



Public Affairs Council

Public Affairs Strategic Planning 2026

18th September 2025

Brussels

Dr. Alan Hardacre



Strategic
Planning and
Alignment is a
challenge that
the Profession is
not meeting

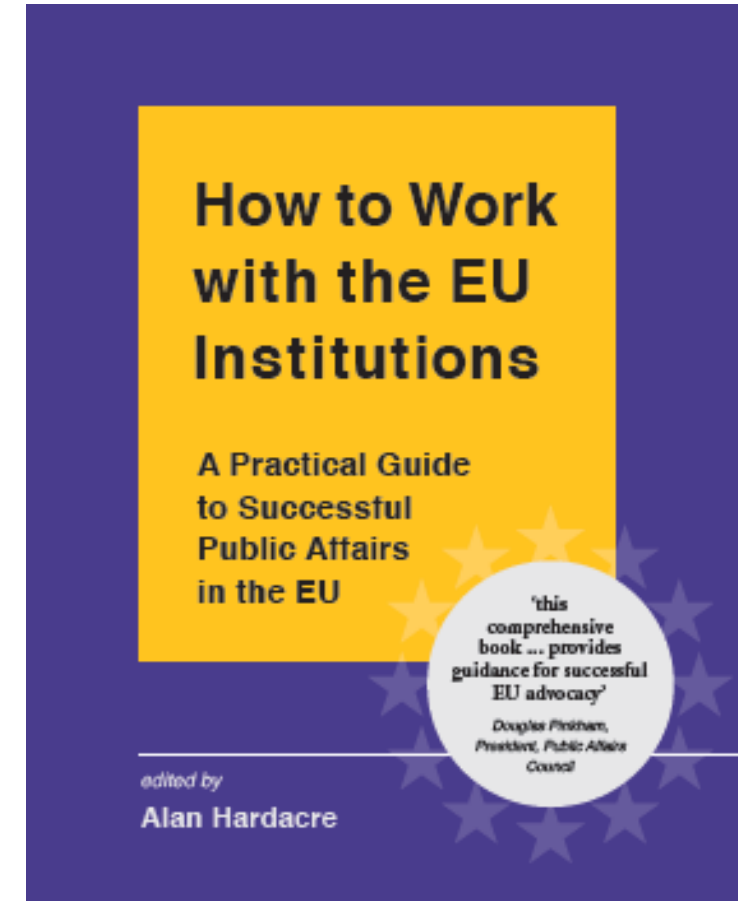
From “Shape the Policy Environment”
“Improve Reputation”
“Manage External Risks”
“We held a successful cocktail”
*Too vague...no tangible measurement...no
clear impact...hard to communicate success*

To Demonstrate tangible value-impact
Results-driven performance
Measure & Quantify our impact
*To thrive and grow as a function we need
more data, more accountability, more
measurement and better communication*



Dr. Alan Hardacre

- Co-founder of Advocacy Strategy / Advocacy Academy / Lanzcape
- Passionate about professionalizing Public Affairs
- Consulting, teaching, coaching on Public Affairs
- Ex-director of Corporate Affairs @ Imperial Brands
- Over 25 years Public Affairs experience
- Author of several articles & books
- Long time Board Member of Public Affairs Council
- Visiting Professor in UK, Thailand, Switzerland, Belgium, Netherlands



Public Affairs Council Skills Trainings 2025

April 15th

**Measure & Communicate the Value
of your Public Affairs Work
Internally**

Topics: Measuring Impact, Internal
Plans, Visibility, Education

September 18th

**Public Affairs Strategic Planning:
GOST**

Topics: Structure and Framework for
Public Affairs success in 2026


November 20th

**Mapping & Engaging EU
Stakeholders**

Topics: Stakeholder Identification,
Mapping, Segmentation and
Engagement

Why are we not meeting the challenge?

	Business	Politics
Metrics	Revenue & Profit	Votes & Influence
Language	ROI, market share, competitive advantage	Social Justice, policy framework, multi-annual budgets
Decision-making speed	Quick	Follows electoral and legislative timelines

 power thesaurus

Synonyms for Poor explanation

bad explanation

bad justification

cheap explanation

faulty reason

ill explanation



Outline of the session

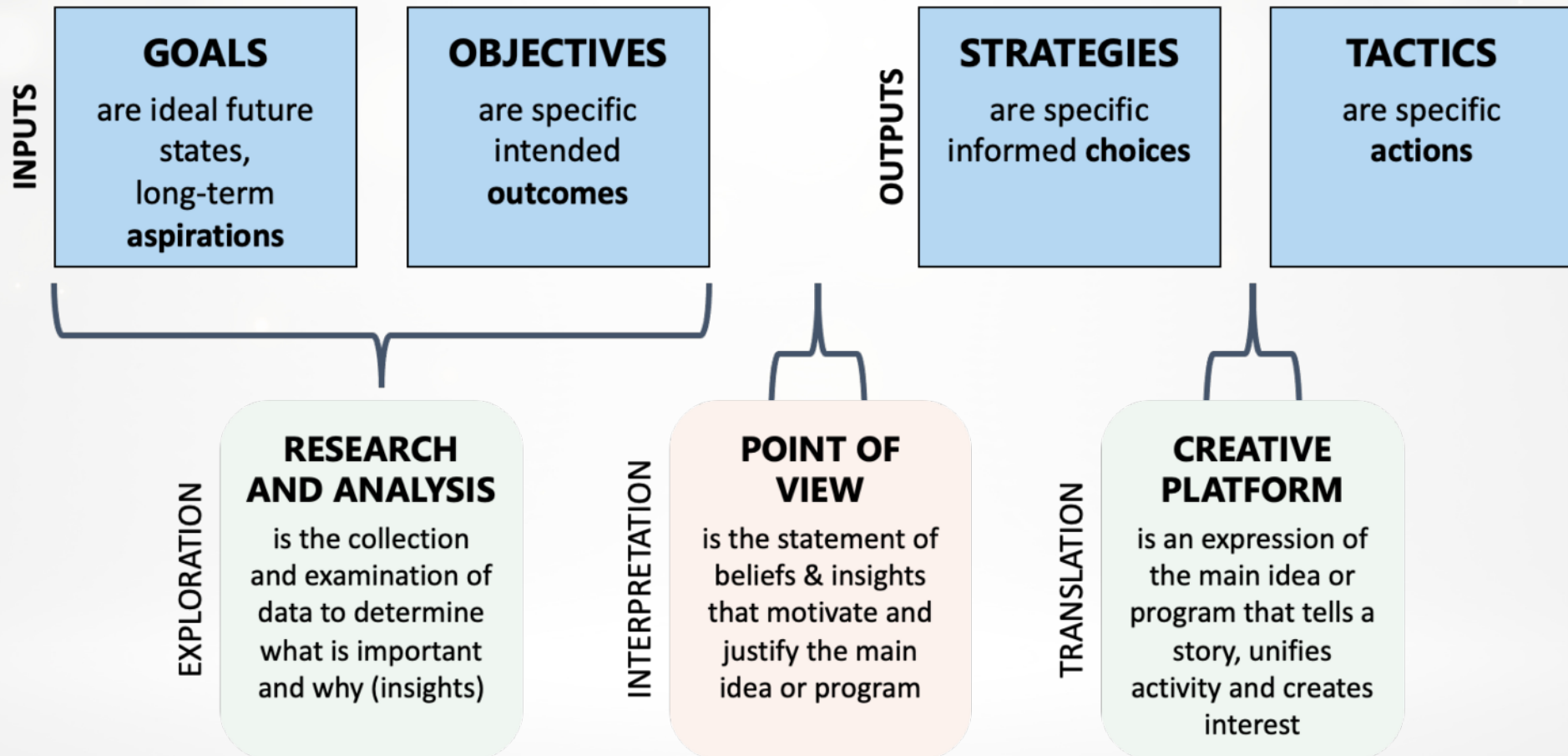
Topic	Duration	Lead	Detail
Introduction	15 mins	Alan	Introduction to Public Affairs Strategic Planning
Goals-Priorities Objectives	45 mins	Alan	Review of goals - objectives - priorities in Public Affairs Work
Strategies & Tactics	45 mins	Alan	Review of key strategies and tactics to deliver Public Affairs Success
How Dashboards & Timelines	45 mins	All	Review How to work together for success Example Dashboards
Discussion & Q&A	15 mins	All	Key Take-Aways and Q&A






Plenary Questions

What challenges do you encounter with your internal strategic planning?

