key messages
- Compare cutting content with targets set
- Read for competitor activity and conflict messages
- Circulation; audience and readership data

# Compare results to objectives

- Compare with objectives
- Are targets being reached?
- Volume does not tell the answer
- Watch for “observer bias”

# Modify campaign

- Use data to modify strategy and tactics
- Aim for weaknesses
- Bolster strengths
- Use competitor or conflict information to create new actions

## Other measures

- Analyse specific reporters or commentators
- Use with relational database/or contact database
- Track issues

## Final thought

- “Get it into the DNA ... make sure every campaign has measurement built into it. Don’t let it go ahead without this, even if the degree of measurement is limited.”

UK consultant Mike Copland