



Enterprise strategy

A concept that explicates corporate communication's strategic contribution at the macro-organisational level

Benita Steyn

*Department of Public Relations Management,
Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, South Africa, and*

Lynne Niemann

Boomtown Communications, Port Elizabeth, South Africa

Abstract

Purpose – This paper seeks to explicate the strategic contribution of the corporate communication/public relations function (PR) to enterprise strategy development at macro-organisational level with the aim of contributing towards its institutionalisation.

Design/methodology/approach – The approach takes the form of a literature review and conceptual analysis, reflective PR paradigm and corporate social performance approach.

Findings – Enterprise strategy is the suggested mechanism and a relevant strategy process for incorporating societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards into the organisation's strategy development processes. Enterprise strategy explicates corporate communication/PR's strategic contribution at the macro-organisational level. Societal expectations, values, standards and norms are expressed through concepts such as CSR, corporate governance, good corporate citizenship, sustainability, and the Triple Bottom Line; manifest through non-legislative measures such as the Global Sullivan Principles of CSR, the Global Reporting Initiative, the Social Responsibility Investment Index of the JSE, as well as voluntary codes such as the Cadbury Report (UK) and the King Reports I, II and III in South Africa (SA); and are addressed through legislative measures such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act (USA) and the Employment Equity/Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment/Financial Intelligence Centre Acts (SA).

Originality/value – This article addresses the dearth of literature on enterprise strategy and corporate communication/PR's strategic role at top management level by conceptualising enterprise strategy and explicating corporate communication's strategic contribution within its framework – indicating corporate communication's focus to be on the social (People) and environmental (Planet) pillars of the Triple Bottom Line approach, rather than its financial aspects (Profit).

Keywords Manufacturing resource planning, Strategic objectives, Stakeholders

Paper type Conceptual paper



Introduction

In the new business paradigm, characterised by a Triple Bottom Line approach to sustainability (economic, social and environmental), organisations are increasingly “regulated” by societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards for good corporate governance and socially responsible/ethical behaviour, rather than only by the law. The “business of business” is no longer business (“Profit”) only and shareholders are no longer the only important stakeholders. In their strategic decision making and behaviour, private and public sector organisations now need to consider the environment (“Planet”) as well as strategic stakeholders such as employees,

customers, regulators, the community, the media, activists and a myriad others (“People”). In this new era, *society* might even be considered the most “strategic” stakeholder.

Organisations of the twenty-first century, whether they be political, social, or economic, are seen as legitimate only when their actions or outputs are “consistent with the value-pattern of society” (Sutton, 1993, p. 3). If society’s evaluation of the appropriateness of an organisation’s activities is indeed the criterion whereby legitimacy is established, then all organisations are dependent on society for legitimisation. Organisations therefore have to consider and adapt to societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards in order to obtain and maintain a good reputation; be regarded as societally (socially, environmentally and economically) responsible, trustworthy, a good (corporate) citizen and thereby secure legitimacy (Steyn, 2003a, 2009, in Toth, 2007).

Problem statement

Few organisational decision makers (especially in the private sector) would disagree that there is an increasing need to incorporate societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards into their organisation’s strategy development processes. Likewise, few corporate communication/PR practitioners or academics would disagree that the strategic role of corporate communication/PR needs to be further explored, especially with regards to its contribution to top-level strategies and key organisational priorities.

As a case in point, the topic of the 2006 Euprera Congress in Carlisle was centred around “Strategic Communication.” The latter was again extensively discussed at the 2008 Euprera Congress in Milan around the topic of “Institutionalising Public Relations and Corporate Communication” – i.e. are its practices and activities standard and generally accepted in organisations (Grunig, 2006). The conclusion was drawn that technical/managerial communication has indeed been “institutionalised”, and that the practice of strategic communication was on the increase in certain countries. However, it was generally felt that the contribution of communication/PR practitioners to organisational strategy formulation/PR’s strategic role is still not fully understood/practised by many nor taught in PR curricula worldwide). This view is supported by Grunig (2006, p. 151) in stating that:

...the greatest challenge for scholars now is to learn how to institutionalize strategic public relations as an ongoing, accepted practice in most organizations.

There are various reasons for, and theoretical/practical problems with regard to, the above, notably the following:

- (1) Which mechanisms/concepts exist or which theoretical guidelines are to be followed to incorporate societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards into strategy development, and what is the relevant strategy process into which they should be incorporated?
- (2) Who is to take responsibility for identifying these societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards, and how is it to be done?
- (3) What are these societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards that are to be incorporated and how do they manifest in practice?

To address these questions, the major research objective of this article is to explore enterprise strategy as a concept that explicates corporate communication's strategic contribution at the macro organisational level. In support of the major objective, the following secondary objectives have been set:

- (1) To explicate the concept of "enterprise" strategy (Ansoff, 1979; Freeman, 1984; Digman, 1990; Judge and Hema, 1994; Hemphill, 1996; Stead and Stead, 2000; Steyn, 2002a, 2003a) as a mechanism/theoretical guideline and a relevant strategy process for incorporating societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards into the organisation's strategy development, in order to achieve the organisation's non-financial goals (Steyn, 2002a, 2003a; Steyn and Bütschi, 2004, 2003; Prinsloo, 2004; Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communication Management, 2005; Worrall, 2005; Steyn (2007), in Toth, 2007; Steyn and Niemann, 2008; Niemann, 2009).
- (2) To explicate how practitioners, playing the role of the corporate communication/PR strategist, can make an important contribution in identifying societal expectations, values, norms and standards as input for the development of enterprise strategy (Steyn, 2000a, b, 2002b, 2003b, 2009; Steyn and Everett, 2009).
- (3) To explore the literature for concepts that could be seen to express/embody current societal expectations, values, standards and norms.
- (4) To explore the literature for guidelines or recommendations (non-legislative measures) as well as laws (legislative measures) that address these expectations, values, standards and norms.

Secondary Objectives 1 and 2 are to be achieved through a conceptual analysis, leaning on the theoretical framework of the study. A conceptual analysis, according to Mouton (1996, p. 175), is:

... the analysis of the meaning of words or concepts through clarification and elaboration of the different dimensions of meaning.

The design is non-empirical, the type of data is secondary textual data and the strengths of this method are to bring conceptual clarity, explicating theoretical linkages and revealing conceptual implications. Secondary Objectives 3 and 4 are to be accomplished through a literature review of secondary data, in this case specifically to come to an understanding (through inductive reasoning) of how societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards manifest in practice.

The concept of enterprise strategy

In the strategy literature, Schendel and Hofer (1979) identified a level of strategy that they called "enterprise" strategy, which directly addresses the relationship of an organisation with society. According to Freeman (1984), questions of enterprise level strategy have a long history, at least as far back as Berle and Means (1932), and perhaps even to Adam Smith (1759). Enterprise strategy is the broadest, overarching level of strategy, and addresses the political and social legitimacy of an organisation (Ansoff, 1977). It is also known as societal role strategy (Freeman, 1984); bridging strategy (Meznar and Nigh, 1995); social strategy (Hemphill, 1996); institutional

strategy (Bowman, 2000); the strategy level that achieves non-financial goals (Steyn and Puth, 2000; Steyn and Niemann, 2008); and top management's orientation toward an organisation's role in society (Ansoff, 1977; Freeman, 1984; Freeman and Gilbert, 1988).

