

Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever!

Gandhi

Meet the Authors



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For over three decades, she has assisted companies in optimising communication to benefit the organisation's strategic imperatives. BusinessDNA, the company she started 22 years ago, specialises in strategic planning, research and measurement, assisting business leaders in developing their competence and confidence in communication with their teams, producing state-of-the-art communication content and channels and communication coaching for executive leaders.



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Introduction

The *What's Your Next Play?* Playbook supports the [IABC Career Assessment](#)SM, the online career self-assessment designed for communication professionals (CommPros) working in diverse types of organizations throughout the world and in various communication disciplines. Based on an individual's responses, the self-assessment identifies a [communication professional's current career milestone](#), areas of professional accomplishment and strengths and opportunities for continued career growth. Constructed on the Purpose and Principles of [The Global Standard of the Communication Profession](#), the self-assessment results and recommendations are a perfect starting point for commpros to reflect on their career strengths and determine where they want to go and what they want to do next.

How to Use the Playbook

Using the Playbook is simple and easy. You need the PDF report you downloaded after completing the IABC Career Assessment and this Playbook. The assessment report is a snapshot of your career and proficiency in the communication profession's principles. The Playbook guides you in using your results and recommendations to plan where you want to go in your career. Please answer the questions posed in the Playbook as we go along.

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Setting Your Career Goal

People take self-assessments for a variety of reasons.

Triggers/Motivation for Development

(Note listed in alpha order)

- Career Progression (Accomplishment & Confidence)
- Entry/re-entry to the field or an industry (Change of Direction)
- New job search (downsizing, move, etc.)
- Performance appraisals (Job security)
- Promotion opportunity (Career Advancement)

What motivated you to take the career self-assessment?

Based on what motivated you to take the career self-assessment, what is your career focus or goal for the next three years?

Understanding Your Career Assessment Report

Look at your self-assessment report - what does the report tell you?

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the IABC Career Assessment report. The page title is "Your IABC Career AssessmentSM Well done, Rising Star!".

Your current career milestone is:
Strategic Advisor

This milestone was calculated using the average of the ratings you gave in the self-assessment, mapped against the research behind the Global Standard for the Communication Profession.

Your proficiency levels

Here is your Career Assessment summary based on the Global Standard principles and the IABC Proficiency MetricSM:

IABC Proficiency Metric SM *	Developing	Novice	Independent	Intermediate	Advanced	Accomplished	Mastered
Strategy							
Analysis							
Context							
Engagement							
Consistency							
Ethics							

*IABC Proficiency Metric is a seven-point measurement developed to measure self-assessment of knowledge and skill competencies within the Global Standard of the Communication Profession and within IABC's four career milestones.

Your current strengths and areas for development:

Based on your current Assessment, these are the areas you feel most proficient:

1. Analysis (Click for details)
2. Strategy (Click for details)
3. Consistency (Click for details)

Based on your current Assessment, these are the areas you feel less proficient:

1. Engagement (Click for details)
2. Context (Click for details)
3. Ethics (Click for details)

For more information, and other resources, please visit the [IABC Career Roadmap hub](#).

[SUBMIT FEEDBACK](#) [PRINT YOUR REPORT](#)

On the left

On this side, you see your current career milestone and proficiency in the Global Standard Principles.

You are at the Strategic Advisor milestone based on your responses. The Strategic Advisor “matures as a communication professional through consistent application of the Principles. At this milestone, we see expanding expertise and innovation. The professional assumes increased responsibilities, including resource management.” ([IABC Career Milestones](#))

The table indicates your proficiency based on your responses to the assessment knowledge and skill statements for each Principle. The information in the table is the heart of this self-assessment tool. We come back to these in an upcoming section.

On the right

On this side, you see five boxes of information.

