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Efficient Organizational Communication - a Key to Success

Ramona Todericiu¹, Lucia Fraticiu²

Abstract: The paper aims at analyzing organizational communication, since it is well known that the process of communication is present in all the activities of the companies. Only an efficient communication can facilitate the practice of the functions of forecasting, organization, coordination, empowerment and control. Moreover, only its effectiveness can ensure the participation of the members of the organization to achieving the objectives. Communication can be seen as the binding agent of the organization, and its degree of efficiency has a great influence on the performance of a company as a whole. In a global market that is under constant change at an unprecedented speed, the process of communication is considered vital for organizational success.

Keywords: managerial communication; organizational culture; information; change; technology

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1. Introduction

Communication is the most important component of our lives, because we are forced to communicate, regardless of means or channel. Undoubtedly, in the contemporary world, communication is present in any relationship, and the communication processes are of vital importance. We are all aware nowadays that a successful communication is the basis for the personal or professional success.

Communication is everywhere, and the field of communication has become extremely vast. All human activities, individual or collective, revolve around information that is sent, received or analyzed. Communication is part of action and reflection, just as currency is part of the economy (Zemor, 2003).

We live nowadays in an era of information and communication, an era which, as Alvin Toffler shows (1995), “is born from the clash of new values and techniques, new lifestyles and means of communication”.

All organizations, regardless of size or object of activity, have to listen to their interlocutors and, at the same time, meet the expectations of a public characterized by diversity and exigency.

¹ Associate Professor, PhD, “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Romania, Address: 17 Dumbrăvii Avenue, Sibiu, Romania, Tel.: +4072333087, Corresponding author: ramona.todericiu@ulbsibiu.ro.

² PhD, “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Faculty of Economic Sciences, Romania, Address: Address: 17 Dumbrăvii Avenue, Sibiu, Romania, Tel.: +40745909690, lucylucyda2005@yahoo.com.

2. Related Concepts

As regards to the organization, communication is defined as the process of exchanging messages with the view of achieving the individual and common objectives of its members (Niculae, Gherghiță, and Gherghiță, 2006). Basically, the members of the organization, regardless of their position in the hierarchy, spend most of their time communicating in one way or the other. Communication is, nowadays, unanimously recognized as “the key to organizational excellence and efficiency” (Grunig, 1992), as one of the most important activities of an organization (Harris & Nelson, 2008).

In the specialized literature (Rosengren, 2000), it is shown that organizational communication can be organized into two types:

- 1) communication defined formally among those that occupy various positions in an organization;
- 2) communication defined informally, among persons as individuals (separate from their position in the organization).

3. Aspects Concerning Managerial Communication

In the opinion of certain specialists (Burlacu, Graur & Morong, 2003), managerial communication is a “component of managerial and organizational culture”, and the specific aim of communication is “to increase the performances of the organization”.

For a successful manager, communication is an instrument and, at the same time, a state of mind. Studies demonstrate the fact that a successful manager spends about 75-95% of the time talking, listening, writing and citing, thus communicating. Managerial communication is a factor of competitiveness and a strategic advantage of an organization. The management of organizations can put into practice the decisions only through an efficient communication with the ones that will execute them. The latter must be informed regarding what they have to do and, at the same time, they must be able to make their suggestions, hopes, ambitions and problems known, and be understood at the same time. Communication represents the means through which employees understand their organization, what it represents and can contribute to their motivation and to the creation of a common identity.

Nevertheless, we believe that in many organizations, the communication between manager and employee is faulty, and the main cause for this situation is the barrier represented by the simple fact that the manager is the boss. The subordinates, however, demand respect and appreciation for their efforts invested in the activities performed. The lack of a feedback from the manager leads, finally, to a lack of motivation of the employees and to failure in achieving the objectives of the organization.

The technical progress modifies continuously the means through which the people, members of the organization, communicate among them. The modern means of communication used most widely are the telephone, fax or email.

We have observed that in large organizations, managerial communication is performed more frequent through the use of the mobile phone, the Internet and the fax, than through face-to face communication. The telephone has the disadvantage of a more limited feedback than face-to-face conversation. In case of the latter, more information can be collected due to visual clues, by looking at the interlocutor. However, the latter offers more interaction than the fax or the email. The electronic message is the cheapest means of communication; it is accessible and extremely fast and efficient, offering the advantage of sending the information immediately and directly. And still, although the

advantages of using the new technologies in the managerial communication are undisputable, as they fulfill the needs of a fast communication, we must underline the fact that they lack an important feature: personalization. At the other end we find small companies, where face to face communication is dominant

4. Organizational Communication - a Priority

Is it a known fact for the companies, especially in this difficult period, that communication is an important factor for performance? Without the intention to generalize, we believe that not all companies have fully understood the major role of communication, since managers are more focused on obtaining immediate profit than on other aspects, such as the influence of communication on performance.

