



THE LITTLE  
BOOK OF  
clear  
THINKING

*“Short, sweet and to the point.  
Clear writing, and therefore  
clear commands, come from  
clear thinking. Think simple.”*

Timothy Ferriss

## Being clear – what this little book is all about

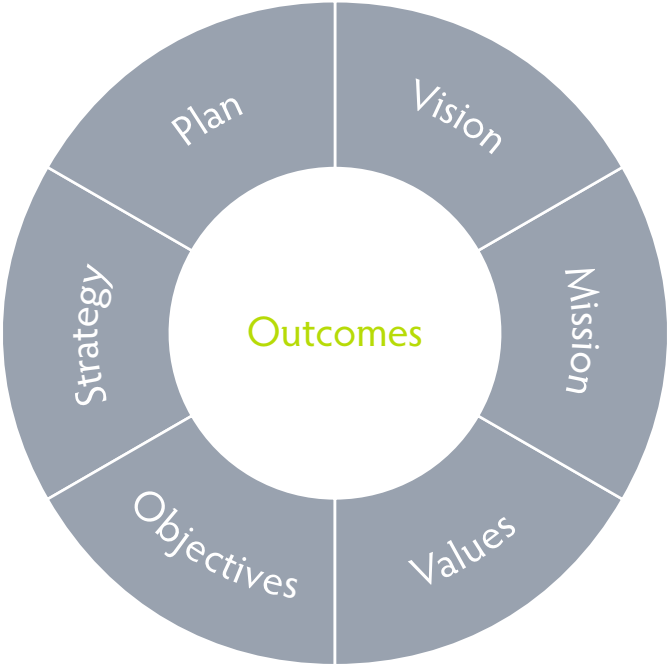
In business, we all recognise the need for clear communication.

And greater minds than ours have given thought to the fact that clear communication stems from clear thinking.

Yet all too often our thoughts become clouded as we are bombarded with an excess of complex information.

So at Clear B2B, we follow a few easy steps to help clarify, understand and simplify what we do, enabling us and our clients to stay focused and achieve our goals.

We're often asked to summarise these steps by our clients. So we've created this handy little book to share our approach to developing an effective marketing communications strategy, based on **clear thinking**.



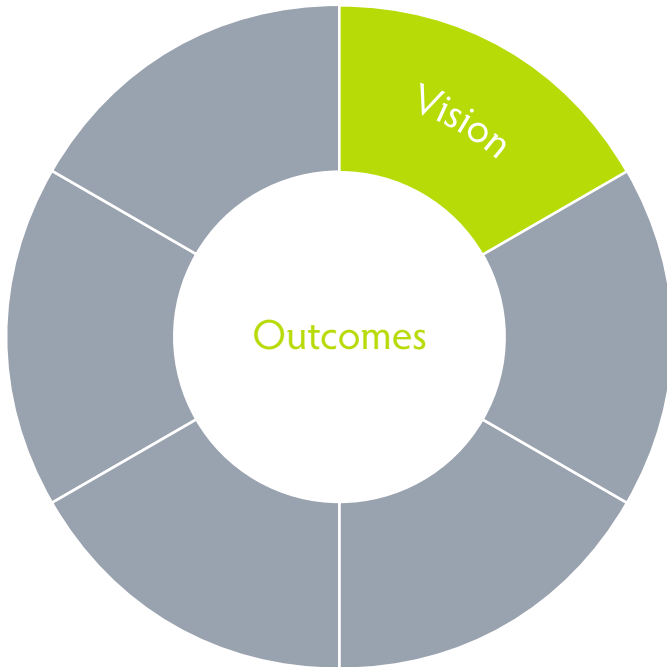
## Outputs and outcomes

Many companies define marketing success by outputs – the collateral produced, a re-designed website, the number of e-shots sent and so on.

However, the most successful businesses see things a little differently; they measure success not by output, but by **outcome** – what their audiences do as a result of the communication.

And what you want your audience to do will depend on what you want to achieve for your business.

Therefore, defining your business goals or objectives is the best place to start when developing your marketing strategy, to ensure a successful **outcome**.



## Clarity of vision – what you see

The marketing choices we all face today have never been wider or more varied. There are so many possibilities that it can be almost impossible to decide or agree what we should or shouldn't do.