1. Areas you rated yourself as most proficient. These are areas to broaden expertise.
2. Areas you rated your proficiency the lowest. These are essential development areas.
3. Resources - a link to resources to use in building your career plan. We provide tips on doing this in an upcoming section.
4. Submit Feedback – Provide feedback on the self-assessment.
5. Download your report - Click on the tab to save your pdf report.

Meeting The Global Standard in Your Career

The Global Standard of the Communication Profession is defined by communication professionals worldwide embracing a shared career purpose and six core Principles as the building blocks of their work. Informed by a passion for engaging audiences with strategic communication, the purpose and Principles focus our work and form a global standard. Applying that Standard enables us to cross all borders, align with diverse cultures and effectively serve organizations of all types and sizes. (iabc.com).

As you review The Global Standard, contemplate where you must meet the Standard more fully to stay competitive in the field of communication.

The Career Purpose of Communication Professionals

Communication professionals represent the voice of an organization as it interacts with customers, clients, employees, partners, shareholders, competitors and the community.

Communication professional brings the organization to life with a brand voice that aligns its verbal, visual and digital messages and activities with its mission and vision. By bringing the brand to life, communication professionals also help ensure the organization runs efficiently and effectively.

Communication professionals build a strategic communication plan based on thorough research; communicate with a variety of audiences in a range of styles; develop and edit content; and assess where and how to communicate and evaluate the results of their work. They often act as the organization's conscience and frequently strive for financial, social and environmental sustainability.



Next, think about your proficiency in each Principle of The Global Standard. Do you meet the definition and context fully? Is there an opportunity for growth?

The Six Principles of the Communication Profession*		
Principles	Definition	Context
Ethics	Communication professionals adopt the highest standards of professional behaviour. They always: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with sensitivity to cultural values and beliefs; • Act without deception and in accordance with the law; • Represent the organization truthfully, fairly and accurately. • Enable mutual understanding and respect; and • Adhere to the "IABC Code of Ethics for Professional Communicators." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate cultural values • Communicate in accordance with law • Represent organization truthfully, fairly and accurately • Enable mutual understanding and respect • Adhere to Code of Ethics for communication professionals
Consistency	Acting as the organization's voice, a communication professional expresses a single, consistent story for internal and external audiences. This narrative is clear and compelling, it reflects the input and perspectives of diverse stakeholders, and it furthers the organization's mission. A communication professional integrates information and inspiration for this narrative from people with diverse perspectives and ensures that communications are culturally appropriate to each audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using single, consistent voice for internal and external stakeholders • Establishing clear and compelling narrative • Recognizing diverse stakeholders • Integrating information from diverse perspectives • Ensuring culturally appropriate information for each audience
Context	The communication professional is sophisticated about the organization's internal culture and external environment. Deep familiarity with the organization's vision and goals and how its elements function together – from accounting to production to human resources - is crucial to interacting successfully with other leaders of the organization and communicating effectively about the organization. Advocating successfully for the organization also depends on a thorough understanding of its political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal context – and of how to interact with representatives of other organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding internal cultures • Understanding external environments • Understanding organization's vision and goals and how operations function together • Advocating for the organization • Understanding political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal context • Interacting with representatives of other organisations
Analysis	Communication professionals research and evaluate how to serve and promote the organization most effectively and then offer recommendations supported by direct and secondary evidence. They develop and implement communication plans and gauge their results using clear qualitative and quantitative measures that can be duplicated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding research • Understanding evaluation • Developing communication plans • Implementing communication plans • Using qualitative measures • Using quantitative measures
Strategy	With rigor and discipline, a communication professional identifies opportunities and challenges both inside and outside of the organization. Addressing communication challenges and opportunities with a thoughtful strategy allows the organization to achieve its mission and goals. The communication professional systematically manages communication activities, making decisions based on research, analysis, planning and evaluation. The professional also has the flexibility and creativity to adjust to change inside and outside of the organization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding communication challenges • Managing communication activities • Making decisions based on research • Making decisions based on analysis • Planning communication strategies • Conducting evaluation
Engagement	A communication professional identifies and communicates with employees, customers, shareholders, regulators, government agencies and other groups with an interest in the organization's activities. All these groups have the potential to change the organization's results. So the communication professional fosters and nourishes relationships with them that will support the organization's mission and goals. The communication professional uses dialogue to tell the organization's story and garner support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying with various stakeholders • Fostering and nourishing relationships to support organization's mission and goals • Using dialogue to tell the organization's story and garner support