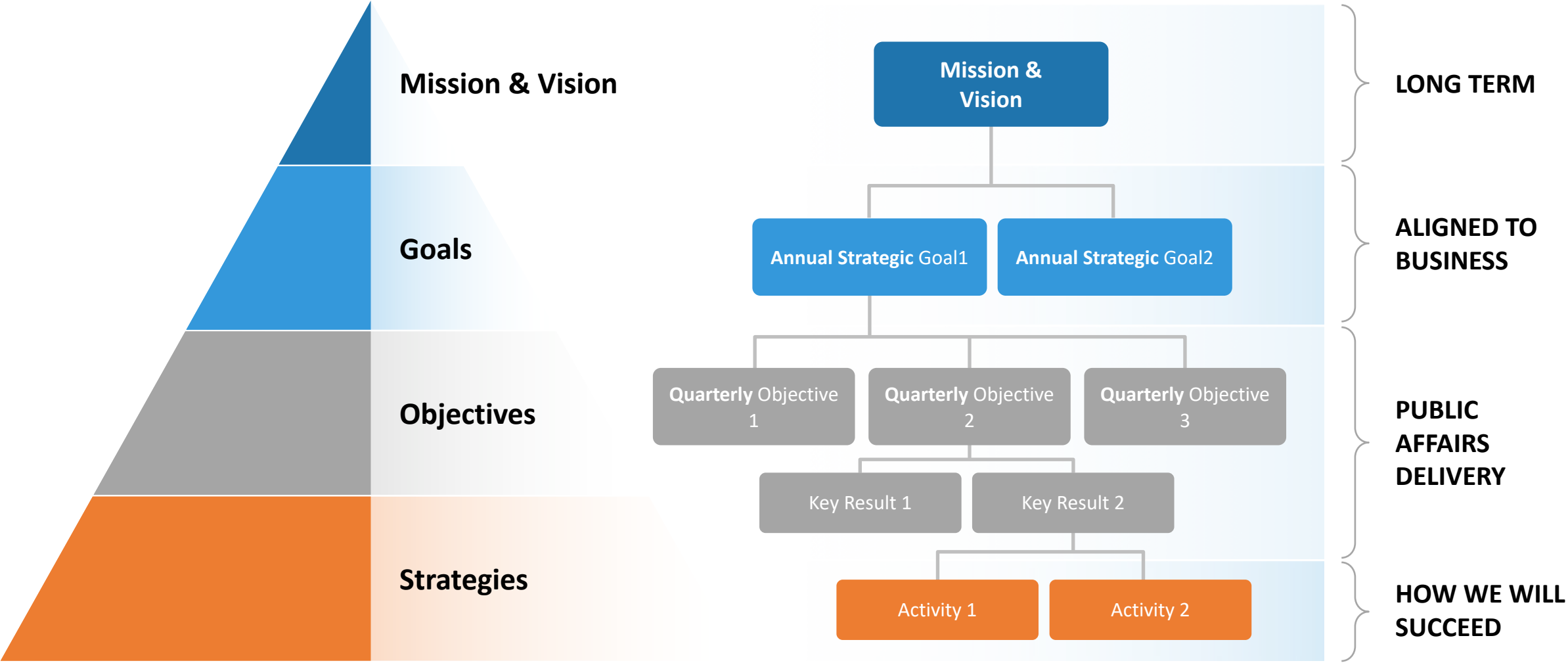
Do you have any examples of things you have done that have changed this / been successful?

G.O.S.T FRAMEWORK



G	H	O	S	T
Goal	How	Objectives	Strategy	Tactics
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ABC ✓ ABC ✓ ABC ✓ ABC 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PA Team ✓ GMs ✓ Training Support 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Objective 1 ✓ Objective 2 ✓ Objective 3 ✓ Objective 4 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Trade Associations ✓ Communications ✓ Echo Chamber 	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Events ✓ Research ✓ Conferences

Public Affairs Overview 2026



Public Affairs Best Practice



GOALS / PRIORITIES & OBJECTIVES

1



"We're picking our objectives for the year."

Public Affairs Objectives: Many Ways to get it WRONG

Setting **too many** objectives

Making objectives **too broad**

Putting all objectives on the **same time horizon**

Making objectives **too easy**

The objective is **a tactic**

Plenary Question

How do you determine your high-level PA objectives for the year?

We make them for ourselves

In a yearly discussion with the business

We are given objectives by the Executive

We don't really have a clear process

Step 2: Set your Priorities

Why does it matter?

In public affairs, you're constantly bombarded by new regulations, policy shifts, and stakeholder demands. If everything feels urgent, nothing truly is, and you risk diluting your impact. Here's why setting clear priorities is essential:

- **Strengthen strategic alignment:** When you target the right priorities, your PA activities naturally support overarching business goals and stakeholder needs.
- **Use resources wisely:** Time, budget, and expertise are finite—focusing on the issues that matter most helps you drive real results.
- **Cut through the noise:** By intentionally deciding what not to tackle, you protect your resources from scattershot efforts.
- **Know what to say no to:** Knowing what your focus is allows you to say no to anything outside this – allowing you the dedicated focus needed to deliver results.

Effective prioritization keeps you proactive, laser-focused, and prepared to seize high-impact opportunities—even amid constant change. Obviously, prioritization needs constant attention, and it's up to the PA professional to keep prioritization matrices updated on a constant basis. Try to consistently look out for potential changes in the political landscape, this will allow you to anticipate potential threats or opportunities before they escalate.

Start Point: Your Issue Inventory

Issue Name	Description	What is the issue?	What could go wrong (risk)?	What could go well (opportunity)?	Should we focus on it?
SBTi Net-Zero Standard v2.0	The Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) Corporate Net-Zero Standard is a global voluntary framework that defines what it means for a company to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions in line with limiting global warming to 1.5°C	A new version of the rules for how companies set climate targets. It may change what kinds of carbon credits or certificates they can use.	Some of CLIENT products might no longer be accepted, so fewer clients might want to buy them.	If CLIENT products are accepted, more companies will need them — and may ask CLIENT for advice too.	Yes – Many clients use these rules, and CLIENT can help shape what's allowed.
IMO GHG Fuel Intensity Standard	The IMO GHG Fuel Intensity (GFI) Standard is a new binding international regulation being developed by the IMO to reduce the greenhouse gas intensity of marine fuels used by commercial vessels.	A new global rule for shipping companies that sets a carbon limit on ship fuels and allows trading of surplus certificates.	If CLIENT fuels or certificates don't meet the rules, clients might stop using them.	If the rules support CLIENT fuels, there's a chance to help shipping companies comply and to trade new certificates.	Yes – It's a new market and CLIENT can take a leading role if the rules fit.

Prioritization Indicators

Issue:

- Any legislation, policy, or decision significant to your organization, broken down into detailed **sub-issues** (e.g., specific provisions or articles).

