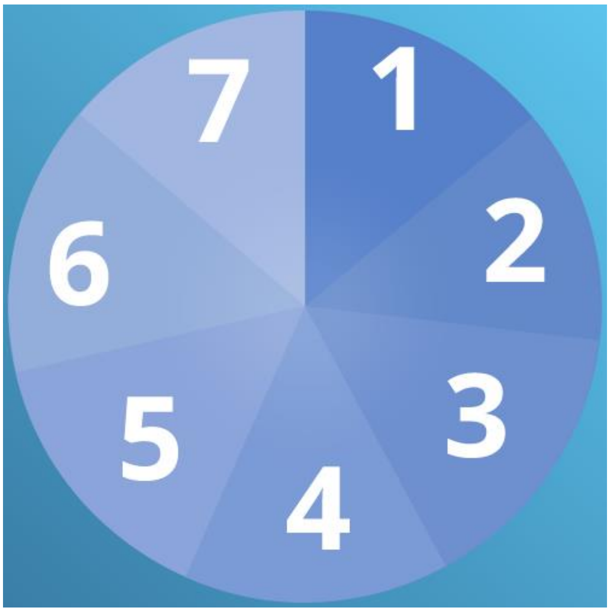
Chapter 4



A Step-By-Step Approach to PR Measurement

Mazen Nahawi

Public relations professionals today must measure their work if they hope to be taken seriously. Measurement has never been more productive and innovative. With the increasing prominence given to measurement through industry associations, academics and analysis vendors, it is easier to stay tuned to important media channels, keep tabs on competitors and anticipate unwelcome surprises than ever before. But to maximize the value and benefits of a measurement program, it's critical to set goals and identify key stakeholders for the data. How do you get the process started without spending a fortune or risking repercussions from an unsuccessful program? The tips below are a step-by-step routemap to get you going in the right direction!

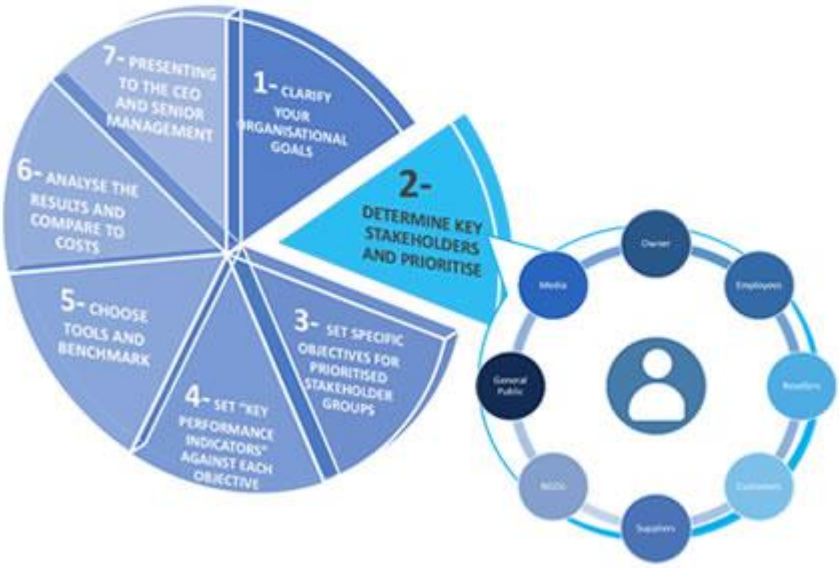
FIRST: CLARIFY YOUR ORGANISATIONAL GOALS

An organisational ***goal*** is a broad idea of what you would like to achieve, stated in clear, simple terms. Typically, these over-arching goals cluster around the following:

- Increase revenue and/or lower costs
- Increase customer engagement and satisfaction
- Strengthen brand preference and loyalty
- Enhance reputation

