

COMMUNICATION
THE MAIN COMMITMENT OF A MANAGER

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Abstract: *Managers of companies do not know what measures should be taken in order to limit the adverse effects of the crisis and what they must do to keep their businesses afloat. Frequently, managers do not consider communication as an important factor that can affect the efficiency of employees. In this article, the author presents a topic of current interest related to commitment and ways in which managers can traverse the crisis period through effective communication with the employers. They must know the procedure for questioning and interpreting the signals provided by the employer, things that can be learned from this article.*

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INTRODUCTION

Communication is part of the „infrastructure” [1] of the organisation. Any attempt to develop an organisation must take into account the human side of its development, and effective and efficient communication is the only way in which people can link their efforts synergistically.

On a personal level, communication enables the wording and the proper understanding of messages, winning the cooperation of people, tension release, etc. In terms of management, communication is an instrument that helps the manager send and receive information and decisions, accept or reject certain solutions, plan, organise, provide, control, produce and introduce change.

Any organisation is defined not only by the products and / or its services, but also by the communication skills of its employees and staff. For a successful manager, communication is an instrument as well as a state of mind; s/he spends about 75-95% of the time talking, listening, writing and reading, thus communicating. [2] If the manager's level in hierarchy is higher, it takes more time to do this. Furthermore, the simple fact that a manager moves up the career ladder, which confirms success, is determined by his/her ability to communicate effectively and efficiently. Managerial communication is a factor of competitiveness and a strategic advantage of an organisation.

1. COMMUNICATION AT THE LEVEL OF MANAGER

The manager is the authority person over an organisation or its subunits and must take one or more management functions. Henry Fayol identifies three functions: planning, organisation and coordination. Communication is vital in each of them.

Planning, based on prediction, sets where the organisation wants to get and how to do so. It defines the performance objectives, the decisions on tasks and the resources used to achieve the objectives. This function cannot be affected without working with the organisation's internal and external information, without a statement and clear transmission of objectives and plans at various levels, without involvement of subordinates in decision making process through discussions and working sessions.

The organising function involves the building of relational framework, informational system, requesting and receiving feedback, reasoning the objectives. The order involves directing the employees in achieving planned objectives by making decisions and taking clear and precise instruction.

Coordination must ensure that undertaken activities and resources are used to work harmoniously for the achieving of common goal. Command and coordination are conditioned by adequate communication, delegating responsibilities, creating a climate of collaboration, motivating staff. Finally, the control function is achieved through communication activities such as performance evaluation, presentation or the writing of activity reports.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Communication is a bi-directional process [3] between people at different hierarchical levels, across all the functions that occur. Managerial communication requires at least the involvement of two partners: the manager and his collaborator (the employee). The actors may be emitter and receiver, both of them pursuing the settled purposes.

The purposes of managerial communication could be achieved: receiving proper and full message, decoding the message, giving feedback encourages a reaction change of behavior of both partners in communication which can settle problems related to the quality of communication.

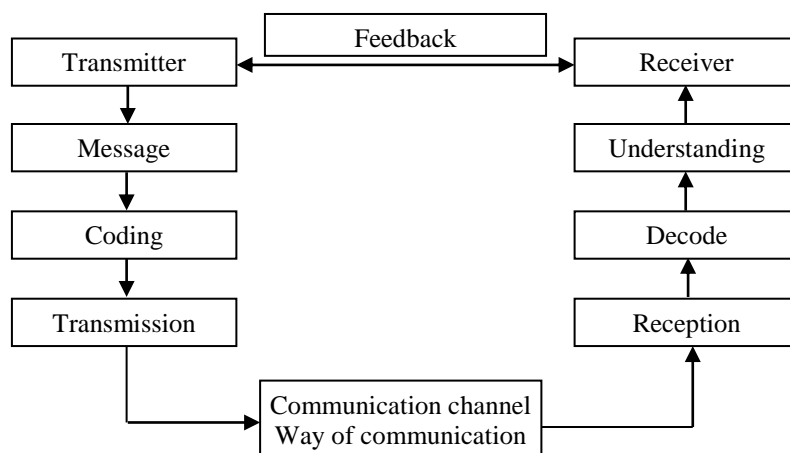
The quality of managerial communication is strongly influenced by manager-employee-co-worker relationship. The personality type of those concerned in communication, the managerial style and even the communicational – direct, indirect, sustained or controller - leave its mark on the quality of communication and then on the expected results as an outcome of this process.