Impact on Organization/Clients:

- Assesses both **financial** and **non-financial** threats and opportunities for ACT and its clients.

Financial Impact:

- A focused evaluation on **quantifiable financial metrics** affecting the organization or its members.

First Year of Impact:

- Identifies the **compliance start year** for policies and legislation, with nuanced assessments for different effective dates.

Likelihood of Impact:

- Evaluates the probability of the issue being enacted into **legislation**.

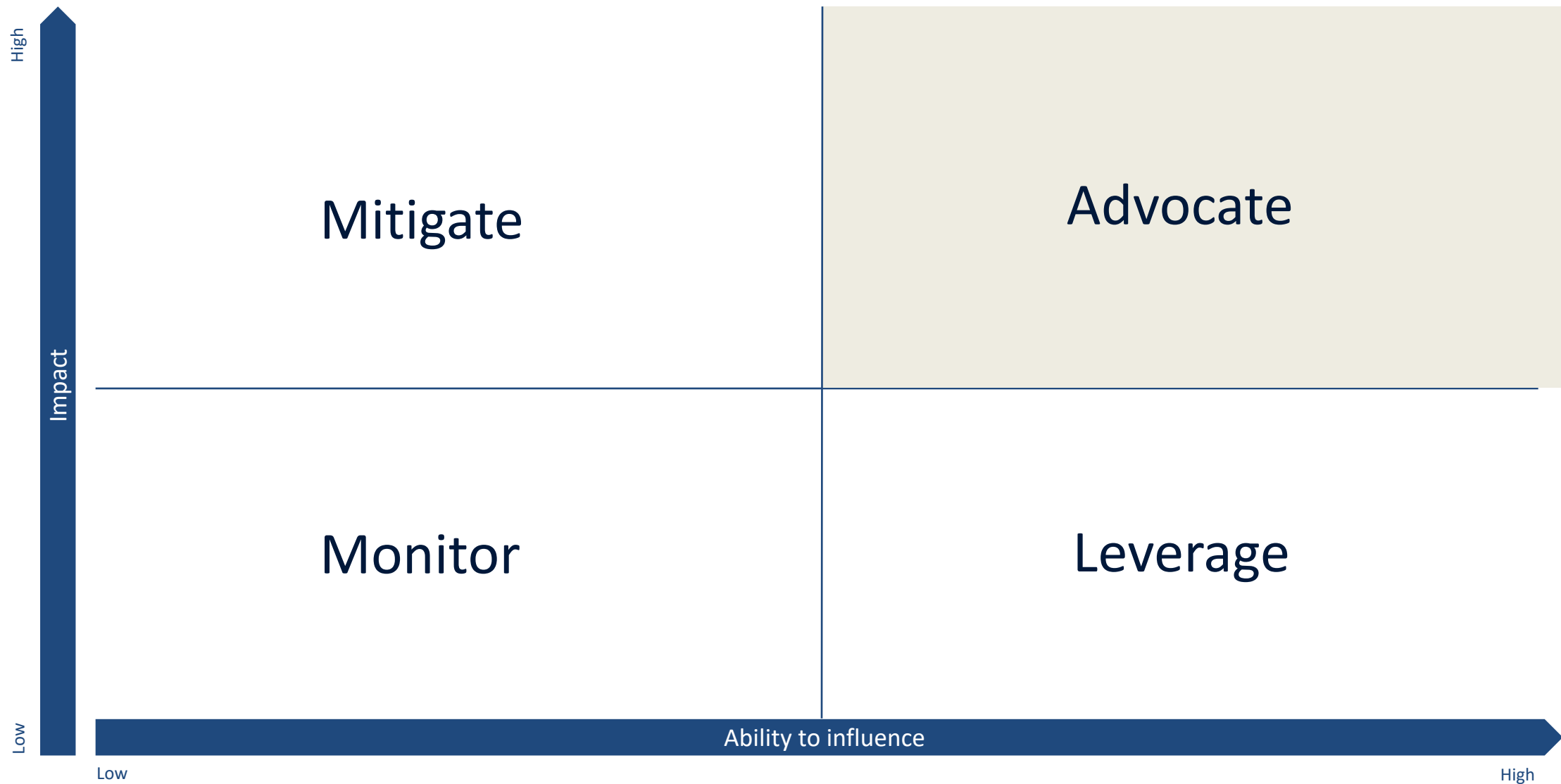
Ability to Influence:

- Measures your organization's capacity to access key decision-makers and exert **influence** on legislation.

Issue Prioritization: Scoring Matrix

Issue Title	Region	Est. Entry into Force	Commercial Risk	Commerical Opportunity	Ability to Influence
SBTi Net-Zero Standard v2.0	Global	2025	4	5	3
IMO GHG Fuel Intensity (GFI) Standard	Global / EU	2027	3	4	3

