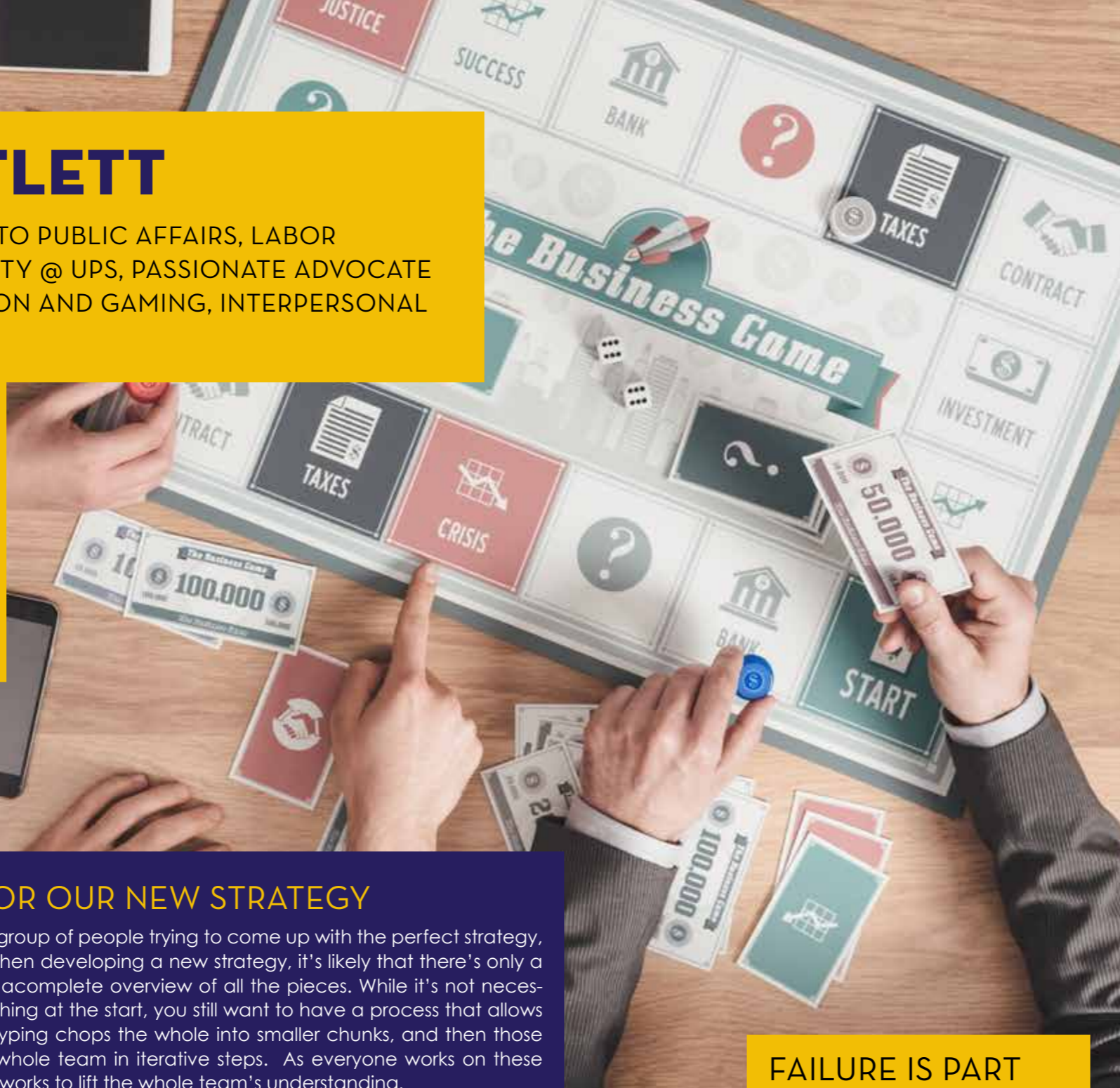


# CHRIS BARTLETT

HUMAN RESOURCES LIAISON TO PUBLIC AFFAIRS, LABOR RELATIONS AND SUSTAINABILITY @ UPS, PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR POWER OF CONVERSATION AND GAMING, INTERPERSONAL AND MASS COMMUNICATION.



## FAST PROTOTYPING FOR OUR NEW STRATEGY

Instead of sitting in a room with a small group of people trying to come up with the perfect strategy, we applied a lot of fast prototyping. When developing a new strategy, it's likely that there's only a small group of people who can grasp a complete overview of all the pieces. While it's not necessary that everybody understand everything at the start, you still want to have a process that allows people to learn as you go. Fast prototyping chops the whole into smaller chunks, and then those chunks are used and reviewed by the whole team in iterative steps. As everyone works on these pieces, the development process itself works to lift the whole team's understanding.

This process also helps when it comes to diverse audience outreach. Communicating the strategy requires that the message make sense to the different kinds of receivers. Fast prototyping gave us a head start, as people with different jobs and strengths have already reacted to the pieces as they were created. Then, as soon as we had a first draft, we literally took somebody from the management team to one of our first-line teams, to check if the strategy made sense to them.

We repeated this 'reality check' all along the process – develop a draft, review it with the team, and get it to the first-line management team as quickly as was feasible. Rapid prototyping created a meaningful feedback loop that rotated at a very quick pace. We're quite sure the whole communication went faster than a normal top-down communication strategy because there was less confusion. People felt more engaged because they had a chance to contribute something to the strategy. Of course, not everybody agreed with the strategy, but at least it was clear in which direction we were going.

## FAILURE IS PART OF THE PROCESS

Being able to experiment (and accept some failures) is essential within UPS to move forward. If we can prototype something and experiment with it in reality, that's a lot better than creating the perfect strategy on paper. During the whole communication process of the new strategy, a lot of the techniques didn't work and there was a whole graveyard of dead ideas that were eliminated during the process.

## COMMUNICATING A NEW STRATEGY TO 400,000 EMPLOYEES

Translating a new strategy from the board to the rest of the company is always a challenge. If your company is UPS, and you have more than 400,000 employees working all over the world, I would call it a huge challenge. We made use of a lot of visual tools - an illustrated approach meant we relied less on the written word,

This was a great help in managing culture and language differences in our global company. We still had to adapt some of the visuals depending on which country we were approaching but it made for a more powerful, more engaging deliverable.

Another piece we put into play was a board game. We actually took our management team at all levels and all countries through a board game that basically took our strategy and rewarded you for following the strategy.

A big part of the success of the game was the fact that we put the upper-level management teams at the same table as our first-line management team. That environment led to a good translation of the strategy. Our front-line people don't need the same level of understanding of the strategy as middle or top-management, but they need to understand the impact of that strategy in their daily jobs.

We also created a comic strip with different characters, so that our people can see themselves in a different way. In the comic strip we reflected again the kind of behaviour that we would like to see from our people. At me ... I'm part of the race. Thanks to those thoughts I could switch my anger into gratefulness and I have enjoyed every moment of the race.