The manager communicates and practices his role which could be a cause of various reactions from those with whom he interacts. Therefore, one of the important qualities of a manager should be effective communication.

Communication should be understood as a complex process, apparently simple, but also considered as a vital factor in achieving the organisational and individual purposes. Communication can be analysed both in terms of external environment of organisation (customers, partners, public institutions and authorities) and internal environment (human resources of the organisation).

In Figure no.1 we can see the perfect scheme of communication. Within the companies, this scheme is not always respected because not all the managers know how to communicate the message properly. This has been noticed after sustained training. Therefore, I developed exercises that emphasise the importance of communication in a company.

FIGURE 1: COMMUNICATION SCHEME [4]



Internal communication helps to [5]:

- achieve an optimal movement of information within the company;
- operationalising of managerial functions;
- monitoring, evaluating and motivating the employees;
- developing and keeping the competitive teams.

In formal communication, the messages that circulate on controlled and present channels of one's organisation compose the formal communication [6]. The content of the communication is related to the activity of the organisation, work and all that is connected to it. Formal communication may consist of verbal and non-verbal messages, written in the form of letters, phone messages, radio messages, printed or internal memos. Even some gestures may constitute formal communication. Communication from top to bottom, up and down, is carried out by the manager to subordinates. Directives and dispositions are transmitted outlining the responsibilities of employees. It can take place only when the manager orders directly to his employees without caring too much of their information.

Figure no. 2 described the two types of communication within the company.

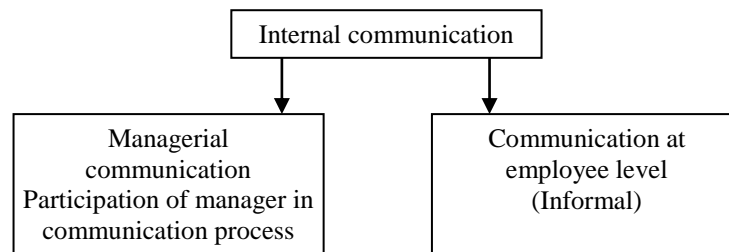


FIGURE 2: TYPES OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION [8]

Informal communication [7] brings back the gap created between the requirements of formal system and those of the entire system of the organisation. This consists of a large number of messages, informational snatches, opinions and expressions of employees; it comes off on channels dictated by daily necessities that are inconsistent with those of formal communication. Not all the kinds of informational messages or the ways in which they circulate in organisation can be classified. Without informal communication, work tasks wouldn't be achieved and the organisation, with the requirements of economic, social, technological, psychological order, couldn't function.

3. THE RISKS OF A POOR COMMUNICATION

In a business not all the projects could be successfully completed. On average, 2 out of 5 projects did not achieve their main goals and target business and a half of these unsuccessful projects are due to ineffective communication.

The organisation jeopardises not only the amounts of money, but also the success rate of projects. This research shows that ineffective communication leads to a decreased success rate of projects, organisations conducting just a minimum of communication efficiency report a significantly smaller number of projects that compass their goals on time and without budget.

We can observe it in figure no.3. Organisations must address this problem decisively and launch initiatives intended for improving the communication and preventing new failures of managerial projects.

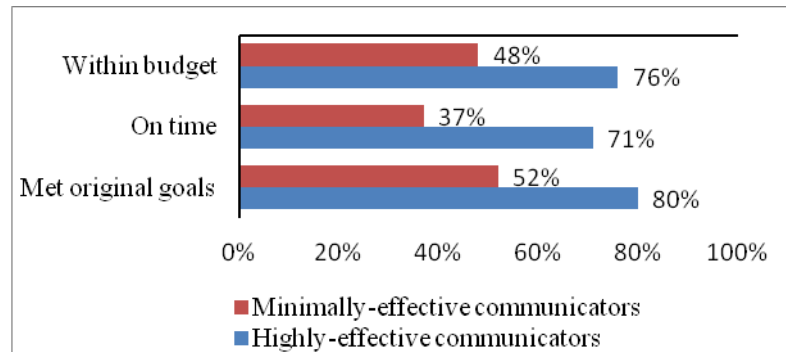


FIGURE 3: ORGANIZATIONS THAT COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY HAVE MORE [9]

The investigations of the Project Management Institute indicate that managers recognise effective communication as being an important component for the fruition of success. On the other hand, it also shows that the understanding of communication importance has not always guaranteed the existence of successful communication. The research also indicates a discrepancy in the management system; while the business owners and executive sponsors said that information about business benefits and alignment of strategy are properly communicated, the project managers disagree with this.