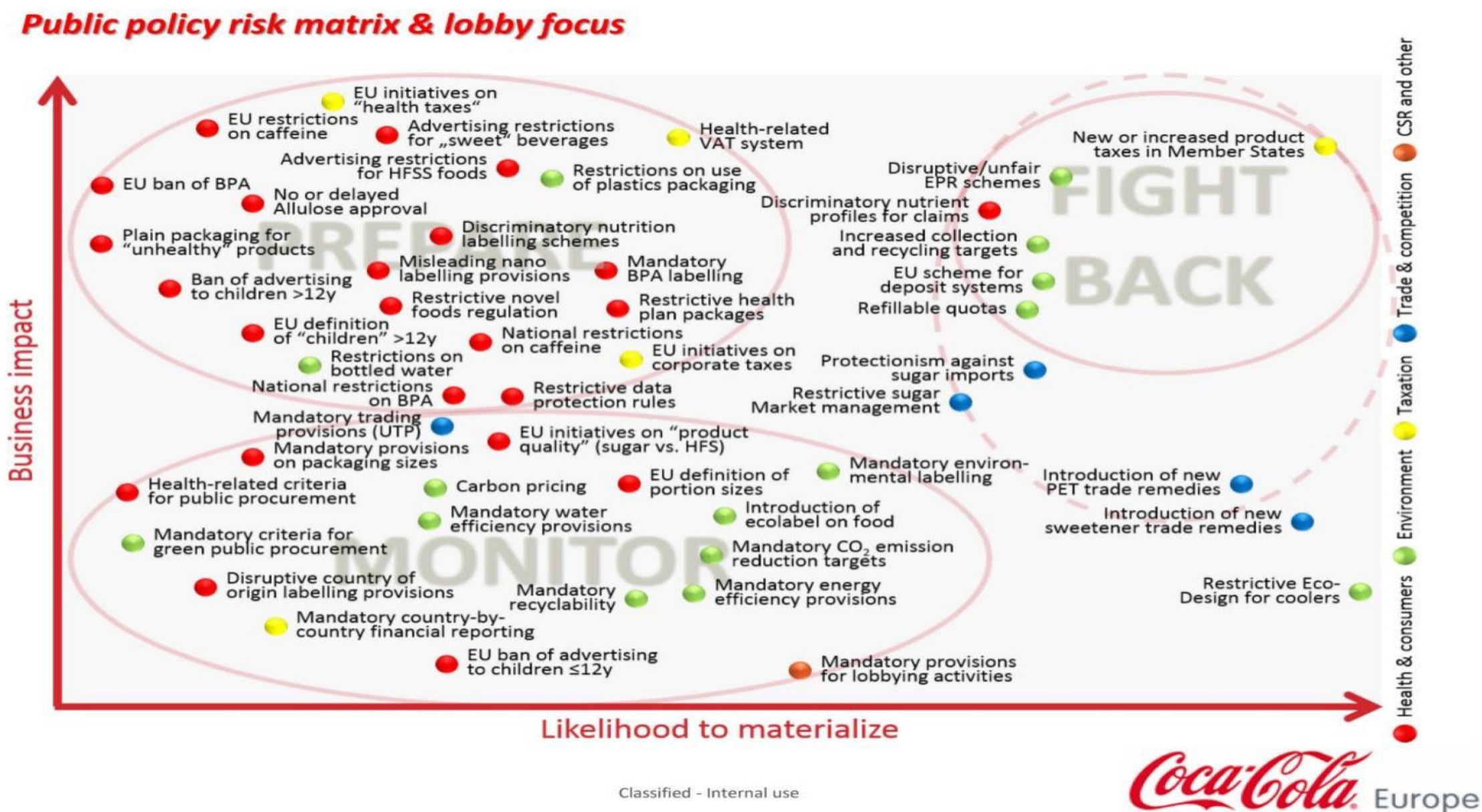
Issue Prioritization: Barriers Matrix



Tiered Priorities

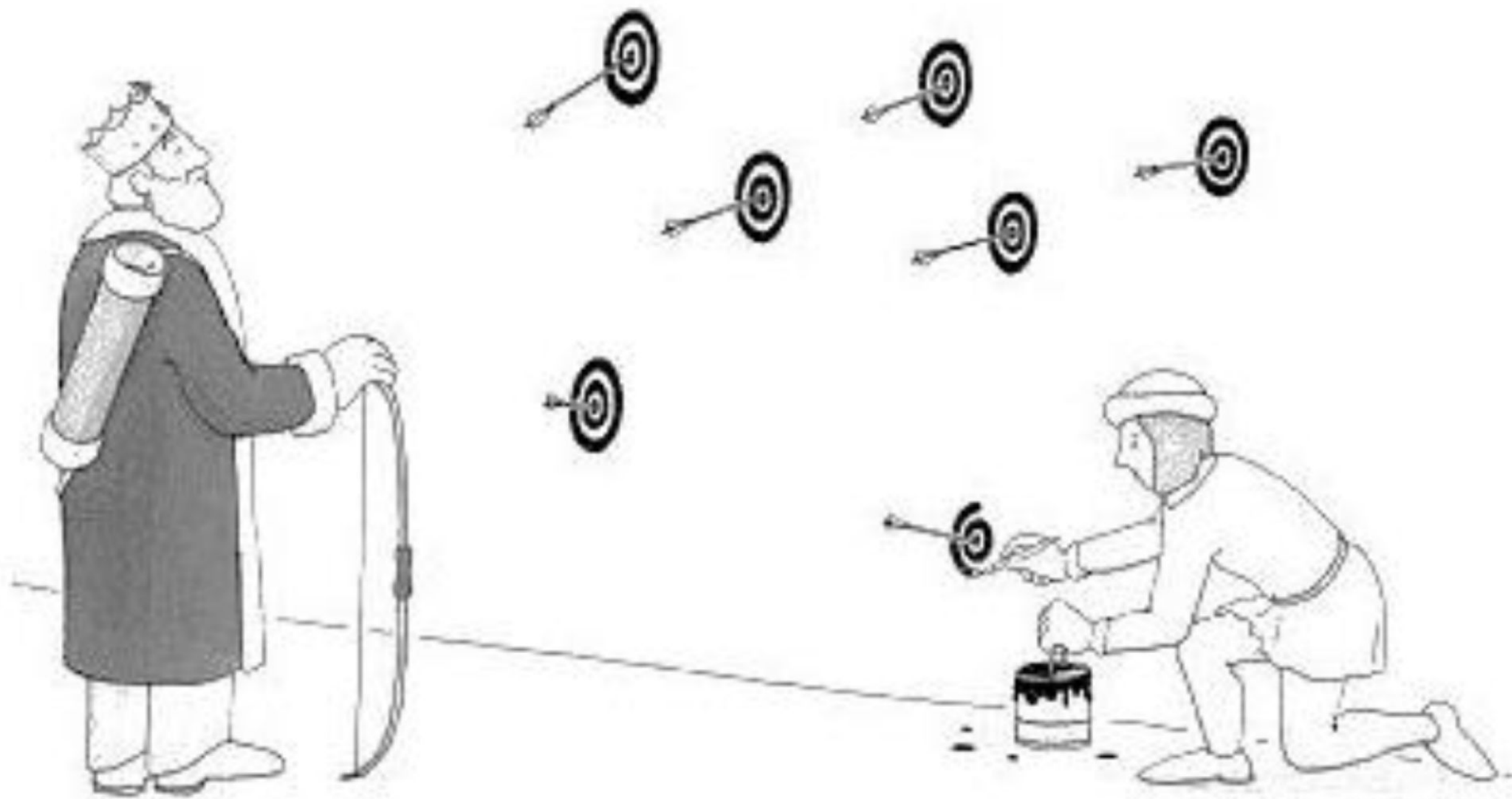
Issue Title	Region	Est. Entry into Force	Commercial Risk	Commercial Opportunity	Combined Score	Ability to Influence	
	Japan	2026	5	5	5	3	Tier 1 Proactive Strategic Issues
	USA	2025	5	5	5	2	
	USA	2024	4	5	4,5	5	Tier 2 Reactive Operational Issues
	EU	2026	5	4	4,5	3	
	EU	2025	3	3	3	3	Tier 3 Monitoring
	Japan	2026	3	1	2	2	

Case Study: Coca Cola



Plenary Question

What makes a good Public Affairs
Objective?



Gianfranco

Objectives: Example of an outcome-focused objective

Achieve a specific, detailed policy outcome

Generate political support for the future proofing of the regulatory system

Protect the 8-year Regulatory Data Protection term

With a clear outcome for the business – positive, negative or neutral

Positive: robust RDP system limits risks of patent infringements and provides greater predictability; avoids price erosion and maximizes revenue

Positive: regulatory sandbox facilitates local approval of new complex innovations that do not fit within the existing legal framework, in a timely and efficient manner, minimizing constraints and costs

1

2

3

4

In a specific time frame mapped out in advance

Final outcome to be achieved by 2026 and effective in 2028

2024 milestones: 1st reading in Parliament includes 7-year RDP, provides patient-centric definition of unmet medical need, and retains regulatory sandbox; progress of text according to legislative priorities

And able to show your tangible impact

Number of inspired amendments adopted by legislator

Public statements, positions by MPs or representatives of national governments reflecting proposals and policy asks



SMART objectives even more key for Public Affairs

Strategic objectives

S	Specific
M	Measurable
A	Achievable
R	Relevant
T	Timely



Setting KPIs at the outset allows you to measure your success





Specific <i>What are you trying to achieve?</i>	Measurable <i>How will you measure it?</i>	Attainable <i>Is it realistic, why?</i>	Relevant <i>Why is it relevant for Philips?</i>	Timely <i>By when should the objective be achieved?</i>

Are there any possible risks you identified?

- *Add in risks here*

Plenary Question

Share examples of your Public Affairs Objectives? Select good and bad examples.

STRATEGY

2



Strategy without tactics is the
slowest route to victory.
Tactics without strategy is the
noise before defeat

Sun Tzu

Plenary Question

What are your main strategic categories in Public Affairs?

What is the role of a strategy?

