

Case Study: The Chartered Insurance Institute
 Focus and clarity with a
“STRATEGY ON A PAGE”

The background

Since taking the helm of the Chartered Insurance Institute in 2016, chief executive Sian Fisher has been leading the organisation on a fast-paced journey.

A strategic review shortly after her appointment confirmed that the status quo was unsustainable. Upheaval in the market environment – driven by such factors as rising consumer expectations, new technologies including Big Data, and globalisation – meant the tide of change could not be resisted. One of the world’s longest-established professional bodies needed to adapt to survive.

Updated products, new market sectors, an overhaul of the operating model, different ways of engaging with members. The transformation agenda was packed with ideas and initiatives.

The challenge

A key finding from the strategic review was a lack of clarity about the organisation’s direction. This was apparent not just amongst external stakeholders – but also amongst the CII’s own workforce, including its senior management team.

Chase Noble has been working with the CII to create clarity in place of uncertainty, and precision in place of ambiguity. The goal is simply stated: that every stakeholder uses the same concepts and language to describe

the CII’s role in the marketplace, and its direction of travel. The understanding should be consistent – whether it’s held by the CEO of a major life insurer, a Whitehall policymaker, a millennial claims handler studying for an insurance certificate, or an agent in the CII’s Customer Service department.

The solution

It was agreed that a clear articulation of the CII’s strategy would be of huge value in building a shared understanding. Simplicity was essential – a 96-page strategic document was not the answer. Instead, the challenge was to represent everything that mattered on a single sheet of A4; in other words, the firm needed SOAP. A ‘Strategy On A Page’.

For greatest impact, it was vital the SOAP’s content should not be imposed. Rather, it should emerge organically from a widespread internal and external consultation programme. Chase Noble worked with people throughout the CII, and beyond, to develop a SOAP which rose to the challenge – brimming with straightforward language to answer fundamental questions including:

- **Why are we here?** – articulating the purpose and vision
- **Where do we focus?** – defining the market sectors and customer segments where the CII is most active
- **What do we do?** – identifying the three priorities that will ensure the firm survives and thrives

- **How do we measure success?** – setting out performance indicators that will demonstrate progress
- **How do we work?** – bringing to life the firm’s values, culture and operating model

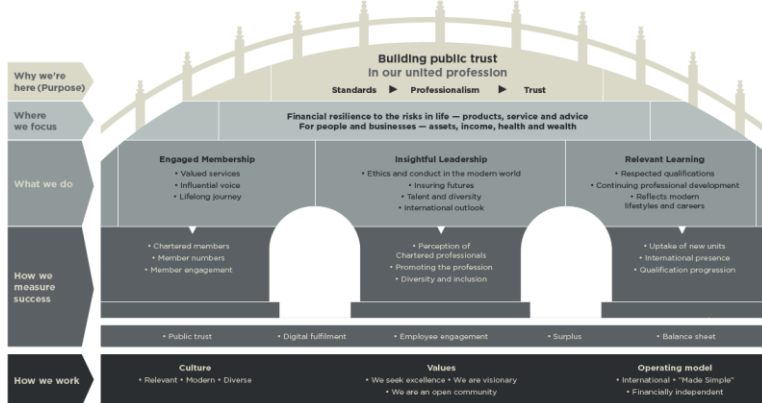
The result

The extensive consultation revealed a number of new and emerging priorities. The Strategy On A Page, which was finalised and announced in early 2018, fully reflects all these contributions.

For example:

- **The SOAP places great emphasis on the CII’s role in building public trust.** As social media and press scrutiny have increased public scepticism about the established professions, it falls to professional bodies to work with members on ways to re-establish trust, and strengthen it year on year
- **The three strategies of Relevant Learning, Engaged Membership and Insightful Leadership** are of equal importance in fulfilling this purpose. In particular, four agendas have been selected for the Insightful Leadership activity – topics where a professional body can make a legitimate difference, and are not already adequately handled by existing commercial operators
- **The CII’s culture** – being modern and diverse – must reflect not only the membership, but the composition of wider society
- **International servicing and delivery is a pre-requisite** in an age when employers are increasingly global, and professionals will often work overseas for extended periods during their career

The bridge imagery chosen for the SOAP has ample metaphorical significance. It connects to the journey mentioned at the outset of this article. It embodies the need for robust foundations. And it involves multiple layers which make no sense isolation, but – when connected in a single structure – provide immense value for all its users.



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