IABC INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS

Determining Your Proficiency and What It Tells You and Others

The IABC Proficiency MetricSM and the 7-Point Scale provide a universal measurement for proficiency in the knowledge, skills and behaviors associated with The Global Standard of the Communication Profession Purpose and Principles. The metric labels the level of expertise, what each level is accountable to perform and the evidence on a resume that supports the level of expertise.

Proficiency/7 Pt. Scale	Definition	Indicates the user is...
1. Developing	Minimal usage and experience; currently developing/training	Building knowledge and application
2. Novice	Limited usage, requires assistance and supervision in a single speciality	An example of performance with professional attribution
3. Independent	Perform multiple times without assistance/supervision in a single specialty	A portfolio piece specific to a single specialty
4. Intermediate	Perform with more than acceptable speed and quality; working or functional command of output	A summary of value/contributions in a select time range
5. Advanced	Perform with initiative and adaptability to special situations across multiple specialties	Able to assist, consult or lead others in the application
6. Accomplished	Performs with awareness of interrelationships, calculated risks, multi-specialized	Recognized as an authority or performer by 1 of the following: company, industry group <u>or</u> civic expert network
7. Mastered	Holds broad, in-depth knowledge and experience	Recognized as an authority or master performer by 2 of the following: company, industry group <u>and</u> civic expert networks

Taking A Closer Look at the Assessment Statements

The assessment statements focus on knowledge – know and understand sentences -- and skills – can (do) sentences - required for the career milestone. [The Career Milestones](#) - Foundation, Generalist/Specialist, Strategic Advisor and Business Leader – describe where your proficiencies currently cluster. As the Metric indicates, your proficiency is based on the combination of what you know about something, your skill level at doing it and your ability to do it effectively and efficiently, repeatedly.



A Couple of KSB Examples

Look at the two examples below to see how knowledge(k), skill(s) and behavior(b) combine to make us proficient at something. The practical analogy details the KSBs needed to bake a cake successfully. The strategic communication example drills into one of the areas in the Analysis Principle where a commpro must be proficient to call themselves a Communication Professional.

Principle: Context			
Competency Element	Definition	Practical Analogy	StratComm Example
Ability (Task)	Possession of means to do/accomplish something	Make a cake (Think: Work to be done)	Conduct situational analysis
Knowledge	What you need to know	The Nature of Wet/Dry Ingredients Recipe/Steps to Make a Cake Types of Bakeware (Think: cookbook, especially front-end content)	Primary research Secondary research Research instruments Research interpretation Research validity Research reliability Research measurement (Career Playbook?)
Skill	What you need to do it	Baking (Think: activity, in this case it's not cooking, frying)	Research (Principle of Context has other skills such as macro/micro environmental scan, analysis)
Behavior	To do it well, you need	Detail-oriented Curious Organized (Think: mind -set, attitude)	Critical thinking Curious Attention to detail