In the public relations literature, the concept of enterprise strategy was introduced as the strategy level at which corporate communication/PR practitioners could or should make a strategic contribution, in Steyn (2000a, 2002a, 2003a, in Toth, 2007, 2009), Steyn and Puth (2000), Steyn and Bütschi (2004), Prinsloo (2004), Worrall (2005), Bütschi and Steyn (2008), Steyn and Niemann (2008), Niemann (2009).

There are at least two separate sets of questions that need to be addressed when formulating a statement of mission for an organisation (Freeman, 1984, p. 88): the first concerns a broad set of issues around values, social issues and stakeholder expectations. This level of analysis Freeman regards as the "enterprise" strategy. The second set of issues address the range of business opportunities available to the organisation and rests on an understanding of how the stakeholders can affect each business area. This level of analysis is usually called the "corporate" strategy. Digman (1990, pp. 36-7) concurs with these views in stating that an enterprise needs:

... [a] clear, unambiguous concept of its mission and purpose – its role in society – to guide formation of corporate policies and strategies in other areas. Thus, the enterprise strategy acts as a framework or envelope within which other, more specific types of strategies will operate.

According to the father of the stakeholder concept (Freeman, 1984), enterprise strategy stems from research on the social responsibility of business and answers the question of what the organisation should do. In part, enterprise strategy represents the moral/ethical component to strategic management (already identified in the 1960s by early researchers, but not acted upon) and joins it with strategic thinking – providing the best reasons for the organisation's actions (Hosmer, 1994):

Corporate strategists have ignored this level of strategic thinking for too long (Freeman, 1984, p. 107).

While the enterprise strategy aligns social and ethical concerns with the corporate strategy (the latter traditionally reflecting business concerns), it is not simply another call for corporate social responsibility or business ethics. Enterprise strategy is important because organisational survival depends in part on some fit between the values of the organisation and its managers, the expectations of its stakeholders, and the societal issues which will determine its ability to sell its products (Freeman, 1984, p. 107; Steyn and Puth, 2000; Steyn, 2003a). Developing enterprise strategy clearly articulates organisational values and helps to ensure that they are in touch with societal and stakeholder expectations and norms.

It is important to note that enterprise level strategy does not necessitate a particular set of values or requires an organisation to be socially responsive in a certain way. It does however require an explicit and intentional attempt to answer the question of "what do we stand for" (Freeman, 1984, pp. 91, 107). The point of enterprise-level strategy is that an organisation needs to address this question intentionally, specifically, and cohesively. Enterprise strategy is thus concerned with the question of "consistency" among the key elements of an organisation's relationship with the environment.

Since enterprise strategy is specifically aimed at aligning organisational behaviour and strategies to changing societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards (Steyn, 2002a, 2003a, in Toth, 2007), it can be described as a “bridging” strategy which focuses on adapting organisational activities to conform with external expectations. Bridging implies that the organisation actively tries to meet and exceed regulatory requirements in its sector or that it attempts to rapidly identify changing societal/social expectations so as to promote organisational conformance to those expectations in order to minimize the risk to its reputation. In bridging, organisations promote internal adaptation to changing external circumstances (Fennell and Alexander, 1987; Grunig, 2006).

Bridging stands in contrast to “buffering” – a strategy in which the organisation tries to influence the external environment and keep it from interfering with internal operations. Buffering implies that an organisation is trying either to insulate itself from external interference or to actively influence its environment through means such as contributions to political action committees, lobbying, and advocacy advertising. By buffering, an organisation thus resists environmental change or tries to control it (Fennell and Alexander, 1987; Grunig, 2006).

Strategic management researchers (Ansoff, 1977; Schendel and Hofer, 1979) and scholars of business and society (Freeman, 1984; Miles, 1987) have argued that the values of top managers play an important role in determining the attitude of an organisation toward external stakeholders. Enterprise strategy, as top management’s orientation toward an organisation’s role in society, can be conceptualised as having two components (Meznar *et al.*, 1991). The first is the degree to which the organisation’s top management emphasises collaboration with external groups (Miles, 1987), and the second is the degree to which it has a philosophy of being a pioneer or leader in meeting societal/social expectations.

The corporate communication/PR/public affairs activities of organisations whose (top) managers have a collaborative, socially pioneering philosophy are expected to differ from those of other organisations. Top managers interested in achieving organisational legitimacy through collaboration with multiple external stakeholder groups would naturally be more willing to bring about internal changes (that is, to adapt and bridge) in making the compromises necessary for effective collaboration. Therefore, collaboration – an “institution-orientated” philosophy (Miles, 1987) – is in essence a bridging mechanism, used as a means of securing legitimacy in the eyes of stakeholders and society as a whole. If top management follows the philosophy of being a pioneer in social matters, bridging is likely to be emphasised as it requires continual interaction with social groups in order to take the initiative on, and comply with, expectations regarding emerging issues (Meznar and Nigh, 1995, pp. 975-97).

Although enterprise strategy is often not formally stated in organisations, it exists nevertheless. It manifests by way of mission/vision statements, codes of conduct/ethics, approach to stakeholders (Ansoff, 1977); multi-stakeholder dialogue, ethical conduct, broader value orientations, symmetrical communication (Holmström, 2002, p. 9); committees on social audits, corporate philanthropy, ethics and public issues (Carroll, 1996); partnerships and alliances (Hemphill, 1996). It also manifests in how an organisation responds when faced with public crises. Whether it responds to stakeholders in a positive, constructive, and sensitive way reveals the presence or absence of soundly developed enterprise-level strategy. The latter can also express a

desire to maximise shareholder value, satisfy stakeholder interests, and increase social harmony or the common good (Freeman, 1984).

Stead and Stead (2000, p. 310) extended the scope of enterprise strategy to the ecological level of analysis, calling it “eco-enterprise” strategy. This provides a sound theoretical framework for ethically and strategically accounting for the ultimate stakeholder, which is “Planet Earth”. Within the framework of enterprise strategy, a value system based on sustainability can provide a sound ethical basis for developing ecologically sensitive strategic management strategies. In doing so, organisations are able to satisfy the demands of a myriad stakeholders for whom the protection of the environment is critical. In a recent survey by McKinsey & Co., CEOs identified increasing environmental concerns as the most important trend influencing societal expectations of business (Bielak *et al.*, 2007). The research also indicated that CEOs were increasingly incorporating environmental, social and governance issues into core organisational strategies.

Based on the literature review, the researchers summarised the characteristics of enterprise strategy in Table I.