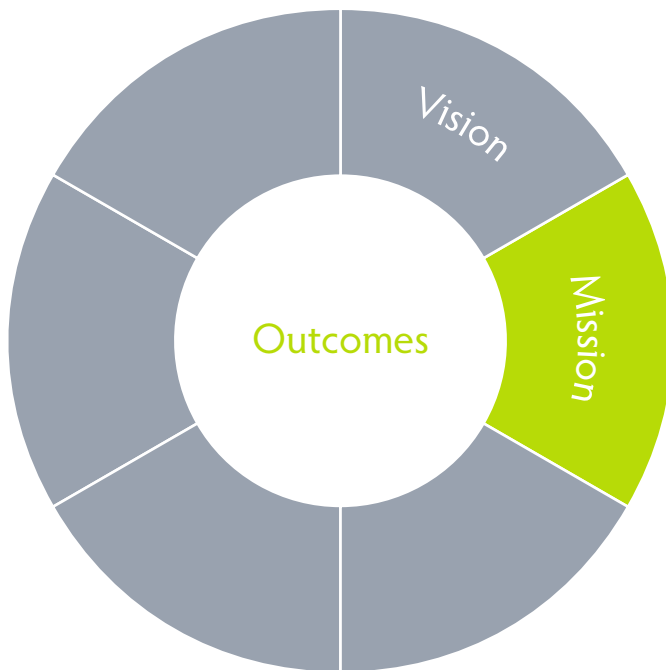
Having some fundamental guidance in place, which can help us make a decision and progress appropriately, is more important than ever.

So always start with a **vision**. A **vision** of what your organisation wants to be.

What is your organisation's ambition... Is it to be the most innovative? The most trusted? The most profitable?

Always try to define it in a way which is aspirational and timeless.

If your **vision** doesn't inspire you, then it probably needs re-thinking.





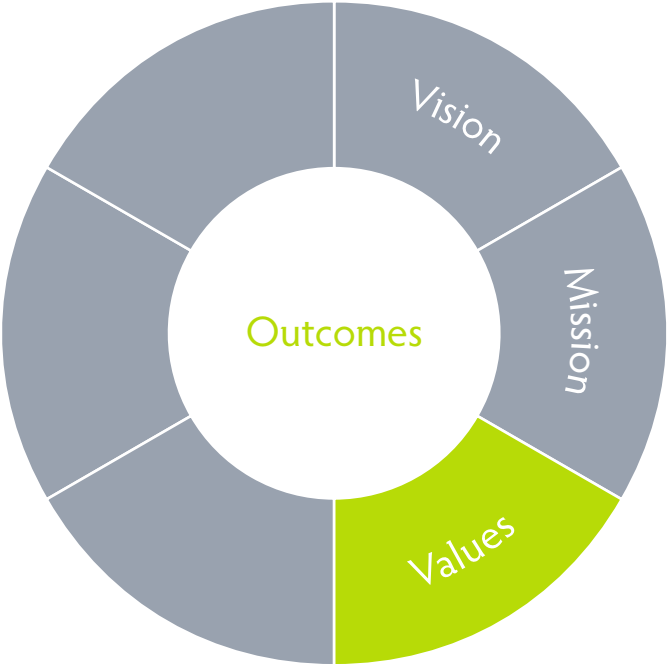
## Clarity of mission – what you need to do to achieve your vision

Some corporate **missions** or **mission statements** don't really help to define anything. This is because they are often a set of grand, or even bland, wishes or hopes which lack anything specific or unique and could refer to any organisation.

However, used properly, a **mission** should guide the direction of your business. A **mission** is dynamic and active – you go on a **mission** to achieve something. And that something is your vision.

Your **mission** defines what you need to do to achieve your vision and should, be a practical, instructive and concise message. Google's is 'To organise the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful' and Toyota's is 'To lead the way to the future of mobility, enriching lives around the world with the safest and most responsible ways of moving people.'

It is worth taking time to think about the **mission** – it is fundamental to achieving your vision.



## Clarity of values – the way you do it

Having defined where you want to be (**vision**) and what you need to do (**mission**), the next step for absolute clarity is to define the way you'll go about it.

In many organisations **values** often include words such as integrity, honesty and openness. However these are too generic and could describe any business, so add very little 'value'.

Developing unique and 'specific to your business' **values** can really help you understand and communicate the reason why your organisation is special. So make sure they are real and that you can live and breathe them.

The right set of **values** will help in all sorts of decisions, from who to recruit through to your corporate and brand identity. They will also inform some difficult decisions enabling you to 'do the right thing', in keeping with the organisation's culture.