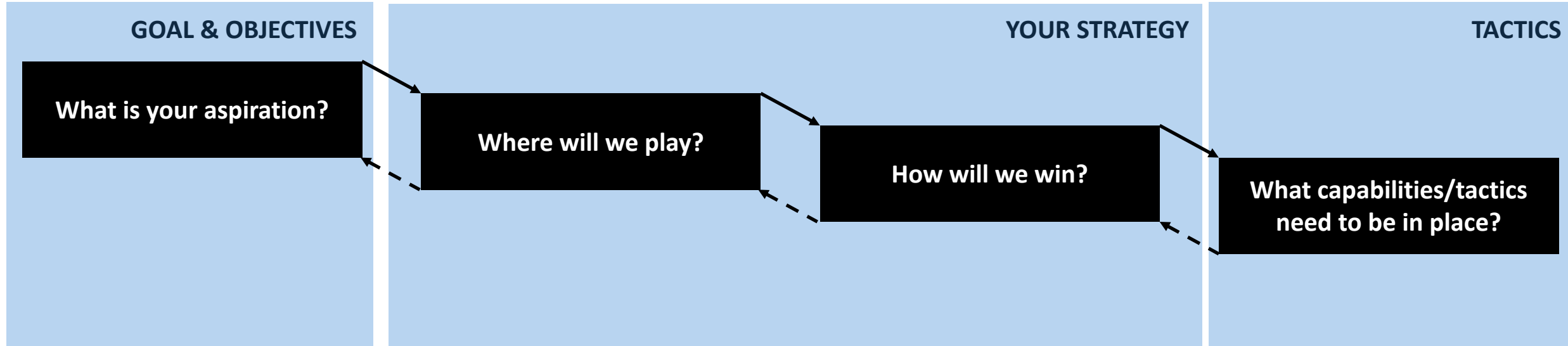
1. It provides a guiding framework for decision making, helping to navigate changes, complexity and uncertainty
2. It bridges between tactics and objectives
3. It helps to prioritize resource allocation
4. It facilitates communications and collaboration
5. It helps to measure success and provide more insight in effectiveness of campaigns and adapting to change.

What is a strategy?

WHERE do we
play?

HOW do we
win?