To conclude: At the enterprise/institutional level, the organisation’s values are to be determined, its reputation managed, sound corporate governance principles adopted, and societal responsibilities fulfilled. This ultimately leads to the organisation being trusted by its stakeholders and regarded as sustainable, legitimate, and societally responsible by society at large (Steyn, 2003a). The enterprise strategy is thus developed mainly to achieve the organisation’s non-financial goals (Steyn and Puth, 2000, p. 42; Steyn, 2002a, 2003a, in Toth, 2007).

The conceptualisation of enterprise strategy achieved Secondary Research Objective 1.

Meta-theoretical framework and conceptualisation of study

As summarised in Table II, the meta-theoretical framework for this study spans three domains: strategic management, business in society and corporate communication/PR. The framework has been constructed based on two approaches: first, the corporate social performance (CSP) approach to business and society, and second, the reflective paradigm.

Corporate Social Performance (CSP) approach to the role of business in society

Organisations must advance the common good, and minimise the social and environmental side effects of their strategies and policies, or their licence to operate will be removed (Valor, 2005, pp. 194-201). The CSP approach to the role of business in society developed from the trend through the 1980s and 1990s to make concerns for social and ethical issues more pragmatic. What is really important in this approach is what organisations are able to accomplish with regard to specifying the nature of their responsibilities, adopting a particular philosophy of responsiveness and identifying the stakeholder issues to which these responsibilities are tied (Carroll, 1996; Steyn, 2003a). CSP is seen by Husted (2000, pp. 24-33) as the extent to which stakeholder [and societal] expectations with regards to the organisation’s behaviour towards relevant stakeholders (including managers) and societal groups are satisfied or exceeded.

Levels of strategy formulation. This theory refers to the content of strategies addressed at different organisational levels (Lynch, 1997). Strategy engages all levels

Characteristic	Enterprise strategy
Responsibility of ^a	Top management (Ansoff, 1977); Board of directors (Ansoff, 1977; Steyn and Puth, 2000); Corporate communication strategist (Steyn, 2003a, p. 20) ^a
Component of	The environment to which an organisation adds value (stakeholders) The type of value an organisation adds (benefits) (Meznar <i>et al.</i> , 1991, p. 52)
Directly related to	The role of the organisation in society The principles/values of the organisation The obligations the organisation has towards society at large The implications thereof for current business and allocation of resources (Freeman, 1984)
Goals to be achieved ^a	Non-financial goals, including the attainment of legitimacy, trust, a good corporate reputation, being viewed as a good corporate citizen, and the maintenance of sound relationships/partnerships with government and other stakeholders (Steyn, 2003a) ^a Economic, social and environmental sustainability (Steyn, in Toth, 2007) ^a Long-term social goals, not short-term economic gains (Post <i>et al.</i> , 1999, p. 16) ^a The ultimate goal is to enhance the quality of life (defined by society) in the broadest possible manner (Post <i>et al.</i> , 1999, p. 10) ^a The value of the social goods the organisation adds to its environment is to exceed the social costs it imposes on society (Meznar <i>et al.</i> , 1991, p. 50) ^a
How it is described	A social contract which implies an understanding between organisations and stakeholders as to how they will act towards each other (Post <i>et al.</i> , 1999, p. 15)
Content or focus of strategy ^a	Outlines the organisation's mission/purpose in society (Ansoff, 1977) ^a Addresses organisation's relationship with the natural environment (Shrivastava, 1995, p. 133) ^a Represents organisation's approach to managing its stakeholders (Stead and Stead, 2000, p. 311) ^a Focuses on social/environmental/economic component of the Triple Bottom Line (Ansoff, 1977) ^a The acknowledgement of stakeholder relationships, dealing with the impact of organisational decision making and responding to stakeholders who are touched by the organisation's activities (Post <i>et al.</i> , 1999, p. 15) ^a Addresses the political and social legitimacy of the organisation (Ansoff, 1977) ^a Manifests by way of mission statements, codes of conduct, approach to stakeholders (Ansoff, 1977), partnerships and alliances (Hemphill, 1996) ^a Concerned with aligning organisational behaviour and strategies to societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms, and standards (Steyn, 2003a) ^a Aims to synchronise the values of the organisation and its leaders; the expectations of customers, shareholders, regulators, employees, the media and other strategic stakeholders; and the societal issues that will determine the ability of the organisation to achieve its mission (Stead and Stead, 2000, p. 317) ^a
Criteria measuring effectiveness	Its impact on the long-term survival (sustainability) and performance of the organisation (Meznar <i>et al.</i> , 1991, p. 48)

Table I.
Characteristics of
enterprise strategy

(continued)

Characteristic	Enterprise strategy
How it emerges	Through the interaction of three factors: the values that underpin the organisation's ethical system; the societal issues faced by the organisation; and the stakeholders that the organisation serves (Stead and Stead, 2000, p. 324)
Outcomes	The organisation is regarded as being legitimate and trustworthy by stakeholders and society at large (Stead and Stead, 2000, p. 319) Provides link between social issues management and strategic management (Freeman, 1984) A shared interest and interdependence between the organisation and its stakeholders (Post <i>et al.</i> , 1999, p. 7)
Information sought	Social intelligence (Ansoff, 1977; Prinsloo, 2004) An understanding of the interrelated social, economic, political and cultural trends in society (Post, Lawrence and Weber, 1999, p. 17)
Stakeholders addressed ^a	Non-financial stakeholders including government and regulators, activists, the media, the community and society at large (Ansoff, 1977) ^a Employees, shareholders, suppliers, wholesalers/retailers, unions, competitors and creditors (Post <i>et al.</i> , 1999, p. 10) ^a

Source: Own research, except for ^a Worrall's contribution (2005, p. 14)

Table I.

(enterprise, corporate, business, functional and operational) and defines the nature of the economic and non-economic contributions the organisation intends to make to its stakeholders and society (Hax and Majluf, 1991, p. 8). The broadest (highest) level is enterprise or societal role strategy, developed to achieve non-financial goals such as a good reputation and set the tone with regards to stakeholder relationships. It differs substantially from corporate strategy, which defines the set of businesses that should form the business organisation's overall profile (e.g. taking decisions on mergers and acquisitions, strategic alliances, joint ventures), selecting tactics for diversification and growth, and managing corporate resources and capabilities (Harrison and St John, 1998, p. 170).

Corporate social performance (CSP) theory. There are three concepts that define this theory: the principles of corporate social responsibility (legitimacy, public responsibility and managerial discretion), implemented through the processes of corporate social responsiveness (environmental assessment, stakeholder management and issues management) and culminating in the outcomes of corporate behaviour – referring to its social impacts, programmes and policies (Wood, 1991, pp. 696-708).

This theory is core to enterprise strategy development since strategy at the societal level is ultimately aimed at achieving organisational legitimacy amongst societal stakeholders and interest groups, being seen as socially responsible and a good corporate citizen. In achieving the aims for which enterprise strategy is developed, managers need to exercise discretion in their dealings with stakeholders – acting truthfully, honestly and ethically. The social responsibility principles and social responsiveness processes are underpinned by good corporate governance practices to assure outcomes such as social, environmental and economic sustainability (closely related to the three pillars of the Triple Bottom Line, namely *People, Planet and Profit*).