*“The significant problems we face  
cannot be solved by the same level  
of thinking that created them.”*

Albert Einstein

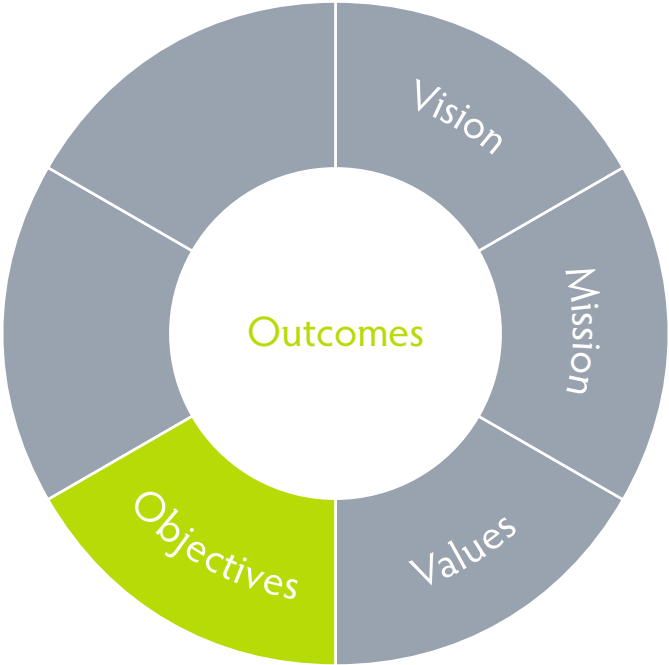
## ...but how does this help successful marketing?

The principles of defining where you want to be (**vision**), what you need to do (**mission**), and the way you do it (**values**), is an important process to follow when planning your marketing communications strategy.

As the marketing team you also need to define what you want to achieve (**objectives**), which audiences to target and how to influence them (**strategy**), together with how you will implement this (**plan**).

Your **strategy** needs to reflect your **values** and **mission** so that it drives you towards achieving your **vision**.

Together this strategic marketing process gives you the clarity you need to stay focused and make effective business decisions.

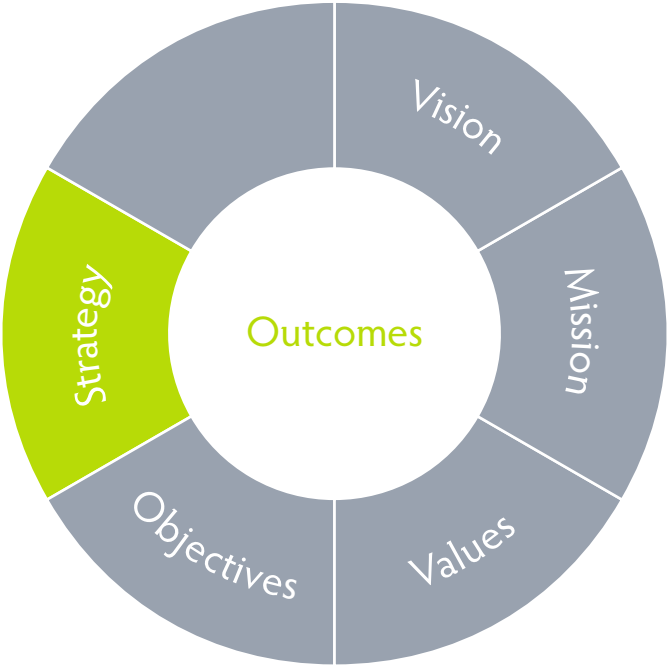


## Marketing objectives

You will be familiar with commonly used marketing **objectives** like 'to raise awareness of the brand' or 'to support field sales activity'. However these statements are impossible to measure.

In order to analyse your Return On Investment (ROI), you need quantifiable **objectives** such as 'to raise awareness of the brand amongst architects from 17% to 30%', 'to generate a minimum of 40 valid sales leads per month', or 'to establish a minimum of 4 feature article opportunities in support of the new brand launch'.

Of course there is no marketing formula to guarantee a certain outcome, but with the application of logic you can create realistic **objectives** which can be used to measure your results and understand your ROI.





