NEED/OPTOPORTUNITY / With the 2007 decision to unify the many business areas that comprise Novozymes’ non-enzyme activity under the umbrella BioBusiness, two of the organization’s needs coalesced into an opportunity.

THE BIRTH OF BIOBUSINESS
Novozymes is the world’s leading provider of industrial enzymes. Over the years, however, the company simultaneously built up substantial knowledge in bioinnovation outside of the enzyme field. In September 2007 Novozymes combined its non-enzyme activities into a major new business unit. BioBusiness comprised 7 percent of annual revenues and employed 650 of Novozymes’ 5,000 employees. A vehicle for building significant new business, BioBusiness aims to be a DKK6 billion (US$1+ billion) business by 2018.

MAKING A COMMUNICATION MODEL A BUSINESS REALITY
From 2005–2007, Novozymes’ business developed rapidly, and new industries, such as biofuel, compelled the organization to engage on the world stage. Internally and externally, Novozymes needed to improve its communication competencies. Corporate communications’ answer was VOICE—a Vehicle for Orchestrating International Communications Excellence. This comprehensive mapping, target-setting, and implementation tool envisioned the entire organization working proactively, consciously and systematically with communication to reach Novozymes’ business goals. The VOICE wheel itself divided communication into overall strategic, internal, and external areas, and tied these respectively to the pivotal business goals of supporting strategic direction, securing engagement and efficiency, and building Novozymes’ reputation. In late 2007, it was a model that had yet to cement its business legitimacy.

TWO NEEDS COME TOGETHER
While many of its challenges were not uncommon for a substantial new business unit, BioBusiness was uncommonly dedicated to using communication to solve problems. A month after its creation, BioBusiness and corporate communications started putting words on the issues: lack of internal integration and common goals, unclear organizational structure, confusion during a strategy process, and uncertain futures for projects.

Confusion persisted even with the launch of the strategy. Phone surveys following a management road trip revealed that 45 percent of employees at one location did not understand their role in BioBusiness’ strategy. At the same time, People’s Opinion scores—the annual questionnaire for taking the pulse of the organization—showed BioBusiness lagging behind the rest of the organization with:

- A greater than 12 percent difference in satisfaction and motivation.
• A greater than 8 percent difference in questions concerning employee’s immediate manager.
• A greater than 8 percent difference in understanding the strategic direction.

All three measurements placed in the medium range.

At the same time, corporate communications had a chance to roll out the entire concept of VOICE, starting with the target setting tool to identify the three major communication focus areas, selected according to:
• The impact on BioBusiness’ strategy.
• The need for improvement.
• Scope, specifically, development activities lasting more than one day.

Corporate communications and BioBusiness decided to spend their energies on addressing the following:
• **Communication strategy.** Challenge: Create an overview of the entire communication landscape, prioritize the right activities, and use communications to roll out the strategy.
• **Line communication.** Challenge: Ensure employee understanding of the business strategy and focus on line managers’ communication competences and their systematic use of communication to engage employees.
• **Change communication.** Challenge: Integrate acquisitions in diverse locations into Novozymes, speak convincingly to stakeholders in situations of stress and channel change communication through the line.

**INTENDED AUDIENCES / PRIMARY TARGET GROUP**
Despite a mandate to conquer new territory for Novozymes, it was clear in 2007 that BioBusiness needed to unify its employees before venturing into new terrain. The primary target group was top management, line managers and employees, totaling 650 worldwide. Job functions were disparate; however, managers, professionals and middle management comprised two-thirds of the whole. Culturally, BioBusiness was an odd mix of old and new. The majority of professionals from the Danish headquarters had been drawn to the possibilities inherent in BioBusiness, while operations in several countries were newly acquired. Line managers with influence over employee engagement became the principal vehicle for reaching employees.

Another primary target group was BioBusiness stakeholders in the rest of Novozymes, especially executive management. Success depended particularly on the support of the enzyme business, R&D (research and development), and the cross-organizational teams in charge of research allocations and direction.

**GOALS AND OBJECTIVES /** With primary stakeholders located inside BioBusiness, the team turned to their voice as expressed in Novozymes’ annual People’s Opinion survey to measure effectiveness. The motivation and satisfaction rating is a key indicator in Novozymes’ ambition. Based on BioBusiness’ pressing internal need to form a solid foundation for future business growth, the success criteria were not financial. In addition,
the team evaluated VOICE in the context of the BioBusiness goals and objectives. In reaching those goals and accumulating user feedback, they could validate the model’s business worth.

GOALS
1. Communicate the strategic direction as the basis of all communication activities.
2. Communicate systematically and proactively to reach business targets.
3. Increase employee engagement by improving the communication competencies of line managers.
4. Communicate change without damaging employee loyalty.

PROCESS OBJECTIVES
Overall:
1. Develop an additional set of questions regarding communications and strategic understanding for BioBusiness employees in the annual People’s Opinion employee survey (2009).

Strategy:

Line Communications:
3. A. Develop one-day communication workshop for BioBusiness line managers. Train 140 managers through workshops. Each should receive an average rating of 4 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 as the maximum score (2008–2009).


Change Communications:
4. Develop communication strategies for significant change projects to ensure consistent messaging (2008–2010).

EFFECT OBJECTIVES
In People’s Opinion 2009, achieve high scores in:
1. Overall level of satisfaction and motivation (one question).
2. Strategic direction and communication (five new questions and one regularly recurring question).
3. Communications of top management and the overall rating of immediate superiors (three questions).
4. Employee loyalty (one question).