Table II.
Meta-theoretical,
theoretical and
conceptual framework

Meta-theoretical framework Domain	Corporate Social Performance (CSP) approach Strategic management	Business and Society	Reflective paradigm Corporate communication/public relations
Theoretical framework	<p><i>Levels of strategy formulation</i> (Lynch, 1997):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise strategy • Corporate strategy • Business-unit strategy • Functional strategy • Operational strategy 	<p><i>Corporate social performance</i> (Wood, 1991)</p> <p>Principles of CSR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legitimacy (institutional) • Public responsibility (organisational) • Managerial discretion (individual) <p>Corporate social responsiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental scanning • Stakeholder management • Issues management <p>Outcomes of CSP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social impacts • Programmes • Policies 	<p><i>Mutual reflection</i> (Holmström, 1996):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective task • Expressive task <p><i>European Body of Knowledge (EBOK's) four roles</i> (Verçic et al., 2001):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflective role • Managerial role • Operational role • Educational role <p><i>Strategic communication roles theory</i> (Steyn, 2000b, 2003b, Steyn and Puth, 2000):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategist role • Manager role • Technician role <p><i>Levels of strategy formulation</i> (Steyn, 2000a, 2003a, 2003b; Steyn, in Toth, 2007; Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communication Management, 2005):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate communication's contribution to enterprise strategy development • Corporate communication strategy development <p>Corporate communication's strategic contribution (to enterprise strategy development):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of the corporate communication strategist
Main concepts	Enterprise strategy (see Table I)		

Source: Own research

The reflective paradigm

In a reflective approach (Holmström, 1996), a social system (e.g. an organisation) assesses itself in relation to other social systems based on societal expectations, values and norms – for instance, the guidelines/recommendations of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI, 2002) or the King II or III Reports on Corporate Governance in South Africa (IOD, 2002, 2009). It then responds by developing restrictions and coordinating mechanisms in decision-making processes with regards to other social systems (Luhmann, 1995, p. 144).

In practising a reflective approach, the interdependence between social systems (e.g. organisations and their stakeholder/societal environments) is exposed. This leads to the incorporation of non-financial aspects (e.g. the environment, human rights, social responsibility and sustainability), into decision making. According to Verçiç *et al.* (2001), reflective corporate communication/PR is a strategic process of viewing an organisation from an “outside” or public perspective – having a special concern for broader societal issues. Practitioners thus approach any problem with a concern for implications of organisational behaviour/strategies towards the public sphere (society/community).

Theories most relevant to this study, that fall under this approach, are the following.

Mutual reflection. Mutual reflection, the core concept of the reflective paradigm, consists of a reflective and expressive task. Of particular relevance to this study is the reflective task, namely to gather and analyse information from the environment to feed back into the organisation in order to strengthen its self-reflection. The specific task of corporate communication in inward communication (the reflective task) is to select and interpret information from the public communication system (societal discourse) in view of socially responsible behaviour in the public sphere (society) and convey it back to the organisation (Holmström, 1996).

European roles theory. The findings of the European Body of Knowledge (EBOK) project indicate four corporate communication roles (Verçiç *et al.*, 2001): reflective, managerial, operational and educational. The most important is the reflective role, which is to analyse changing societal standards, values and viewpoints and discuss these with organisational members in order to adjust organisational values and norms regarding social responsibility and legitimacy.

Strategic corporate communication roles theory. This theory posits three roles for corporate communication namely strategist, manager and technician (Steyn, 2000a, b, 2003b; Steyn and Puth, 2000). Of relevance to this study is the strategist, operating at the macro organisational level and performing the boundary-spanning role of information acquisition on stakeholders and societal issues through environmental scanning in the stakeholder and societal environment. Steyn (2000a, b) regards this as the mirror function of corporate communication, found to be similar to the reflective role by Steyn and Bütschi (2003). The strategist processes the information gathered by considering its consequences for the organisation’s stakeholders and strategies, feeds this social and environmental intelligence into the organisation’s strategy development processes, and ensures that it is used by taking an active part in enterprise strategy development.

Corporate communication’s contribution to enterprise strategy development. Based on the information gathered on societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards, and playing the role of objective outsider, the corporate communication

strategist advises top management on the risks to reputation, their consequences for organisational strategies and the necessity to align organisational goals and strategies to societal and stakeholder values and norms. The strategist suggests the most appropriate actions to take with regards to stakeholders and societal issue groups in order to be socially and environmentally responsible, obtain/maintain a good reputation and license to operate from society (Steyn, 2000a, 2003a, b; Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communication Management, 2005). This process constitutes the contribution of the corporate communication function to the organisation's strategic decision making, specifically the development of enterprise strategy (Steyn, in Toth, 2007). Based on, and aligned to the enterprise strategy, corporate communication strategy is developed to achieve communication goals and identify communication themes.

This section explicated how practitioners, playing the role of the corporate communication/PR strategist, can make an important contribution in identifying societal expectations, values, norms and standards as input for the development of enterprise strategy. It concludes the discussion on how the foundations of the major concepts are anchored in the meta-theoretical framework of the study, achieving Secondary Research Objective 2. In the next section, concepts that express/embody societal expectations, values, norms and standards are identified through a literature review.

Concepts expressing/embodying societal expectations, values, standards and norms

According to Wheeler and Sillanpää (1998, p. 205), stakeholder and societal interests and concerns are more effectively articulated in this new business era than at any time since the dawn of the free enterprise system. This is due in part to the upsurge in active citizenship (embracing shareholder activism and green consumerism), technological progress (access to the internet, fragmentation of print and broadcast media), and global economic and political trends (*Strategic Direction*, 2005, p. 24).

This broader societal perspective manifests itself in modern organisations in the form of multi-stakeholder dialogue, ethical conduct, broader value orientations, the Triple Bottom Line approach, symmetrical communication (Holmström, 2002, p. 9), and an increasing emphasis on sustainability. It includes non-financial aspects formerly considered as exterior to the boundaries of business organisations, but now placed at the top of the corporate agenda. Some of the most important non-financial concepts that represent societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards in the South African environment (as identified in the literature) are now briefly defined.

Corporate social responsibility

In order for organisations to meet stakeholder and societal expectations, values, norms and standards, they have to conduct themselves in a socially responsible manner towards the environment and also towards their stakeholders and society at large. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is defined by Davis and Blomstrom (1996) (in Carroll, 1996, p. 34) as "the obligation of decision makers to take actions which protect and improve the welfare of society as a whole along with their own interests". Business and society is increasingly seen to be interwoven and interdependent instead of distinct entities.