Strategy, Bridging from Objectives to Tactics



Strategy, Bridging from Objectives to Tactics



Elements of a Good Strategy

Well aligned with objectives or organizational goals

Includes stakeholder perspectives, ideally based on data

Multi channel or multi approach where needed

Flexible and adaptable

Combining short-term immediate gains with a **long-term** sustainable outcome

Considering ethical considerations and compliance

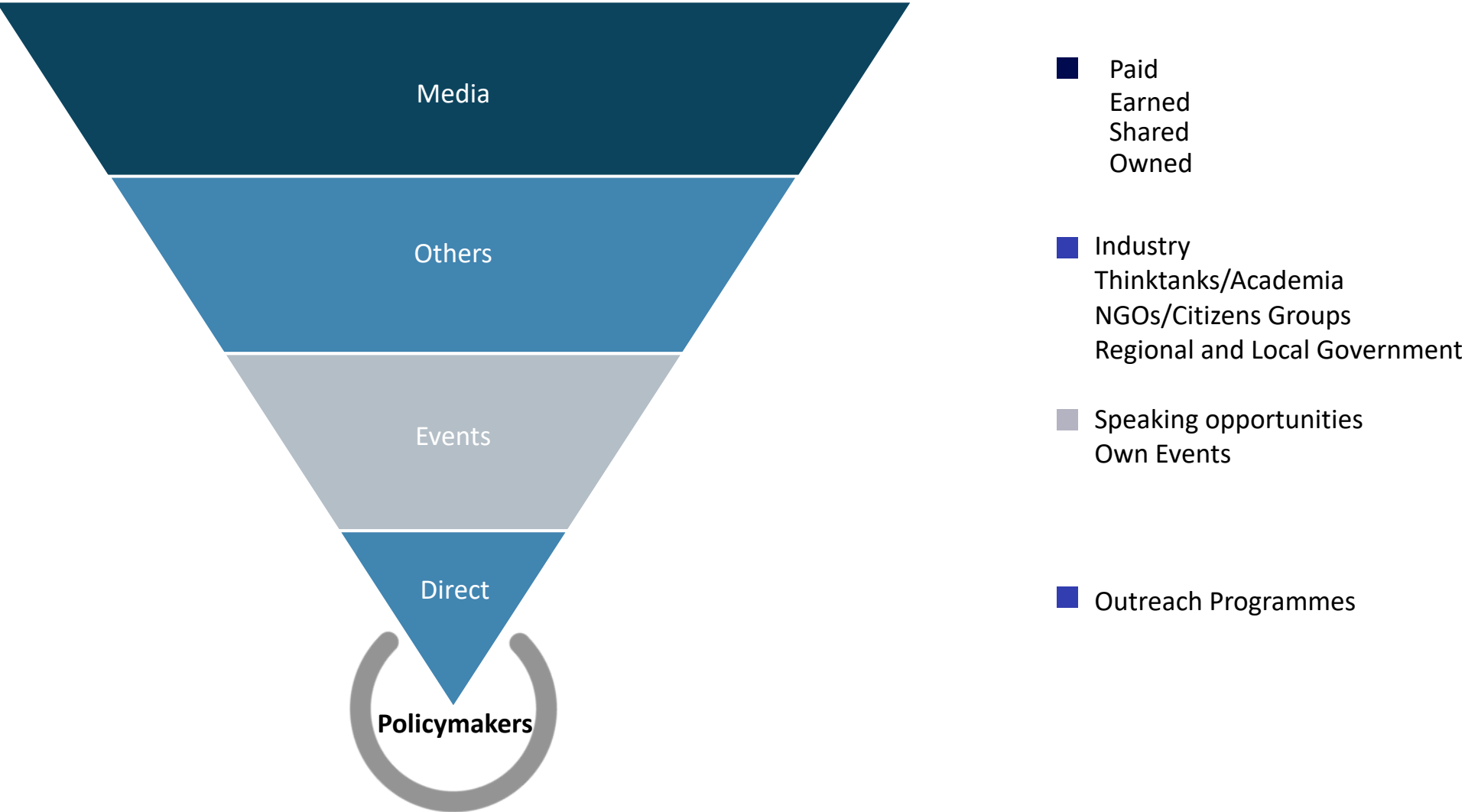
TACTICS

3

Plenary Question

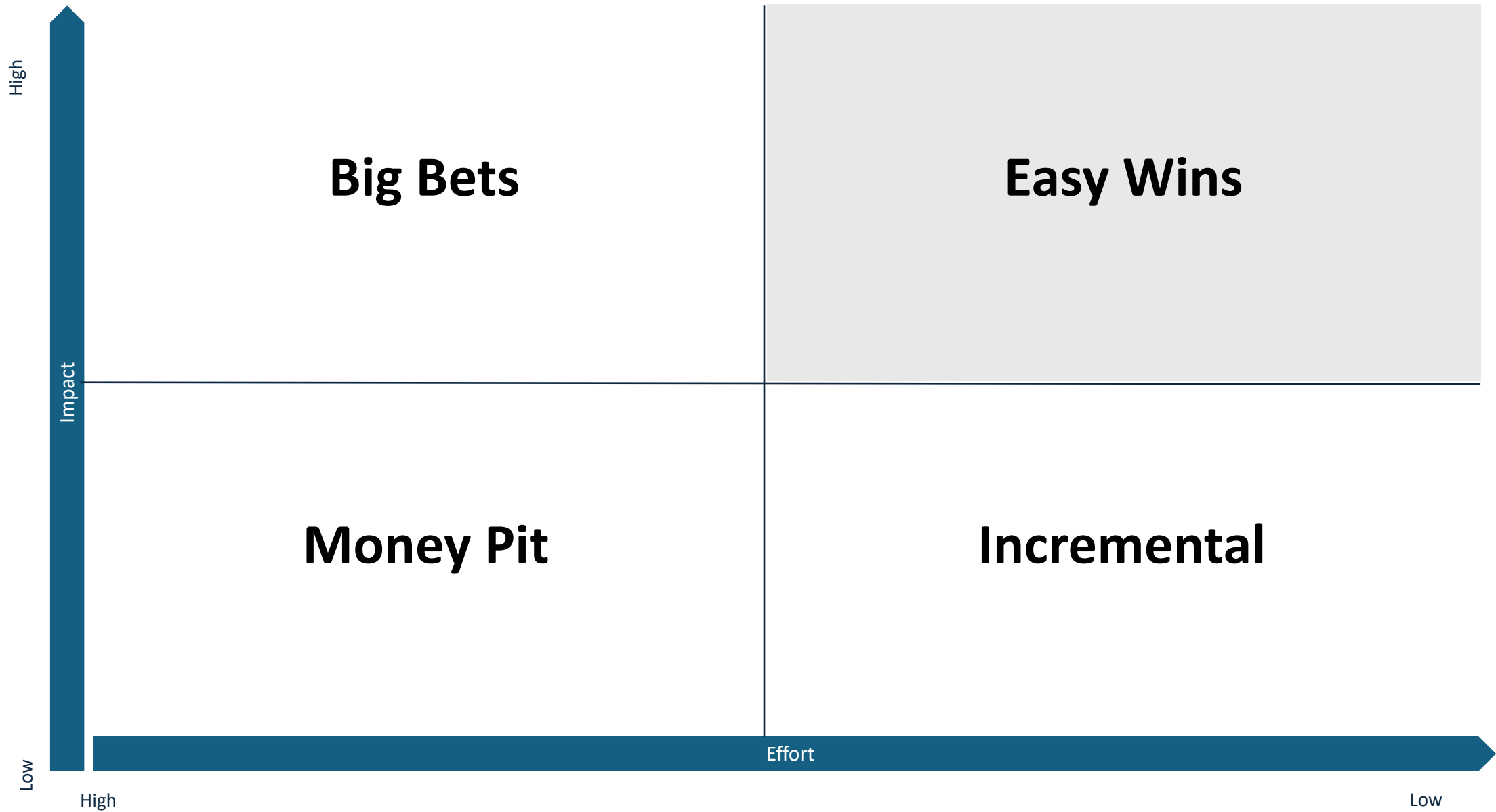
What are your main tactics in Public Affairs?

The External Affairs Funnel



How do I do it?

[illegible]



HOW

4

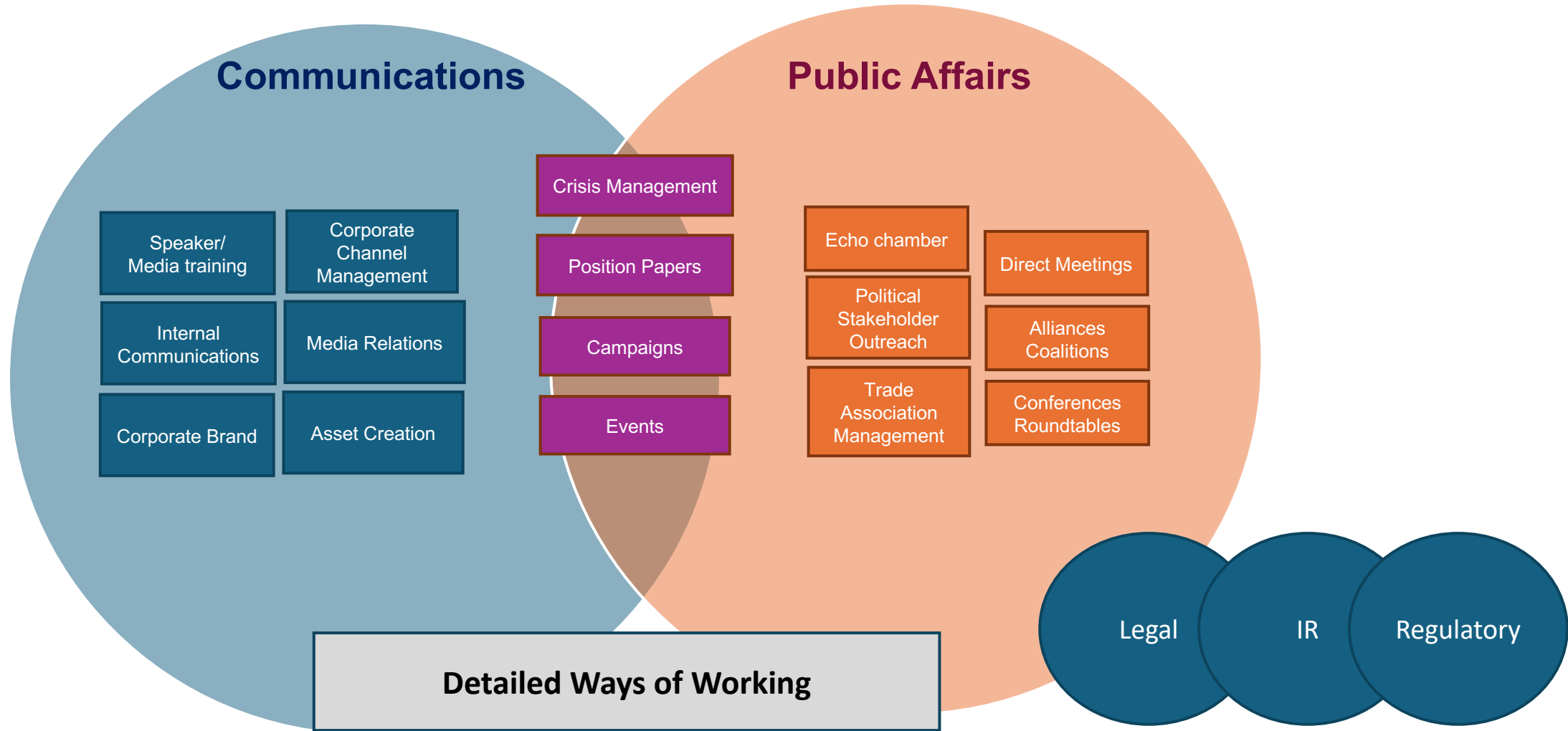
Plenary Question

What are the main ingredients of internal success in delivering Public Affairs Objectives?

How you build for success

1. Public Affairs Team Roles and Responsibilities / Ways of Working
2. Clarity with Adjacent Functions (Venn Diagram)
3. Project Clarity / Approach
4. Buy-in / Support / Objectives Cascade from Global-Regional-Market
5. Training and Support for GMs and other non-PA colleagues
6. Managing and Coordinating Internal networks-resources-markets
7. ...

