



## Career levels of the communication profession

### **Foundation**

This is the entry level of the profession. At this level the communication professional attains the education and develops the core skills required to be competent within all Principles of the Global Standard and to work across disciplines. Foundational skills are required to do the job and understand the organization's culture, structure and function.

At this milestone the professional is expected to contribute under relatively close supervision and direction from a more senior person, and is expected to exercise initiative and creativity within a well-defined area. They must master basic and routine communication tasks, and demonstrate competence on a portion of a larger communication project or task.

### **Generalist/Specialist**

At this level the communication professional branches into a role with either a specific or a generalist focus, where work experience provides opportunities for a more strategic and problem-solving approach. The communication professional will apply a deeper understanding and practice of the Principles.

Here, the communication professional begins to refine their career choices. They can be satisfied as a generalist or specialist for a number of years or for a whole career, but expertise and responsibility will continue to grow. Some professionals never need or want to move away from this milestone, thriving on interdependent work. They will build expertise in at least one area of the industry. They will develop credibility and a reputation while building strong internal networks of relationships related on their area of expertise and gain greater ability to develop strategic focus and problem solving techniques.

### **Strategic Advisor**

Maturing as a communication professional through consistent application of the Principles, at this milestone they are expanding expertise and innovation. The communication professional assumes increased responsibilities, including resource management.

They are interdependent, taking responsibility for work other than their own and developing others within the organization. To accommodate their personal development



needs, they seek to build additional areas of expertise. They have strong interpersonal skills, broad business perspectives, stimulate others through ideas and knowledge, and effectively represent the organization's clients and external groups. They have expanded their expertise in niche disciplines and explored innovations within these disciplines. They are highly skilled and confident, providing strategic communication advice and counsel to the organization's leadership.

### **Business Leader**

The communication professional at this milestone demonstrates the ability to serve at a senior peer level, leads within an organization by providing counsel, and helps to set organizational direction at a strategic level. They set a standard for application of the Principles.

As business leaders, they play a key role in shaping the future of the organization by sponsoring promising people, programs and ideas. At this milestone they have developed a distinct competence in several areas of expertise and often have a regional or national reputation. The professional influences the future of the organization through original concepts that often lead to changing the way business is done. They are adept at seeing new business opportunities, motivating buy-in and gaining resources. They competently represent the organization on critical strategic issues, and are sought after to provide counsel and function at a peer level with other senior executives.