Corporate governance

The King II Report published in SA defines corporate governance as the building of a balance between economic and social goals, and between individuals and communal goals – the aim being to align as closely as possible the interest of individuals, organisations and society (IOD, 2002). In the traditional narrow sense, corporate governance refers to the formal system of accountability of the board of directors to shareholders (a more financially oriented perspective). In its broadest sense, corporate governance refers to the informal and formal relationships between the organisation and its stakeholders; and the impact of the organisation on society in general (including non-financial aspects) (Ehlers and Lazenby, 2004).

Good corporate citizenship

Maignan and Ferrell (2000, p. 284) define corporate citizenship as the extent to which business organisations meet the social, economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibilities and expectations imposed on them by their stakeholders and other societal groups.

Sustainability

Dyllick and Hockerts (2002, p. 131) define organisational sustainability as meeting the needs and expectations of an organisation's direct and indirect stakeholders (such as shareholders, employees, customers, pressure groups and communities) without compromising its ability to meet the needs of future stakeholders. Group 100 (2003, p. 12) defines sustainability as corporate communication with stakeholders that describes the organisation's approach to managing one or more of the economic, environmental and/or social dimensions of its activities and providing information on these dimensions.

An important departure point of sustainability is the realisation that a single-minded focus on economic sustainability alone can only succeed in the short run. In the long term, sustainability requires that three dimensions (economic, environmental and social) be satisfied simultaneously (Gladwin *et al.*, 1995, p. 876). To ensure sustainability, organisations need to consider how their strategies impact not only on their financial performance, but also wider economic systems, the environment and the national and international communities in which they operate, and how all of these are interlinked (Ehlers and Lazenby, 2004, p. 45).

Triple bottom line

Traditionally, organisations were only expected or required by law to report on financial or economic matters. In line with the drive towards corporate governance worldwide, there is a move from this single bottom line to a Triple Bottom Line approach (Ehlers and Lazenby, 2004, p. 45). A narrow view of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) is a framework for measuring and reporting corporate performance against economic, social and environmental parameters. Taking a broad view, the TBL is an approach to decision making that captures the whole set of values, ethics, societal expectations, issues and processes that organisations must address in order to minimise any harm resulting from their activities – thereby creating economic, social and environmental value (SustainAbility, 2007).

This discussion outlined some of the most important non-financial concepts that represent societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards in the SA environment – achieving Secondary Research Objective 3. The next section of the literature review highlights some of the measures (grounded in, and resulting from societal expectations and values) that increasingly guide and impact on organisational strategies and behaviour.

Non-legislative and legislative measures that address societal expectations, values, norms and standards

The concept of enterprise strategy is now explored in relation to current societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards as reflected/addressed by non-legislative and legislative measures which impact upon the decision making of organisations in the SA environment.

Non-legislative measures

The Sullivan principles. In 1970, after SA was ejected from the United Nations (UN) for its apartheid policies, Reverend Leon Sullivan proposed that all US companies apply a set of minimum standards when dealing with SA operations. The Sullivan Principles, which outlined eight principles of social responsibility, was a voluntary code of conduct that provided a framework to which socially responsible organisations could be aligned. These standards were formalised in 1977. In 1999, Reverend Sullivan, together with the UN Secretary General, Kofi Anan, launched the Global Sullivan Principles of Corporate Social Responsibility (The Sullivan Foundation, 2005).

Reporting frameworks. One of the most important frameworks is the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), to which some 800 organisations subscribe globally. It was launched in 1997 as a joint venture between the US Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies and the UN Environment Programme (GRI, 2002). The goal was to enhance the quality, rigour and utility of sustainability reporting and to assist reporting organisations and their stakeholders in articulating and understanding the contributions made to sustainable development.

The Social Responsibility Investment (SRI) Index is another framework, launched in SA as a means to identify organisations listed on the Johannesburg Securities Exchange (now JSE Limited) that integrate the principles of the Triple Bottom Line into their business activities (JSE SRI, 2005, p. 2). Both the GRI and SRI frameworks are of a voluntary nature.

Regulations, codes of conduct or recommendations. In most cases, non-legislative measures are the result of long-standing societal expectations for organisational conduct (until they are eventually embodied in a formal code or recommendation). By adhering to voluntary codes or regulations, an organisation is able to secure its long-term sustainability and be regarded as a responsible global citizen that responds to the needs of its stakeholders and society. Explored in this study were *inter alia* the International Convergence of Capital Measurement and Capital Standards, the Turnbull Guidance (2005) in the UK, the *Code of Banking Practice* (2004) in SA and the Cadbury Report of 1992 in the UK. The latter was the first in-depth statement on corporate governance and a model for sound practice worldwide (Cadbury, 2000, p. 7).

In 1994, the King I Report in South Africa incorporated a code of corporate practice and conduct that went beyond the corporation and its financial matters, taking into

account its impact on the larger community. In 2002 and 2009, the King II and III Reports took the inclusive approach to business even further. Its premises are that there are increasing expectations for organisations to operate as good corporate/global citizens, due in part to the influence they have on the environment and the lives of a myriad stakeholders on whom they depend for the goodwill to sustain their operations and maintain their “license to operate” (Barrier, 2003; IOD, 2002, 2009).

The above mentioned (voluntary) codes were instituted partly due to public or market pressure which requires organisations to adhere to the expectations, values, standards and norms of society, or to take account of threatening market conditions.

Legislative measures

Laws are the result of society’s attempt to formalise societal expectations and ideas about what constitutes right and wrong conduct in various spheres of life (Post *et al.*, 1999, p. 113). The following legislative measures were explored in this study:

Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002. This US federal law was passed in response to major corporate and accounting scandals such as Enron, which led to a decline of public trust in accounting and reporting practices (Wikipedia, 2006).

Employment Equity Act No. 55 of 1998. Addressing the inequalities of the apartheid era in South Africa, this Act required all enterprises employing more than 50 employees to take affirmative action in order to bring about a representative spread of designated groups in all occupations and organisational levels (RSA, 1998). On its successful implementation, the SA Government proceeded to implement what is known locally as BEE (DTI, 2003).

BEE (the Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003). This law is defined by the SA Government as an integrated and coherent socio-economic process that directly contributes to the economic transformation of SA and brings about significant increases in the numbers of black people that manage, own and control the country’s economy, and significant decreases in income inequalities (RSA, 2004).

The Financial Intelligence Centre Act of 2001 (FICA). This Act is intended to ensure the sound health of SA’s financial system by preventing it from being contaminated and undermined by an influx of money derived from criminal activities (2004/2005).

To conclude: Society exerts pressure on governments and other regulating bodies to develop measures to force business and other organisations to meet societal expectations, values, standards and norms. In turn, the government or regulating bodies develop legislation, or codes of conduct/charters/recommendations to meet these expectations. Business and other organisations take into account, adhere to or incorporate these non-legislative or legislative measures in their strategy development processes at the enterprise, corporate and other strategy levels.

The foregoing discussion on non-legislative and legislative measures that reflect/address societal expectations, values, norms and standards achieves Secondary Research Objective 4.