Public Affairs & Communications Venn Approach



ADVOCACY
Strategy

DASHBOARDS TIMELINES

5

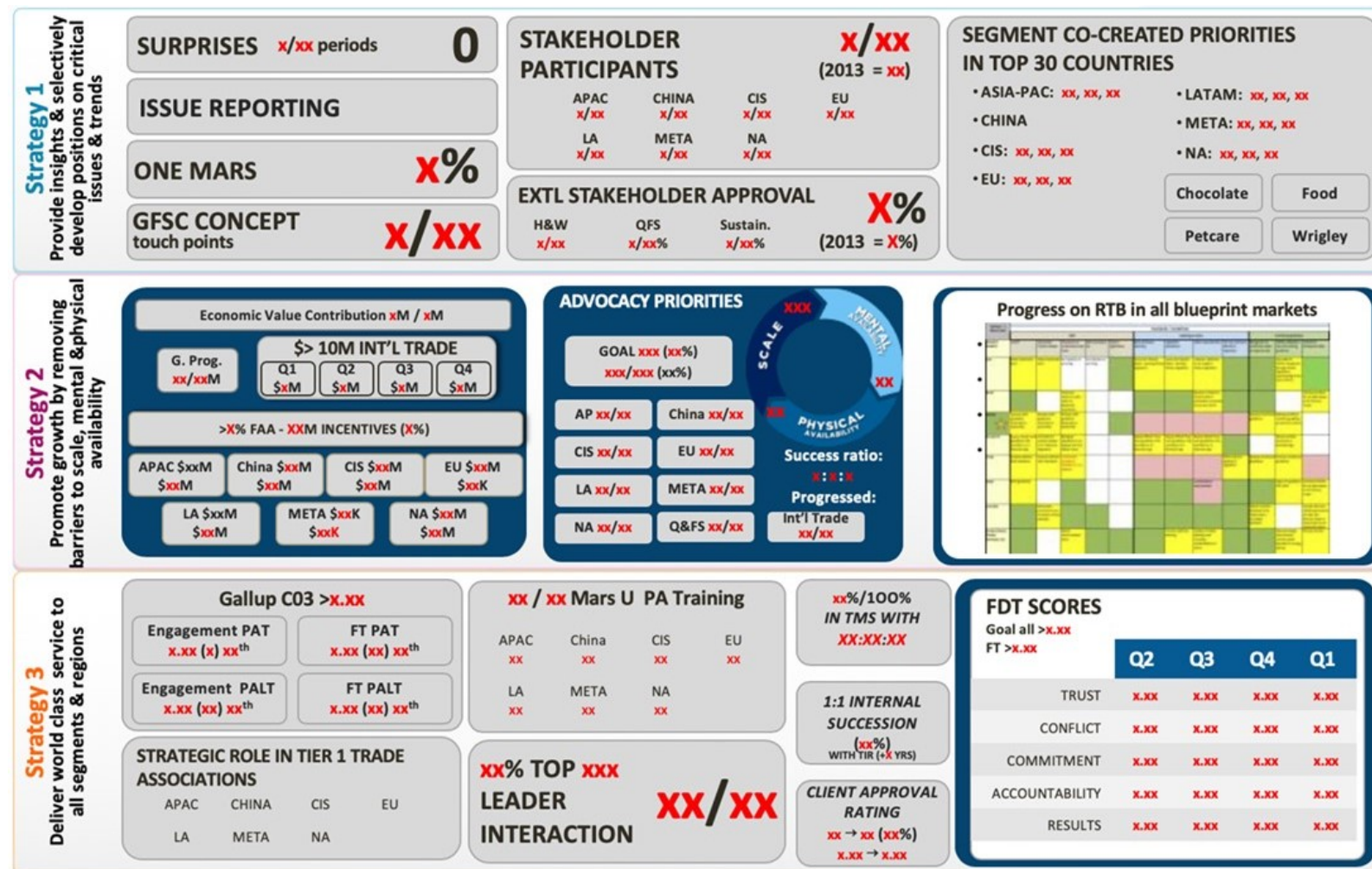
Plenary Question

Do you have PA Dashboard?
What is on there?



Tailoring the approach to measurement and tracking to the needs, culture and resources of the organization









Example: Mars CA dashboard



Example: Dashboard template

Updated: April 2024



Issues		Risks-opportunities: £XX		
Country	Issues	Status	\$m impact	
 Netherlands	A	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	£XX	
	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
 UK	A	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	TBC	
	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
 France	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	£XX £XX	
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
 Belgium	A	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	£XX	
	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
 Norway	A	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	£XX	
	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
 Finland	A	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	£XX £XX	
	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
 Sweden	A	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	£XX	
	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
 Denmark	A	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>	£XX	
	B	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
	C	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		
		<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>		

Overall contribution (August 2025)		
£45.1m		
Issues Key wins	Financial contribution (What)	Future foundations (How)
	✓ XX: Delayed XX(£8m)	✓ Political outreach across spectrum in XX building for future
	✓ XX: Tax ended (£6m)	
	✓ XX: Ban removed (£1.1m)	✓ New trade association created in XX country
	✓ X	
	✓ X	✓ New key relationships built in XX country
		✓ X
		✓ X

2026

Public Affairs & Communications

Financial Contribution



Size of Team
How we work



Projects



Trade Associations



Learning & Development



Biggest Win



Influence



Relationships



What Next



2027



2027



2027



PA Objective

Details

Overall Status



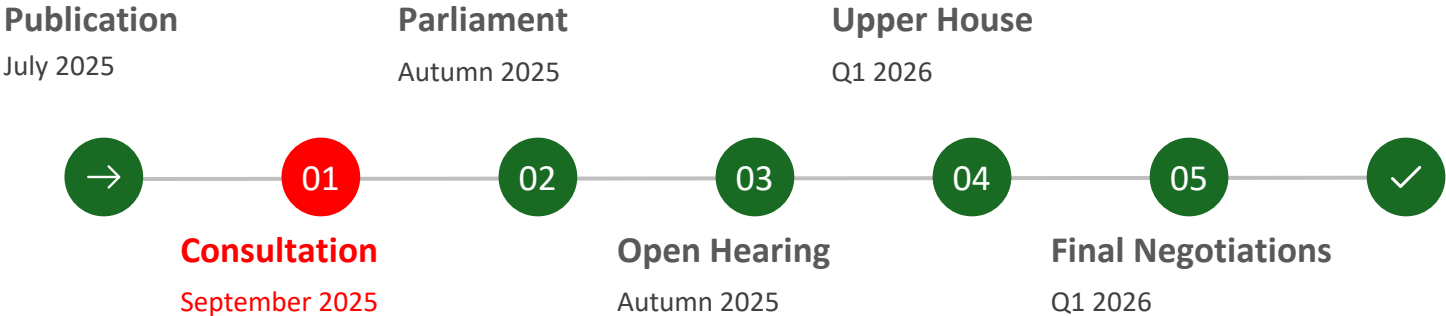
Overall Progress



Strategies

Name	Description
Strategy 1	Echo Chamber
Strategy 2	Trade Associations
Strategy 3	Communications
Strategy 4	Direct Meetings
Strategy 5	Events-Conferences

Political Timeline



Top 5 Issues

Rank	Issue
#1	Insert your text here.
#2	Insert your text here.
# 3	Insert your text here.
# 4	Insert your text here.
# 5	Insert your text here.