Exploring Your Career Assessment

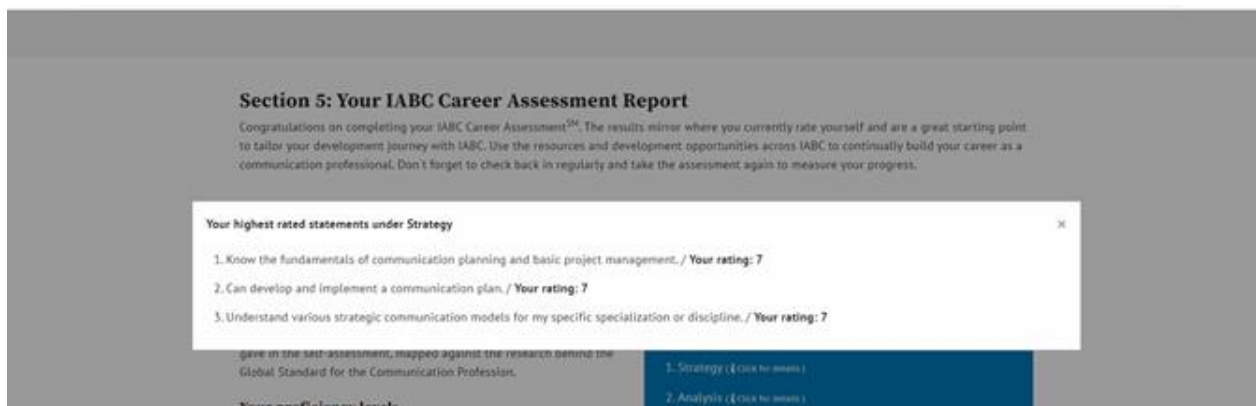
In your report, look at the *Areas you feel proficient* in and *Areas you feel less proficient*.

In the online report areas, click "*I*" for detail on the individual statement rating to see the statements that shaped your result. If using the printed report, find this detail at the end of the document.

Following the steps below, review the statements in your report to identify those you scored at higher and lower proficiency to identify your knowledge areas or skills where you can grow. While doing this analysis, keep in mind the goal of where you want to go.

What are your strengths?

First, look at areas where you feel most proficient.



Copy and paste the list into your document. List the Principles that hold competencies you feel most proficient in, i.e., those with a proficiency rating of 6 & 7. Use this to guide your reflection on your accomplishments and strengths.

See the example reflections below. Ask yourself: Are you confident in the rating you selected? Can you go deeper into these competencies, moving closer to a specialty?

A Word of Caution: Ask yourself if you were objective when you gave yourself this rating. It is better to rate yourself lower and identify development areas than placing yourself where you want to be and developing a blind spot in your career development.

As you begin to develop a career plan for areas you feel most proficient, this is an excellent time to go to iabc.com to:

- Search for the Principle(s) or topic areas you want to focus on.
- Review About: Code of Ethics, Diversity Statement for development interests
- Consider Certification. Go to Career: GCCC Communication Certification
- Connect with other communication professionals on The Hub or join a Special Interest Group
- Learn at Webinars, Virtual Events, and World Conference Recordings
- Read articles, blogs, podcasts, and Gold Quill case studies.

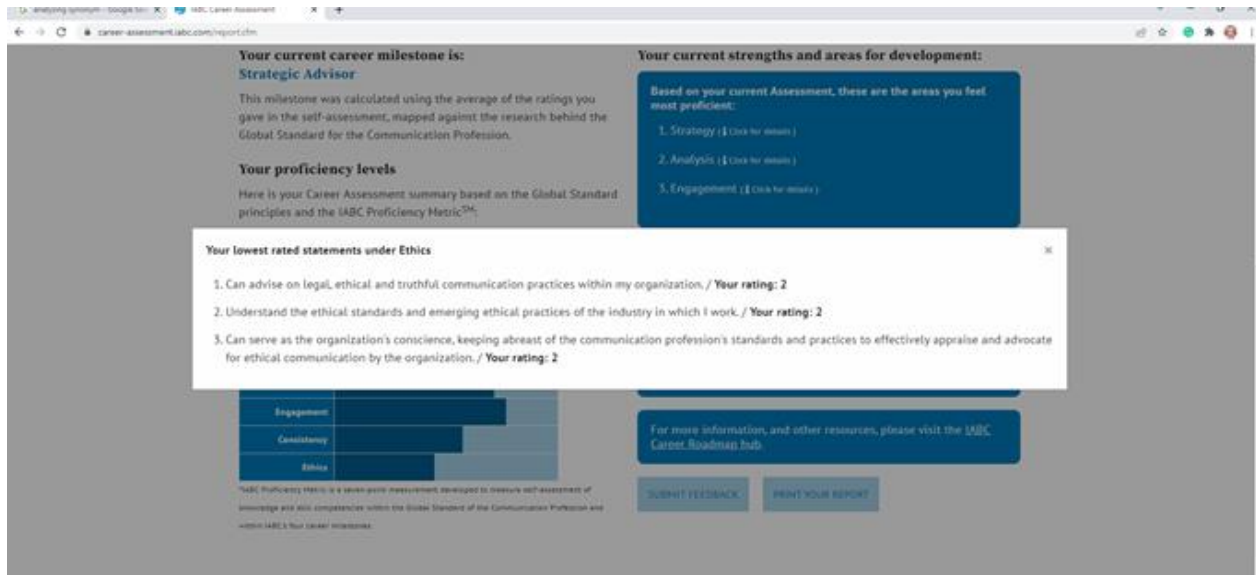
In addition, go to other sources on your interests. The more ideas and information you gather, the better your plan can take you where you want to go.

