



Case Study – Dow Chemical

Challenge:

As measured by its annual growth rate, Dow's ability to create value in the 1990's wasn't meeting management's expectations: Dow was growing in lockstep with GDP. In response, Dow's executives made boosting value creation – for customers first – a top priority. Finding ways to accomplish this goal was the challenge.

Action:

One of the strategic tools Dow considered using to jump-start the value creation process was its brand. A global communications audit, however, revealed a surprising fact: *There was no consensus as to what made Dow different.* Rallying employees to the “value creation cause” would be difficult at best, if people couldn't agree on what made Dow, Dow. Armed with this insight, we held a ‘Growth Summit’ with the communications team. The meeting yielded concrete ideas for shaping all messaging around the theme of value creation – not simply in the form of information, but as *calls to action* designed to deepen Dow's relationships with key stakeholders.

Result:

In the period from 1999 to 2009, Dow's growth rate has averaged nearly 13% - nearly 3 times GDP. Many factors have contributed to that resurgence, including the Growth Summit, which got management's attention and sparked a global identity study. The results of the study yielded a new corporate mission based on how Dow creates proprietary value – *to constantly improve what is essential to human progress.* Today, that mission remains at the core of the enterprise and informs Dow's 2015 sustainability goals.

“Larry's insights led us to reconnect with the passion and integrity that is at the core of Dow – and to translate that into new energy and forward momentum.”

Christine Mei, former Director, Brand Management, Dow Chemical

Roadmap to Value Creation

An In-Depth Identity Leadership Program for Senior Communications Teams

Are you searching for ways to instill confidence in your company during the recession, while emphasizing long-term growth?

Would having a leading indicator that predicts employee engagement and business performance influence your strategy?

Creating value in the marketplace – *proprietary value* – is the key to a healthy and prosperous enterprise in this, or any, economy. But getting there calls for more than rigorous cost management and maintaining profitability. It calls for understanding and communicating the unique characteristics that define the organization's value-creating potential – its core identity.

Over the past 25 years, *Identity-based management* has been a stabilizing force for many organizations during difficult times and now is proving to be a leading indicator of critical results: New quantitative research shows a powerful correlation between identity strength – both personal and organizational – employee engagement, and business performance. In short, *a strong identity drives value creation.*

To help senior communications teams capitalize on the power of identity, we have designed a comprehensive introduction to identity-based management, which you can use to dramatically increase the impact of communications practices and processes, starting now.

Built upon 8 Essential Questions, Quantum™ will give communications teams new perspective on, and tools for how to:

- Capitalize on identity to create messages today, which set the stage for recovery and growth
- Gauge organizational identity strength and its impact on value creation
- Align the interests of all internal and external stakeholders to the benefit of the enterprise
- Develop a brand strategy based on the company's value-creating potential
- Organize the communications function to reinforce and help drive the company's value creation process

In sum, Quantum™ provides a strategic framework that helps senior communications teams better meet current challenges, and which fundamentally changes how all communications challenges will be addressed in the years ahead.

About The Identity Circle

The Identity Circle is a research, education and consulting company, which helps organizations and individuals clarify and capitalize on their unique, value-creating capacities in ways dramatically improve performance, impact and reputation. The company offers Identity Alignment Surveys, Identity Mapping® courses for employees and individuals, and specialized consulting programs for senior executives and their teams.

The Identity Circle is founded on the life-long study of identity by Larry Ackerman. Mr. Ackerman's work has helped put many leading organizations on the path to long-term value creation, including AARP, Dow Chemical, Fidelity Investments, Gates Corporation, Ingersoll Rand, Korn/Ferry, Lockheed Martin, Maytag, and State Farm Insurance.

The work of The Identity Circle is codified in two groundbreaking books by Larry Ackerman, *Identity is Destiny: Leadership and Roots of Value Creation* (for companies) and *The Identity Code: The 8 Essential Questions for Finding Your Purpose and Place in the World* (for individuals).

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How we work with you

Quantum™ has three main steps:



Step 1: Discovery

First, each member of the communications team, independently, answers 3 questions. Responses are submitted to us for review and analysis.

- *What is the single greatest communications challenge posed by the recession?*
- *What are 2 actions you believe would significantly heighten both the real and the perceived impact of communications on the company?*
- *What is the core value proposition of the enterprise as a whole and to what extent do you believe key stakeholders understand it?*

Second, we conduct an online review of the company and its industry, including key enterprise-level competitors, selected together, in advance.

Step 2: A One-Day Identity Leadership Workshop

- We present the answers to the Discovery questions as a way to frame the workshop
- We share the results of quantitative research that demonstrates the impact of identity on employee engagement and performance
- As a group, we discuss the 8 Essential Questions, how they relate to the Discovery answers, and their particular communications implications
- Specific conclusions are drawn and/or actions identified with respect to each question and its impact on value creation

Step 3: Communications Action Plan

The Identity Circle submits a final 2-part report. Part 1 summarizes all conclusions, proposed actions and emerging message themes into a high-level strategy designed to respond to current challenges. Part 2 establishes an expanded framework for communications planning and execution in the future.

* The 8 Essential Questions are drawn from *The Identity Code*, by Larry Ackerman, and have been adapted to meet the needs and challenges of organizations. To preview the 8 Questions, go to www.theidentitycircle.com.