Depending on the organizational culture, size or profile, each company has its own communication system. Large companies, in general, are preoccupied with creating their own communication systems, although this approach is not always implemented as a priority. We believe it is absolutely necessary that the aspects of organizational communication become a priority, or at least one of the main preoccupations of the management.

We present below some studies and research relevant in our opinion, which point out doubtlessly the importance and role of organizational communication (Berger, 2008):

- “More than 80% of the employees that answered the survey in the US and Great Britain, have declared that internal communication influences their decision to stay within an organization or to leave it. Almost a third have declared that communication has *a great influence* on their decision (Burton, 2006)”;
- “The most appreciated 200 companies spend on the communication with their employees three times more than the least admired 200 companies (Seitel, 2004)”;
- “The satisfaction of the employees as regards communication in their organization is connected to the commitment of their organization to them, to the productivity and performance of the positions and to the work satisfaction and other important effects (Gray & Laidlaw, 2004)”;
- “The organizations with involved and dedicated employees were 50% more productive than those organizations in which the employees were not as involved. Moreover, the assimilation and memory of the employees was 44% better in the organization with involved and dedicated employees (Izzo & Withers, 2000)”;
- “A positive climate of communication and an efficient communication with the employees consolidates the identification of the employees with their organization, which contributes to financial performance and lasting success (Smidts & van Riel, 2001)”;
- “A major improvement in the efficiency of organizational culture has led to an increase of the market value of 29.5% (Watson, 2004)”;
- “Efficient communication facilitates the commitment and builds trust, which represents a vital ingredient for strong and reliable organizations (Grates, 2008);
- “Involved employees boost organizational performance, because they influence the behavior of the clients, which has a direct effect on the increase of profits (Towers, 2003).”

Due to the abovementioned reasons, communication should become nowadays a priority of organizations, due to the fact that it offers a great deal of opportunities for the efficiency of all activities. Among the close collaborators of the managers should be specialist in communication because, as Bernard Miège showed (2000), “in order to win, we must communicate”. There are many companies that have fully understood the role of communication and, thus, have introduced rules and procedures, have drafted plans and strategies and have created the position of communication manager/responsible and maybe a specialized department.

5. Communication and the Management of Change

On the other side, it is well known the fact that the 21th century will be a century of change, and communication plays a vital role in the effective implementation of change within any organization. The obvious reality of our days, at the beginning of century and millennium is a more and more profound and accelerated change that marks the evolution of society. These changes have a major impact on the business world, on the organizations and on management. Change becomes an unavoidable and positive phenomenon, which requires the adaptation of the organization to an evolving reality and to the environment, in order to achieve success. We believe that, in approaching and managing change, communication is the most important aspect to consider, due to the fact that, in general, change generates fear and a state of distress. There are certain aspects that need constant communication, such as, for example: arguing the necessity of change or presenting the stages of the process of change.

The key elements of the future performances of organizations will certainly be the acknowledgement of the necessity of change, initiating change and last but not least, an advanced management of change. Communication must permeate the entire process of change, and the face to face communication is essential.

Organizations perform their activities in the context of a “new” economy, an economy based on informational and telecommunication technology and on the Internet. In essence, it is a digital economy, one that recognizes the fundamental roles played by knowledge, information and communication. Some specialists (Friedman, 2007) believe that through connecting the centers of information to the global networks, the Earth became flat and the world leveled out.

6. Conclusions

We believe an efficient communication to be essential within an organization. This is achieved when “the right people receive the correct information in the right time” (Cândea, 1996). In this context, we would like to emphasize the fact that information and knowledge are considered at the beginning of this 21st century as the new major resources of any organization, resources that must be efficiently managed and utilized. Therefore, information management and knowledge based management should be considered by all managers as major functions of leadership and management.

The managers of the modern organization are confronted with the most difficult challenge: the one of building a successful organization. In facing this challenge, an objective of crucial importance is instituting a solid and efficient communication within the organization.

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