Explicating corporate communication’s strategic role through its contribution to enterprise strategy development

The discussion on the achievement of the major objective of the study is based on the conceptualisation of enterprise strategy and the theoretical framework outlined in previous sections.

The strategic contribution of corporate communication/PR to enterprise strategy development (as embodied in the role of the strategist) is grounded in the reflective paradigm. A major assumption of this approach is that a social system (e.g. an organisation) assesses itself in relation to other social systems based on societal expectations, values and norms (that are expressed in guidelines/recommendations such as the GRI or the King II and III Reports on Corporate Governance in SA). The organisation then responds by developing restrictions and coordinating mechanisms in its decision-making processes with regards to other organisations/institutions. This leads to the incorporation of non-financial aspects into (enterprise) strategy development. The reflective task/role of corporate communication is thus to view the organisation from an “outside” or societal perspective – showing a special concern for broader societal issues. This manifests through inward communication after gathering, analysing and interpreting information from the environment (societal discourse) with regard to socially responsible behaviour and legitimacy, and feeding it back into the organisation in order to strengthen its self-reflection and adapt accordingly (the outcome of the processes of environmental scanning, stakeholder and issues management).

The reflective task is similar to the role of the corporate communication strategist, who performs the mirror function of corporate communication on the macro organisational level by acquiring information on stakeholders and societal issues; processing the information gathered by considering its consequences for the organisation’s stakeholders and strategies; and feeding this social and environmental intelligence into the organisation’s enterprise strategy development process. By playing the role of objective outsider, the strategist advises top management on the risks to the organisation’s reputation, the consequences for organisational strategies and the necessity to align organisational goals and strategies to societal/stakeholder values and norms. The strategist suggests the most appropriate actions to take with regards to stakeholders and societal issue groups in order to be socially and environmentally responsible, obtain/maintain a good reputation and a license to operate from society. This process constitutes the strategic contribution of the corporate communication function to the organisation’s decision-making, specifically the development of the overarching enterprise strategy.

Corporate communication’s strategic contribution is also based on the **CSP** approach to the role of business in society. Its assumptions are that organisations must advance the common good and minimise the social and environmental side effects of their strategies and policies, or their licence to operate will be removed. The communication strategist thus assists in specifying the nature of organisational responsibilities, adopting a particular philosophy of responsiveness (notably the processes of environmental assessment, stakeholder management/governance and issues management) and identifying the stakeholder and societal issues to which these responsibilities are tied. The outcomes of CSP manifest in the social impacts, programmes and policies of the organisation.

The concept of enterprise strategy is suggested as the strategy level at which corporate communication/PR practitioners could or should make a strategic contribution. The strategist creates an understanding of the need for a Triple Bottom Line approach to sustainability. That is, managers should also consider the environment (“Planet”) as well as strategic stakeholders and societal interest groups

“People”) in the organisation’s strategic decision making and behaviour (and not only “Profit”). The strategist assists organisational leaders to obtain legitimacy by advising on the adjustment of actions or outputs so that they are consistent with the value-patterns of society – influencing top management’s orientation towards the organisation’s role in society so that they consider and adapt to societal and stakeholder expectations, values and norms.

In its strategic role, corporate communication assists the organisation to answer the question of what it stands for, what it should do and provide the best reasons for the organisation’s actions. In aligning organisational behaviour and strategies to changing expectations, values, norms and standards in the stakeholder and societal environment, fit is achieved between the values of the organisation and its managers, the expectations of its stakeholders, and the societal issues which will determine its ability to sell its products. This brings about consistency among the key elements of an organisation’s relationship with the environment.

Corporate communication assists the organisation in implementing a “bridging” strategy (adapting activities/strategies/behaviour to conform with external expectations), e.g. by meeting and exceeding regulatory requirements in its sector or attempting to identify changing social/societal expectations rapidly in order to promote organisational conformance to those expectations. In so doing, the risk to its reputation is reduced. The values and attitudes of top managers towards external stakeholders are influenced so as to bring about a collaborative, socially pioneering philosophy and achieve organisational legitimacy through collaboration with multiple external stakeholder and societal interest groups.

The corporate communication strategist assists top management to increasingly incorporate environmental, social and governance issues into the enterprise strategy. This includes the development of ecologically sensitive strategies to satisfy the demands of a myriad stakeholders for whom the protection of the environment is critical. Important non-financial concepts that represent societal and stakeholder expectations, values, norms and standards in the environment are identified and communicated about internally and externally, e.g. CSR, corporate governance, good corporate citizenship and sustainability. Also, a Triple Bottom line approach to decision making that captures the whole set of values, ethics, societal expectations, issues and processes that organisations must address in order to minimise any harm resulting from their activities – thereby creating economic, social and environmental value.

The strategist also identifies, advises on and communicates about non-legislative measures (e.g. King III), reporting frameworks (such as GRI and SRI), and voluntary codes of conduct/recommendations, as well as legislative measures that address societal expectations, values, norms and standards (such as the Sarbanes-Oxley Act in the USA, and the Employment Equity and BEE Acts in SA).

In summary, the strategic role of corporate communication in enterprise strategy development is to assist the organisation in determining its values, managing its reputation, adopting sound corporate governance principles and fulfilling its social and environmental responsibilities. This will ultimately lead to the organisation being trusted by its stakeholders as well as being regarded as sustainable, legitimate, and socially responsible by society at large – thereby achieving the organisation’s non-financial goals.

Closing remarks

Conceptualising enterprise strategy and explicating corporate communication/PR's strategic role in its development was an effort to learn how to institutionalise strategic public relations as an ongoing, accepted practice in most organizations, as called for by Jim Grunig (2006, p. 151).

Adopting enterprise strategy as a concept does not require a radical departure from the usual nature of corporate (and government) activities, nor those of the corporate communication/PR function. It is simply a step ahead of time – before new societal expectations, values and norms are codified into legal requirements:

By adapting before it is legally forced to do so, an organisation can be more flexible in its response pattern, achieve greater congruity with social/societal norms and therefore obtain legitimacy at a lower social and institutional cost (Sethi, 1975, p. 62).

The literature review conducted for this study indicated a focus on the so-called “soft” (intangible) issues facing organisations, i.e. a shift to a Triple Bottom Line approach to sustainability (rather than the financial bottom line previously emphasised). In developing enterprise strategy – in addition to corporate strategy – with strategic input from the corporate communication function, an organisation is likely to achieve its strategic non-financial goals (in addition to its financial goals). In so doing, it is likely to be regarded by society and its stakeholders as a responsible citizen (acting socially, environmentally and economically responsible), and as a result become sustainable.

According to the King II Report on Corporate Governance (IOD, 2002, pp. 10-11):

... all organisations operate within the broader society and the natural environment. What an organisation can and cannot do in terms of its strategy is not only constrained by legislation, government policies and regulatory requirements but also by what is considered ethical and in accordance with the expectations of stakeholder and societal standards.