SOLUTION OVERVIEW / Identifying focus areas set the direction, but the team still needed to define concrete activities. To secure necessary insight into the business, they reviewed activities in regular meetings with a committed BioBusiness team in the form of
the executive vice president, organizational director and customer communications manager.

**Communication Strategy**
The communication strategies set out to convert relevant business goals into communication goals. The team felt that if BioBusiness and its three major business areas gained support from internal and external stakeholders, the likelihood of succeeding with their targets would increase. To that end, the team created sets of key messages for their business goals and a schedule to contact stakeholders. The communication strategy contained:

1. **A communication framework.** *Purpose:* To explain the concept of the communication strategies.
2. **A business framework.** *Purpose:* To make visible the strategic framework of the business strategy—its vision, mission, key enablers, goals, etc., while reinforcing its place in the larger organization.
3. **Communication strategies for overall goals.** *Purpose:* To formulate the specific communication goals based on the business goals and develop separate strategies for each goal.
4. **Implementing the communication strategy.** *Purpose:* To show governance, assign roles and responsibilities, define the rollout, and schedule regular reviews.

**Line Communication**
Improving the communication competencies became the guiding idea for the team’s work with line managers. As the bridge to reaching every BioBusiness employee and the source of the most valuable information about strategy and daily work, line managers participated in one-day communication workshops that the team developed and delivered in Europe, Canada and the U.S. For the executive vice president and vice presidents, a second step beyond the course was developed—an individual development program, which is currently being rolled out and will be offered to key line managers over the next two years.

**Workshop**
The course addresses the three roles inherent in effect line communication:

1. The role as a works manager: learning how to build a daily communication system and answer urgent questions from employees.
2. The role as a change agent: learning how to understand employees better, set communication goals, and develop key messages and a communication plan.
3. The role as a visionary strategist: learning how to involve employees in the strategy and inspire them to reach business goals.

At each workshop, the head of the business area briefly presented the area strategy, which became the basis for several exercises.

**Executive Consultancy**
The communication program provides a framework for addressing individual communication challenges and improving overall effectiveness. The team initiated the development program by creating a full picture of the focus person’s communication competencies, built on a charisma barometer developed by filming the person during public speaking engagements and an online survey of stakeholders. From this picture, the team drafted a development plan together with the focus person, and then supported implementation and follow-up.

**CHANGE COMMUNICATION**

New strategies, organizational changes, acquisitions and divestments have honed BioBusiness. They are essential and continuous in a growing organization—and on the communications front, the team developed a set of tools.

Required tools:
- Project communication template, developing key messages and detailed plans
- Q&A
- Basic slide deck

Supporting tools (as necessary):
- Key messages and overview of slide decks to the project team
- A communication package of key messages and advice to line managers

All tools were based on the key messages and built on the drivers and barriers of the most important stakeholders. To ensure that changes made sense in terms of the BioBusiness strategy, all communications maintained a strong focus on the overall picture and the direction.

**IMPLEMENTATION AND CHALLENGES** / The development and implementation of VOICE in BioBusiness have been the responsibility of two communications employees, (who have also handled concurrent change projects and training in the enzymes business). From BioBusiness, the customer communications manager has been the primary collaborator and contact person. Consultants were not used, and there was no allocated budget for this initiative. The costs were minimal, but the lessons great:

**LESS IS MORE**

A 10-page Word template and seven accompanying pages of instructions may represent a comprehensive communication strategy, but as the team quickly discovered, it failed to garner much enthusiasm outside the communications department. The same is true of asking people under pressure to imagine a compelling metaphor or picture to explain the change—these comparisons inevitably turn sour somewhere in the logic. In other words, the last two years for VOICE were about simplification and targeting the tools.

**BROKERING GOODWILL**
Working with BioBusiness had two clear advantages: There were no preexisting structures to negotiate, and the team had direct access to a management team with remarkably little ego and a lot of goodwill. At the same time, they all were subject to the many necessary change projects that made time lines difficult and strategy work occasionally obsolete even as it was being put into the plans. Welcomed as strategic partners, the team constantly had to balance between being consultants and content providers. And through it all, they were very, very busy.

**MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION OF OUTCOMES / PROCESS OBJECTIVES**

**Overall:**
1. People’s Opinion 2009 contained five questions specific to BioBusiness about strategic direction and communications.

**Strategy:**
2. Communication strategies were developed for BioBusiness and the sub-business areas.

**Line Communications:**
3. The team developed the line communications course and trained over 140 managers in eight workshops with average ratings of 4.5 on a scale of 1–5.
4. The executive consultancy concept was developed and the executive vice president is currently being trained.

**Change Communications:**
5. The team handled communication for more than five major change projects.

**EFFECT OBJECTIVES**

In People’s Opinion 2009, BioBusiness scored high on each selected question. The percentage changes between 2007 and 2009 were significant and impressive.
1. Overall level of satisfaction and motivation: 16.1 percent increase
2. Strategic direction and communications: 15.9 percent increase
3. Communications of top management and vice presidents: 13.6 and 9.7 percent increases respectively; overall rating of immediate superior: 14.3 percent increase
4. Employee loyalty: rated “very high” with an increase of 2.5 percent

**NEW DOORS OPEN**

Success spreads, and during 2009, VOICE became a part of the enzyme business as the team helped the new strategy launch with an overall communication strategy and six communication workshops for line managers, with an average rating of 4.6. People’s Opinion 2009 confirmed that the trained line managers not only increased their ratings in key indicators, but that they also outperformed their counterparts in the enzyme business. The business units in Novozymes increasingly use a VOICE that speaks to be heard.