In figure no.4 we can observe how project managers, business owners and executive sponsors said that their organisations frequently communicate the business benefits or contribution to project strategy.

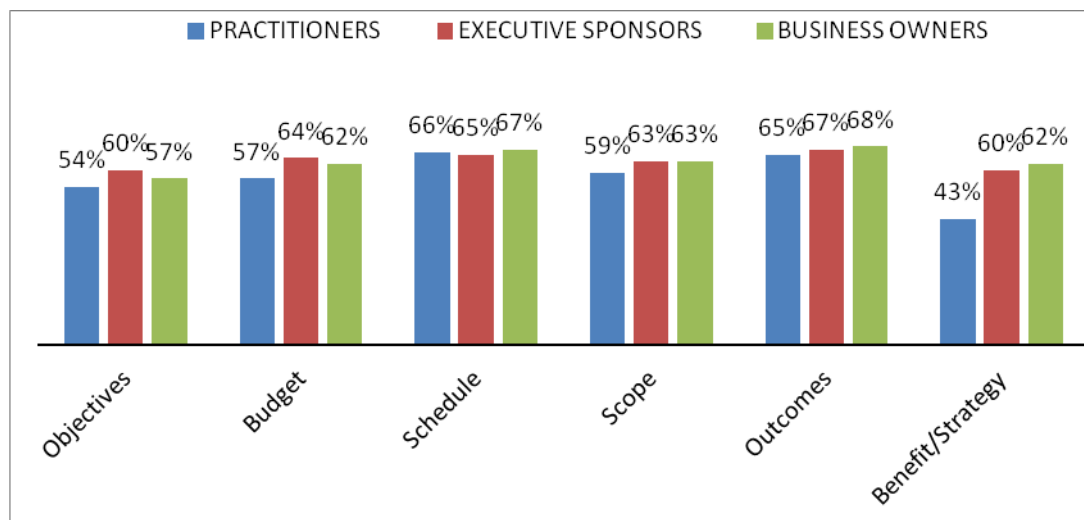


FIGURE 4: COMMUNICATING THE BENEFITS OF BUSINESS [10]

The interviews held with the managers point to the following conclusion: organisations have difficulties to communicate using the right level of clarity and particularisation. The difficulty tends to be increased by the irregular nature of employee groups with their understanding levels of technical language specific to manager.

4. OVERCOMING BOTTLENECKS IN COMMUNICATION

People have more psychological needs; one of them is the need for recognition. One of these needs is to be appreciated for their ideas.

There are two types of people: some with self-esteem, others with pride. People with self-esteem can easily accept when you are right but the second type of people have trouble accepting it.

As a manager, when you communicate with somebody you must analyse if you have in front of you a person with pride or with self-esteem.

The research I have done shows that there are six types of communication breakdown between manager and employee. These are:

- a) people build their opinions on too little information;
- b) they think that you have understood everything they said they had just a little of the mind;
- c) use into question the principles that are not valid all, but they consider them rules for everyone;
- d) they tend to exaggerate and definitely believe their own exaggerations;
- e) they have convictions about something they have never tried or studied;
- f) make suppositions about what you think but most of the times they are wrong.

a. People build their opinions on too little information

Have you ever had the feeling that someone talks to you without knowing what you are talking about? When someone starts to speak to you too vaguely, too generally, then that man actually does not have much information. This may happen because the mind is accustomed to quickly jump from one thing to another so do not insist on details.