References

- Ansoff, H.I. (1977), “The changing shape of the strategic problem”, paper presented at a Special Conference on Business Policy and Planning Research: The State of the Art, Pittsburgh, PA, May.
- Barrier, M. (2003) “Mervyn King: principles, not rules”, *The Internal Auditor*, Vol. 22, available at: www.allbusiness.com/business-planning/business-structures-incorporation/883842-5.html (accessed 22 August 2006).
- Berle, A. and Means, G. (1932), *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, Commerce Clearing House, New York, NY.
- Bielak, D., Bonini, S.M.J. and Oppenheim, J.M. (2007) “CEOs on strategy and social issues”, *The McKinsey Quarterly*, Vol. 20, October, available at: www.mckinseyquarterly.com (accessed 20 November 2009).
- Bowman, E.H. (2000), in Moss, D., Verçiç, D. and Warnaby, G. (Eds), *Perspectives on Public Relations Research*, Routledge, London/New York, NY, pp. 39-40.
- Bütschi, G. and Steyn, B. (2008), “Achieving strategic alignment in PR through the development of an action research-based software program”, paper presented at the 11th Annual International PR Research Conference, Miami, Florida, 6-9 March, available at: www.digitalmgmt.com/html/en/library/2009/ButschiSteynMiami.pdf (accessed 7 January 2010).

- Cadbury, A. (2000), "The corporate governance agenda", *Corporate Governance*, Vol. 8 No. 1, pp. 7-15.
- Carroll, A.B. (1996), *Business and Society: Ethics and Stakeholder Management*, 3rd ed., South-Western College Publishing, Cincinnati, OH.
- Code of Banking Practice* (2004), *Code of Banking Practice*, available at: www.banking.org.za/consumer_info/code_of_banking/code_of_banking.aspx (accessed 30 July 2006).
- Davis, K. and Blomstrom, R.L. (1996), in Carroll, A.B. (Ed.), *Business and Society: Ethics and Stakeholder Management*, 3rd ed., South-Western College, Cincinnati, OH.
- Digman, L.A. (1990), *Strategic Management*, 2nd ed., BPI/Irwin, Homewood, IL.
- DTI (Department of Trade and Industry) (2003), "South Africa's economic transformation: a strategy for broad-based black economic empowerment", available at: www.info.gov.za/otherdocs/2003/dtistrat.pdf (accessed 30 July 2006).
- Dyllick, T. and Hockerts, K. (2002), "Beyond the business case for corporate sustainability", *Business Strategy and the Environment*, Vol. 11, pp. 130-41.
- Ehlers, M.B. and Lazenby, J.A.A. (Eds) (2004), *Strategic Management, Southern African Concepts and Cases*, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Fennell, M. and Alexander, J.A. (1987), "Organizational boundary spanning in institutionalized environments", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 30, pp. 456-76.
- Freeman, R.E. (1984), *Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach*, Pitman, Boston, MA.
- Freeman, R.E. and Gilbert, D.R. (1988), *Corporate Strategy and the Search for Ethics*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Gladwin, T.N., Kennelly, J.J. and Krause, T.S. (1995), "Shifting paradigms for sustainable development: implications for management theory and research", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 20 No. 4, pp. 874-907.
- Global Alliance of Public Relations and Communication Management (2005), "Enterprise strategy", available at: www.globalpr.org (accessed 14 October 2006).
- GRI (2002), "Sustainability reporting guideline", available at: www.aeca.es/comisiones/rsc/documentos_fundamentales_rsc/gri/guidelines/gri_guidelines_2002.pdf (accessed 17 July 2006).
- Group 100 (2003), "Sustainability: a guide to triple bottom line reporting", available at: www.group100.com.au/publications/G100_guide-tbl-reporting2003.pdf (accessed 30 July 2006).
- Grunig, J.E. (2006), "Furnishing the edifice: ongoing research on public relations as a strategic management function", *Journal of Public Relations Research*, Vol. 18 No. 2, pp. 151-76.
- Harrison, J.S. and St John, C.H. (1998), *Strategic Management of Organizations and Stakeholders: Concepts and Cases*, South-Western College, Cincinnati, OH.
- Hax, A.C. and Majluf, N.S. (1991), "The strategy concept and process: a pragmatic approach", in Oliver, R.W. (Ed.), "What is strategy, anyway?", *The Journal of Business Strategy*, Vol. 22 No. 6, pp. 7-10.
- Hemphill, T.A. (1996), "Rewards of teaming up: enterprise strategy and corporate environmental alliance", *Business Forum*, Winter/Spring, pp. 8-12.
- Holmström, S. (1996), "An intersubjective and social systemic public relations paradigm", Master's thesis, University of Roskilde, Roskilde.
- Holmström, S. (2002), "The reflective paradigm of the polycontextual society", working paper, November, Roskilde University, Roskilde.
- Hosmer, L.T. (1994), "Strategic planning as if ethics mattered", *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 15 pp. 17-34.

- Husted, B. (2000), "A contingency theory of corporate social performance", *Business & Society*, Vol. 39 No. 1, pp. 24-48.
- IOD (Institute of Directors) (2002), *King Report on Corporate Governance for South Africa 2002 (King II)*, Parktown, Johannesburg.
- IOD (Institute of Directors) (2009), *King Report on Governance for South Africa 2009 (King III)*, Parktown, Johannesburg.
- JSE SRI (2005), "Background and selection criteria", available at: www.jse.co.za/sri/docs/criteria/Background%20and%20Criteria.round3.final2.pdf (accessed 17 July 2006).
- Judge, W.Q. and Hema, K. (1994), "An empirical investigation of the scope of a firm's enterprise strategy", *Business and Society*, Vol. 33 No. 2, pp. 167-91.
- Luhmann, N. (1995), *Social Systems*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA.
- Lynch, R. (1997), *Corporate Strategy*, Financial Times/Pitman, London.
- Maignan, I. and Ferrell, O.C. (2004), "Corporate social responsibility and marketing: an integrative framework", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, Vol. 32 No. 1, pp. 3-19.
- Meznar, M.B. and Nigh, D. (1995), "Buffer or bridge? Environmental and organizational determinants of public affairs activities in American firms", *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 38 No. 4, pp. 975-99.
- Meznar, M.B., Chrisman, J.J. and Carroll, A.B. (1991), "Social responsibility and strategic management: toward an enterprise strategy classification", *Business & Professional Ethics Journal*, Vol. 10 No. 1, p. 47.
- Miles, R.H. (1987), *Managing the Corporate Social Environment: A Grounded Theory*, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Mouton, J. (1996), *Understanding Social Research*, Van Schaik, Pretoria.
- Niemann, L. (2009), "A framework for enterprise strategy development, conceptualising corporate communication's strategic contribution at the macro-organisational level", unpublished Master's thesis, Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town.
- Post, J.E., Lawrence, A.T. and Weber, J. (1999), *Business and Society: Corporate Strategy, Public Policy, Ethics*, 9th ed., McGraw-Hill Irwin, Boston, MA.
- Prinsloo, P.W.F. (2004), "A framework for the formulation of corporate communication strategy in a financial services organisation: a case study", unpublished research script, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
- RSA (1998), "Employment Equity Act Number 55 of 1998", *Government Gazette*, 400 No. 19370, available at: www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=70714 (accessed 30 July 2006).
- RSA (2004) "Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003", *Government Gazette*, 463 No. 25899, available at: www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=68031 (accessed 30 July 2006).
- Schendel, D. and Hofer, C. (1979), *Strategic Management: A New View of Business Policy and Planning*, Little, Brown, Boston, MA.
- Sethi, P. (1975), "Dimensions of corporate social performance: an analytic framework", *California Management Review*, Vol. 17 No. 3, pp. 58-64.
- Shrivastava, P. (1995), "Eocentric management for a risk society", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 20 No. 1, pp. 118-38.
- Smith, A. (1976), *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Liberty Fund Inc., Indianapolis, IN.
- Stead, J.G. and Stead, E. (2000), "Eco-enterprise strategy: standing for sustainability", *Journal of Business Ethics*, Vol. 24 No. 4, pp. 313-29.