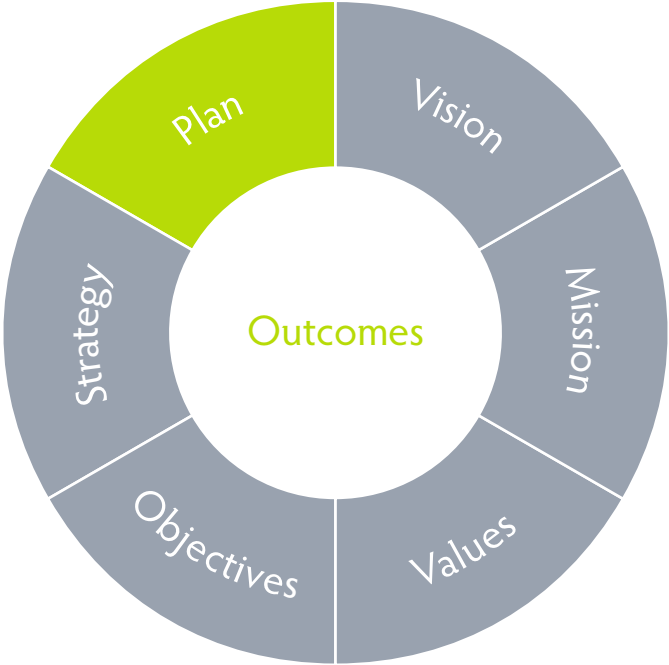
## Marketing communications strategy

So, the objectives tell you what you're aiming to achieve and with that knowledge, you now have to decide how best to achieve it.

This **strategy** stage is often referred to as 'messaging' – deciding what you need to say and to whom, based on understanding your audiences and what they already know and believe about your business and brand.

This is where AIDA can be helpful – Awareness, Interest, Desire and Action. Helping you consider what you will say at critical points along the customer journey.

Decide who to talk to and what they already know. Decide how best to reach them with the greatest impact and cost effectiveness. Decide what to say to them to get them to do what you want them to do in order to achieve your marketing objectives. This forms your **strategy**.

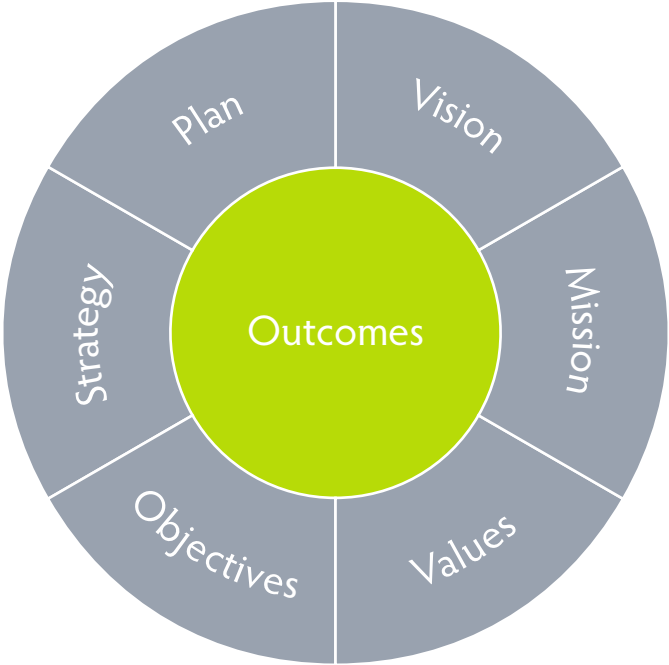


## Marketing communications plan

We can't always afford to do all the things that our clear thinking has identified. To develop a **plan** we often have to prioritise using judgement, experience and common sense.

For example, you could **plan** to concentrate on certain audiences or sectors, or decide to communicate with greater frequency through fewer channels, or with less frequency through more channels, or even focus on areas where the greatest returns are to be found.

Your marketing communications **plan** should also include details of how you will measure success of your activities against your marketing objectives.



## Successful outcomes

With any marketing communications there are very few rules and even fewer guarantees. In our experience, successful **outcomes** are achieved through a regularly reviewed strategic marketing process.

The most important step following the implementation of your plan is to measure and analyse the **outcomes**. You need to understand what worked well and what didn't, so that you can refine and start the cycle all over again, with the goal of improving on the previous **outcomes**. By continually refining your thinking and activities, you should achieve more successful **outcomes** in each cycle.

**One thing is certain – the clearer the thinking at the start the better the results at the end.**

*“To achieve, you need thought.  
You have to know what you are  
doing and that’s real power.”*

Ayn Rand

**The difference is clear thinking**



The difference is clear thinking

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