SECOND: DETERMINE KEY STAKEHOLDERS AND PRIORITISE

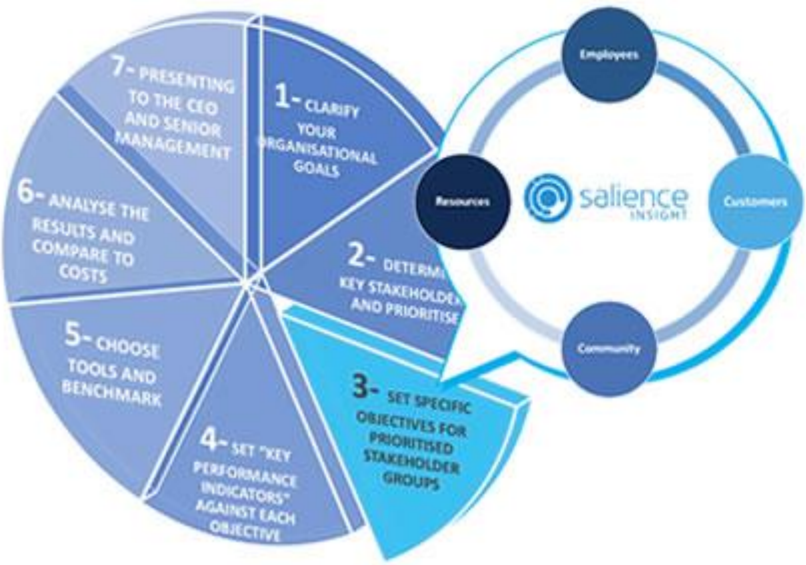
Who are your ***key stakeholders*** internally and externally, and which are most important to reaching your goals? Practical budgeting considerations may make it impossible to address them all, so start ***prioritising*** through some smart initial research:



- Talk with key internal stakeholders to see what would spell ‘success’ in communications
- Discover where your most important stakeholders are involved in the social and digital space
- Listen to what they are saying through online and offline surveys and media content analysis

THIRD: SET SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR PRIORITISED STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

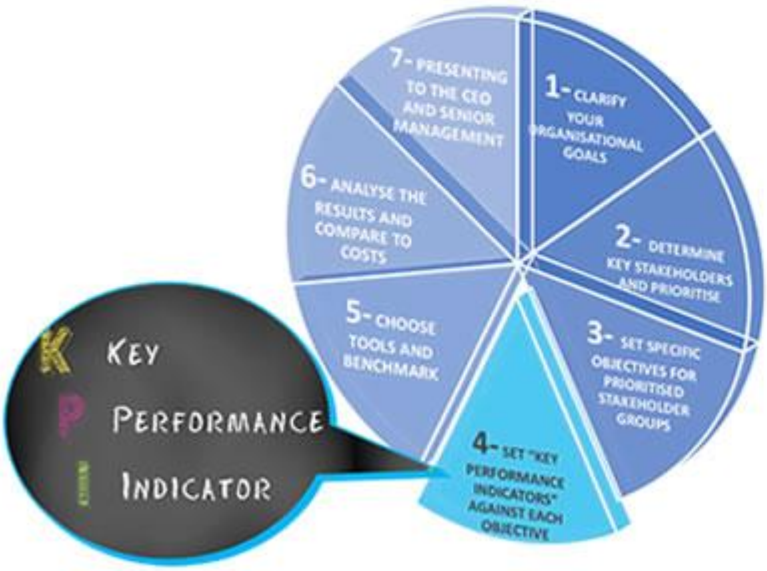
At the conclusion of this research, meet again with key internal managers to help decide which goals and stakeholders will take priority for the PR and/or social media measurement. Then, set ***specific objectives*** for each goal that specify:



1. An action statement
2. A timeline
3. A target audience
4. A measurement outcome (usually expressed as a % change).

For example, if a business goal is to sell more homes, an objective might be "*to increase the number of home tours among first-time buyers aged 25-54 by 50% in the following year.*" Simply focusing efforts in this way will increase your likelihood of success and enable you to modify the objective as you gain history and move forward.

