

## Communicating Strategy

**Can You Say What Your Strategy Is?** by David J. Collis and Michael G. Rukstad. This article from the Harvard Business Review summarises how to describe your strategy in a way that is compelling. Collis highlights three things that have to be made clear: The Objective of the strategy, the Scope of the strategy and the (competitive) Advantage of the strategy. Fortunately, the article appears to be available for free.

I also find that the **strategy triangle** is a good way of summarising a strategy, and it is similar to what Collis and Rukstad say.

A powerful tool for structuring communications is the Pyramid Principle by Barbara Minto. I provide some information on this in **Chapter one of my book** but Barbara is quite savvy at keeping simple summary guides off the internet! Her materials can be accessed at **her website** or her books via Amazon. Or, you can try trawling the web - for example try these links to:

**A simple guide** to the pyramid principle

**An article** about writing using the pyramid principle

The Pyramid principle is based on the idea of hypothesis-based thinking - that it is possible to structure your thoughts in a way that makes critical analysis more focused and efficient. I have found this to be useful not just in communicating strategy but in getting management teams to coalesce around key priorities, check that what they are doing fits with these priorities, fill in "white space" where they are not doing enough and generally hone and define their strategy. You can use the Pyramid principle at the beginning of a strategy process to get your starting hypothesis identified - and then focus data collection on testing the main points.

Another way of thinking about how to communicate strategy comes from Dick Rumelt's popular book, Good Strategy Bad Strategy. He argues that every good strategy contains:

A diagnosis: an explanation of the nature of the challenge. A good diagnosis simplifies the often-overwhelming complexity of reality by identifying certain aspects of the situation as being the critical ones.

A guiding policy: an overall approach chosen to cope with or overcome the obstacles identified in the diagnosis.

Coherent actions: steps that are coordinated with one another to support the accomplishment of the guiding policy.

**Click here** for his McKinsey Quarterly article. (You will need to register to get the article, but this is free).