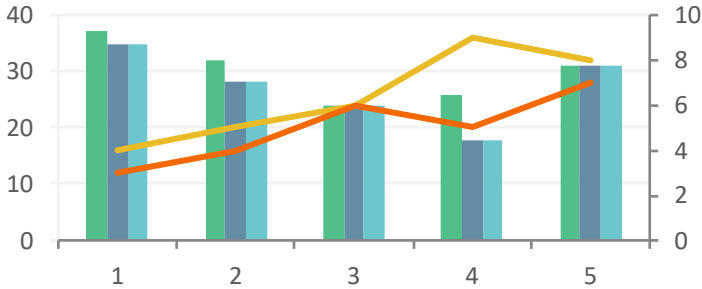
Risk Management

- Placeholder

Placeholder

Placeholder
- Placeholder

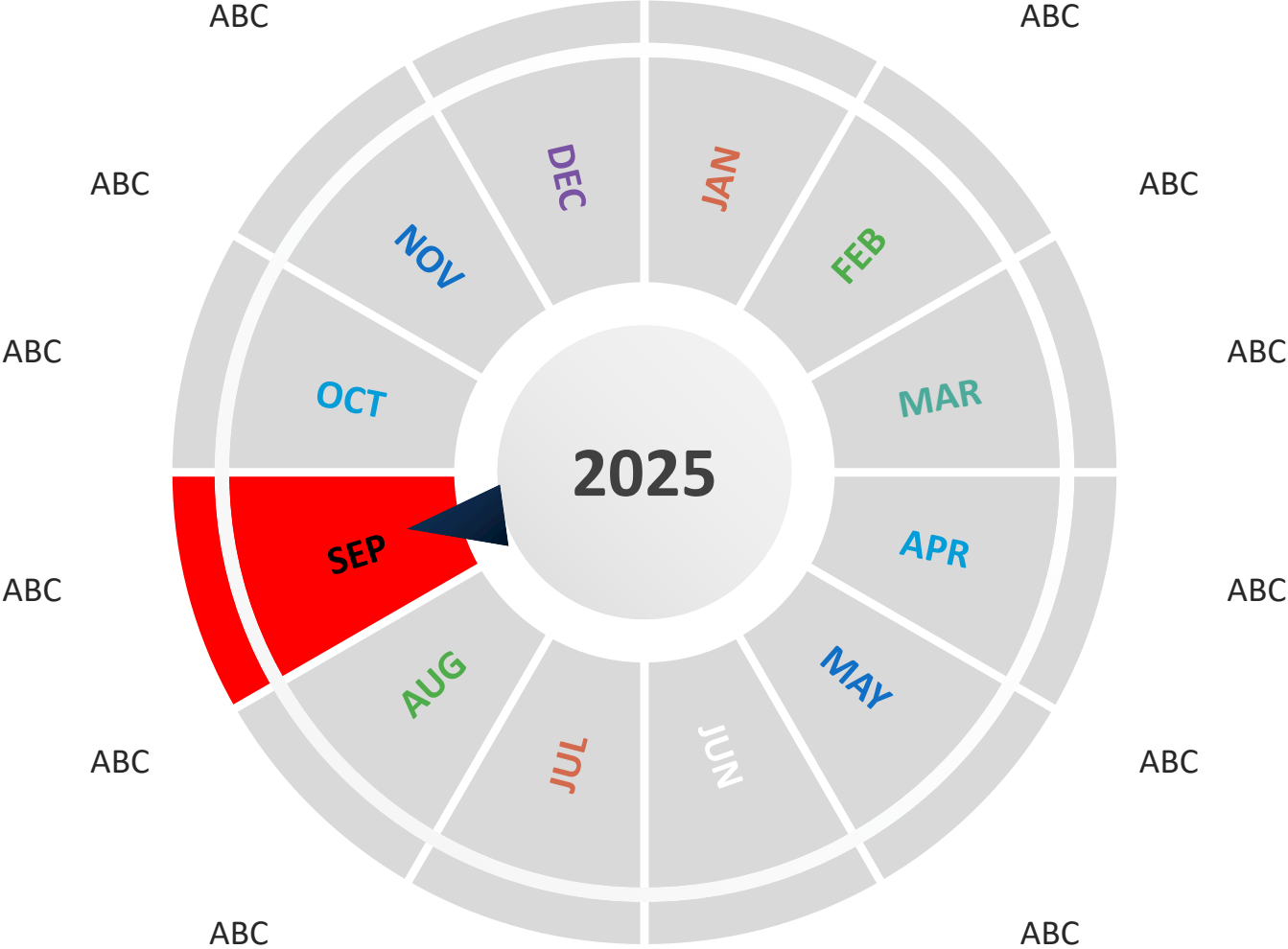
Placeholder



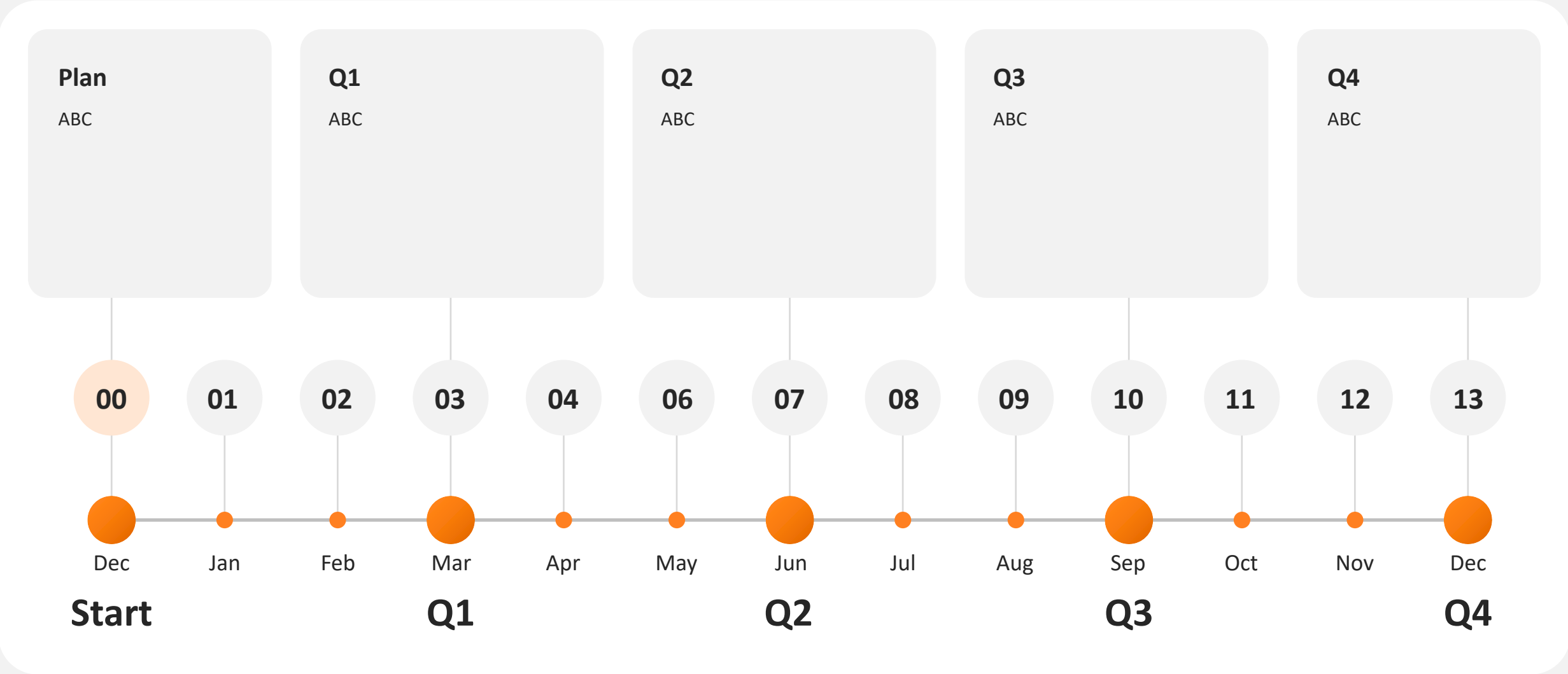
Risks

Risk Name	Impact	Probability
Risk 1	Low	Medium
Risk 2	Medium	High
Risk 3	High	Low
Risk 4	Low	Medium
Risk 5	Medium	High

Public Affairs 2025



Public Affairs 2025



How to Work with the EU Institutions

A Practical Guide to Successful Public Affairs in the EU

'this comprehensive book provides guidance for successful EU advocacy'

*Doug Pinkham, President,
Public Affairs Council*

edited by

Alan Hardacre

Strategic Planning is based on an ability to align with your organisation on their priorities, match these to the external environment and then build a process to deliver.

Be sure to only accept outcome-based objectives and tactics as they help you explain and measure.

Policy Mapping is the foundation. Outcome based objectives are the driver. Dashboards are the shop window to your organisation.

Be sure to tailor what you build to the specifics of your organisation (language / visuals).

This process takes time and effort to create but the investment will be worthwhile.

This process is the backbone of successful Public Affairs.