An Example of a Possible Career Plan

Competency	Principle	Proficiency rating of 6 & 7	Why did I rate myself high	What action will I take to maintain this competency	Timing of action
Can select the appropriate measurement instrument, apply them, interpret the findings and present the results to a team leader to include in a report	Analysis	7 Mastered	I have the knowledge, skill and behavior necessary to be proficient in this competency.	Focus on the knowledge and skill statements under Analysis that I rated myself lower. If it is a knowledge statement, I can read a book or attend a webinar. If a skill, I can identify an opportunity to put my knowledge into action.	Q3 this year
Know how to write and edit content for different channel formats (e.g. print, web, digital, speaking notes), proofread copy, develop a brand and manage events develop communication plans.	Consistency	7 Mastered	I have the knowledge for this competency.	I can identify an opportunity where I can put my knowledge into action	Between now and the end of Q2

Your development areas

Next, examine areas where you feel least proficient.



Copy and paste the list into your document. List the Principles that hold competencies in which you feel least proficient, i.e., those with a proficiency rating of 1 to 5. Use this to guide your reflection on your areas of development.

Ask yourself: How can I prioritize these areas and develop them to move closer to proficiency?

Follow the same steps for gathering ideas and information as you did in the areas of proficiency above.

An Example of a Possible Career Plan

Competency	Principle	Proficiency rating of 1-5 & no proficiency	Why did I rate myself low	What action will I take to build this competency	Timing & metric of action
Understand the ethical standards and emerging ethical practices of the industry in which I work.	Ethics	1 Currently learning	This is knowledge I don't have or been exposed to	Seek out a course on ethics related to my industry and seek out experts within my organization to help mentor me	Q3 this year to attain a novice proficiency
Can develop and implement a communication strategy and assist stakeholders to develop communication plans.	Strategy	2 Novice	I have had some exposure to doing this but have not had a lot of exposure in assisting a number of stakeholders	I will spend more time assisting stakeholders in building communication plans to gain confidence	Between now and the end of Q2 to attain an independent proficiency

Putting Your Career Aspirations into Action

After completing your analysis and reflection, continue to explore career development opportunities to increase your competencies or proficiency in a Principle.

Explore the Principles on page 8 to choose your next area of focus.

Using the Proficiency Metric on page 9, determine where and how to become more proficient. Plan to raise your competency as a Communication Professional by

- Gaining or increasing your knowledge through a course, boot camp, certifications or books.
- Applying what you have learned or know in a real-world situation.
- Or broaden your proficiency by repeating your result(s) in multiple and diverse real-world scenarios.
- Articulating the risks and benefits of applying your knowledge in a new and innovative application to a real-world situation.

Enjoy the journey of exploring your career!