- Steyn, B. (2000a), "Strategic management roles of the corporate communication function", unpublished Master's thesis, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.
- Steyn, B. (2000b), "CEO expectations in terms of PR roles", *Communicare*, Vol. 19 No. 1, pp. 20-43.
- Steyn, B. (2002a), "From 'strategy' to 'corporate communication strategy': a conceptualisation", in Verçiç, D., Van Ruler, B., Jensen, I., Moss, D. and White, J. (Eds), *The Status of Public Relations Knowledge in Europe and around the World, Proceedings of the BledCom/Euprera 2002 Annual Conference, Bled, Slovenia, 4-7 July*, Pristop Communications, Ljubljana, pp. 126-42.
- Steyn, B. (2002b), "A meta-theoretical approach to the role of the corporate communication strategist", *Communicare*, Vol. 21 No. 2, pp. 42-63.
- Steyn, B. (2003a), "From strategy to corporate communication strategy: a conceptualisation", *Journal of Communication Management*, Vol. 8 No. 2, pp. 168-83.
- Steyn, B. (2003b), "A conceptualisation and empirical verification of the 'strategist', (redefined) 'manager' and 'technician' roles of public relations", in Verçiç, D., Moss, D. and White, D. (Eds), *Communication Management, Public Affairs and Public Relations: Building Trust and Equity, Proceedings of BledCom 2003, Bled, Slovenia, 4-6 July*, Pristop Communications, Ljubljana, pp. 95-111.
- Steyn, B. (2007), "Contribution of public relations to organizational strategy formulation", in Toth, E.L. (Ed.), *The Future of Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management: Challenges for the Next Generation*, Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah, NJ, pp. 137-72.
- Steyn, B. (2009), "The strategic role of public relations is strategic reflection: a South African research stream", *American Behavioral Scientist*, Vol. 53 No. 4, pp. 516-32.
- Steyn, B. and Bütschi, G. (2003), "Reflective public relations: a commentary on conceptual and empirical similarities and differences between South African roles research and European reflective research", in Verçiç, D., Moss, D. and White, D. (Eds), *Communication Management, Public Affairs and Public Relations: Building Trust and Equity, Proceedings of BledCom 2003, Bled, Slovenia*, Vol. 4-6, pp. 112-30.
- Steyn, B. and Bütschi, G. (2004), "A model for developing public relations/corporate communication strategy – an online application", in Moss, D., Verçiç, D. and White, J. (Eds), *New Concepts and Technologies for Public Relations, Public Affairs and Corporate Communication*, Vol. 2-4, pp. 89-102.
- Steyn, B. and Everett, T. (2009), "International comparative study indicates different PR roles in South Africa and the UK, using the same measuring instrument", *Tripodos*, Vol. 24, pp. 95-105.
- Steyn, B. and Niemann, L. (2008), "Institutionalising the strategic role of corporate communication/public relations through its contribution to enterprise strategy and enterprise governance", paper presented at the 10th Annual EUPRERA Congress, Milan, 16-18 October.
- Steyn, B. and Puth, G. (2000), *Corporate Communication Strategy*, Heinemann, Johannesburg.
- Strategic Direction (2005), "Becoming a better citizen: the value of corporate social responsibility", *Strategic Direction*, Vol. 21 No. 7, pp. 24-8.
- (The) Sullivan Foundation (2005), The Sullivan Foundation, available at: www.thesullivanfoundation.org/gsp/endorsement/history/default.asp (accessed 22 August 2006).
- SustainAbility (2007), "Report", available at: www.sustainability.com (accessed 14 February 2007).
- Sutton, B. (1993), *The Legitimate Corporation*, Basil Blackwell, Cambridge, MA.

- Turnbull Guidance (2005), Turnbull Guidance, available at: www.frc.org.uk/images/uploaded/documents/Revised%20Turnbull%20Guidance%20October%202005.pdf (accessed 30 August 2006).
- Valor, C. (2005), "Corporate social responsibility and corporate citizenship: towards corporate accountability", *Business and Society Review*, Vol. 110 No. 2, pp. 191-212.
- Verçiç, D., Van Ruler, B., Bütschi, G. and Flodin, B. (2001), "On the definition of public relations: a European view", *Public Relations Review*, Vol. 27, pp. 373-87.
- Wheeler, D. and Sillanpää, M. (1998), "Including the stakeholders: the business case", *Long Range Planning*, Vol. 31 No. 2, pp. 201-10.
- Wikipedia (2006), Sarbanes-Oxley Act, available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarbanes-Oxley_Act (accessed 15 August 2006).
- Wood, D. (1991), "Corporate social performance revisited", *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 16 No. 4, pp. 758-69.
- Worrall, D.N. (2005), "The contribution of the corporate communication and marketing functions to strategy formulation: a case study within a financial services institution", unpublished Master's research script, University of Pretoria, Pretoria.

Further reading

- Financial Intelligence Centre Act (2004), "Financial Intelligence Centre Act (2004/2005)", available at: www.fic.gov.za/info/FIC-ANNUAL-REPORT%20reduced.pdf (accessed 30 August 2006).

About the authors

Benita Steyn has been lecturing and supervising research at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Cape Town, South Africa since 2003, after developing the Web-based Master's degree programme in Public Relations Management. From 1996 to 2003 she taught Strategic Communication Management at the University of Pretoria. Her research interest is the role of the corporate communication/PR strategist and corporate communication strategy. She has delivered more than 50 conference papers and published widely on these topics. Benita Steyn is the corresponding author and can be contacted at: b.steyn@lantic.net

Lynne Niemann is a Master's graduate of the Dept of Public Relations Management at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. This article is based on her Master's degree, titled "A framework for enterprise strategy development: conceptualising corporate communication's strategic contribution at the macro-organisational level".

To purchase reprints of this article please e-mail: reprints@emeraldinsight.com
Or visit our web site for further details: www.emeraldinsight.com/reprints

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.