FOURTH: SET "KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS" AGAINST EACH OBJECTIVE

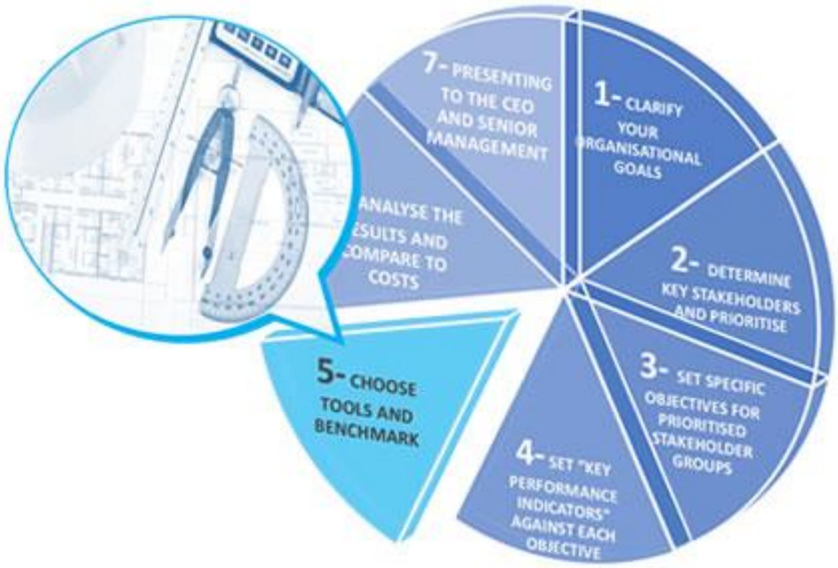


Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are quantifiable (numeric) measures that enable you to show progress over time ***for each objective***. For example, if your objective is to get first-time buyers into your show homes, some KPIs might be:

1. An increase in the number of visitors who sign-up for your homebuilder newsletter
2. The ratio of posts to comments on your homebuilder website
3. The increase in home builder profile pages downloaded and attendees to an open house events

FIFTH: CHOOSE TOOLS AND BENCHMARK

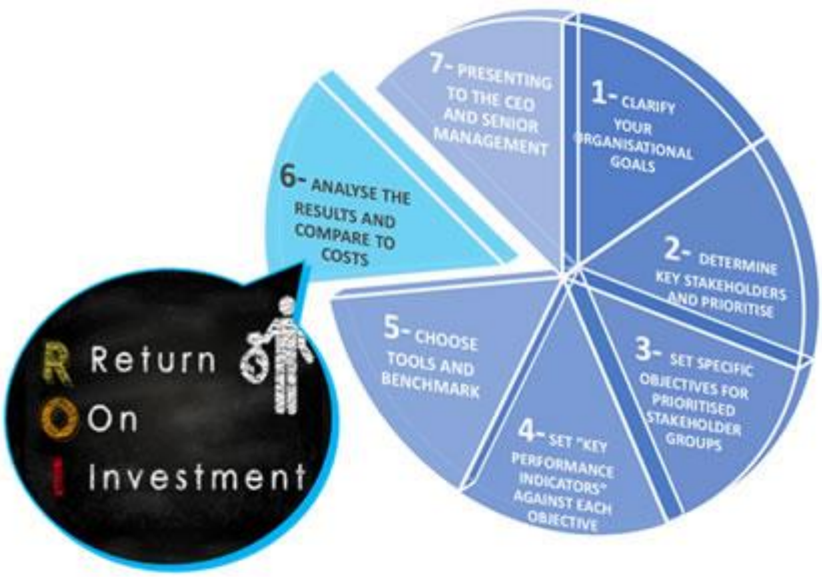
At this point, you'll need to decide who to measure against. Is it just your own organisation over time or would it be important to measure performance against competitors?



Choosing appropriate tools and metrics for measurement is vital to the success of the programme - e.g. the AMEC Valid Metrics Framework would enable you to identify the tools and metrics needed to measure your campaign in terms of:

- **Public Relations Activity** – what did you **DO?** For example, how much content did you create? How many journalist briefings? White papers? YouTube videos? Twitter posts?
- Intermediary Effects – how did the media and key influencers (third parties) **RESPOND** to your activities across the Communications Phases - **Awareness, Knowledge, Interest and Support?** Are they communicating the right messages, in a positive manner and in a greater volume than competitive messages? Have they endorsed or recommended? You can measure this level by charting progress in both:
  ✔ **"Owned Media"** sites - websites, Facebook and Twitter pages, for example.
  ✔ **"Non-owned sites or earned media"** - everything else
- **Target Audience Effects –** finally, what **ACTION** was taken by your target audience? Actions can be hard or soft, ranging from leads or sales increases and efficiency savings to brand awareness, customer loyalty and customer satisfaction improvements. Techniques might include:
  ✔ Surveys
  ✔ Correlations and Market Mix Models
  ✔ Web Analytics
  ✔ Comparing Earned, Owned, Shared and Paid Channels

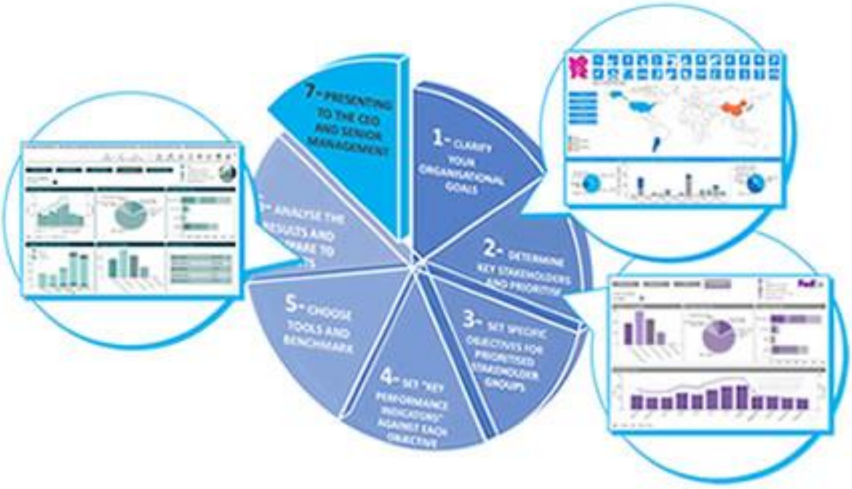
SIXTH: ANALYSE THE RESULTS AND COMPARE TO COSTS



Data by itself does not equal intelligence. It must be analysed and interpreted to generate actionable insights and recommendations for strategy and planning. It should also provide a means to compare programme costs against identified results. "**Return on Investment**" is a very ill understood term, and some claim that it cannot be accurately calculated for non-financial programs. However, cost-efficiency metrics such as "cost-per-targeted impression," "cost-per-lead" or "cost-per-unique visitor" can be useful. If you DO want to calculate ROI, you should use a true financial formula expressed as a percentage or ratio, as follows:

$$\text{ROI} = \frac{(\text{Gain from Investment} - \text{Cost of Investment})}{\text{Cost of Investment}}$$

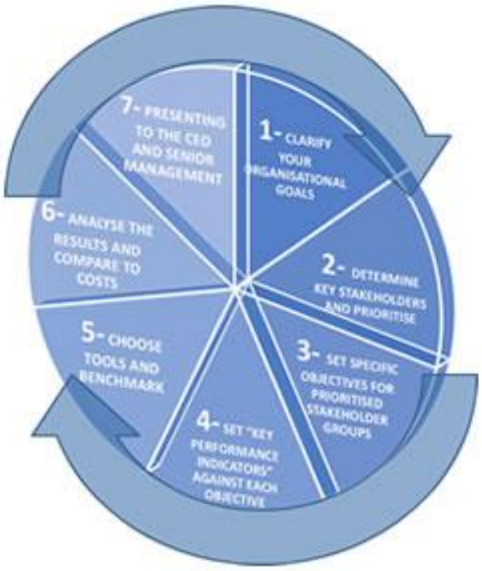
SEVENTH: PRESENTING TO THE CEO AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT



A dashboard or scorecard with headlines, bullets and metrics that show performance trends can be highly compelling to the C-suite. Survey results, correlations to outcomes, or solid tracking data from web analytics, will all resonate strongly with a CEO and senior management.

EIGHTH: MEASURE CONTINUOUSLY AND IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

Stay vigilant by keeping your programme growing and robust.



Mazen's Top 3 Measurement Tips

✔ Always start with asking yourself what you want your evaluation to achieve (sounds pretty basic, but you'd be amazed how many organisations forget this vital step).

✔ Be realistic – on budget, on timing, on scope. You tend to get what you pay for ……

✔ Invest time up front with your evaluation provider – time invested now in defining expectations, scope, budget etc will pay dividends down the line.

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