In order to be able to get over such situations you will have to use questions. There is a set of questions that can be used when you feel that you have too little information:

- "why?" - [When it comes to a subject less defined] - In: What should I do ?, What?, What are you talking about?, What else can you tell me about that ?, What details can you give in plus?
- "who?" - [When it comes to an individual, but not many details] - Ex: Who's that?, Who?, Who should do more?, Who do...?
- "where?" - [When it comes defined a little space] - Ex: Where?
- "when?" - [When it comes to a time duration less defined] - Ex: When exactly? When? namely when can we get started?
- "how?" - [When people do not specify a method, a strategy] - Ex: How do? How to do this?

b. They think that you have understood everything they said they had just a little of the mind

You do not have to ask specific questions, but must use questions that I gave you above, to get the information that's in a man's mind and he already thinks you said it. In general, people who have this deadlock use short sentences, speak quickly, jumping from one topic to another. As his "stop" of this, we have to say the name, then tell them what they think if they do not know do not talk.

This works better if you put the questions then above. Certainly expressed as and when you know exactly what they were. You've also known people who say: "Were you there today? How about if we do this thing and then change it? "

c. Use into question the principles that are not valid all, but they consider rules for everyone

In this block you will see many people with pride. Pride usually is based on principles and rules of others, which they have earned through their own experience, but they have learned "from books". When you use many of these "principles" that convey to discuss not speak of your life experience, but from others.

This type of block can be removed if you use asking questions to find out how man builds his statement.

When people make statements such principles of life, he really believes in them without having to investigate whether are real and others. He thinks that if something is good for him is good for you. It is a "stick your neck" science and philosophy of life.

In order to unblock communication with this type of personality, ask yourself: "How do you know you're right? It may not be so for other people? I know people who do not respect this principle and are still ok."

Of course, everything has to be in a calm voice as if you're not smart guy and show off. It must be a conversation, not an interrogation. OUT!

d. They tend to exaggerate and definitely believe their own exaggerations

Do you know people often say: "Everyone do / say so"? Or people who say: "I will never manage to do that"?

These people tend to generalise unduly things. If you have once fall off the bike, they believe that you will fall every time. If three people have said eating olive oil is not good, they come to believe that it is so.

The problem occurs when those who exaggerate he sabotaged his own life because they believe that they will "never" be able to achieve his goal. "Never" is an exaggeration.

When someone utters a sentence containing generalisations such as: "never do this thing", you can use the following strategy: in a calm and quiet tone, tell him: "Even though I've never done that? I remember a time when I did".

e. They have convictions about something they never tried or studied

Have you heard people saying "I can't? Or "I will never succeed". These people use impossibility that they have had in their psyche for a long time. The problem is that they also sabotage their life because locks alone.

I know many people who say „I cannot" and then do not even try to do that thing. And if they try, some of them, almost all, would succeed. Just as they know they "cannot" so what's the point of even trying?

But I learned two strategies that destroyed this deadlock:

- the first strategy is to ask the man "OK, I get that you cannot ... but what stops you doing this?" So his attention to that man on the obstacle and he will see many times that if he thinks about what prevents it, you can overcome this.
- the second strategy to this deadlock is to give it the thought of the person talking and using "cannot". Let's say, "Okay, I understand you cannot. But if you could, what would you do? "This is a very slick trick. Do not put a man to physically do something "impossible", but to make it in the mind. In psychology, we know that if someone has something in mind, and then begin to do physically handling your face!

f. Make suppositions that they know what you think but in the most times wrong

What annoys me and me when someone thinks he knows what I think? When someone put words in your mouth, although you were thinking different. You know that feeling when someone says, 'I know you thought this "?

I have discovered the best way to get rid of those assumptions from other people's mind.

When someone "knows" that I have in mind, simply asking "how do you know what I thought?" And of course that I say, "I know and ready". "Yes, yes, but on what? I know you're a rational and intelligent man, you must have some proof that I thought so ..." And so ends assumptions about the minds of others.

5. STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING THE COMMUNICATION AT MANAGERIAL LEVEL

Clearly, the organizations that communicate more efficiently run successful projects. The findings show that organizations with a high degree of performance are more effective communicators. Thus, it appears as no surprise that those with a high efficiency in communication have a five times more probability to have a high degree of performance than those whose efficiency in communication is minimal. And, as is shown in Pulse study [11], the high-performance organizations expose at risk a 14 times smaller amounts. These findings suggest that low-performance organizations can extract clear benefits from improving their communication practices, these improvements enabling them to achieve a higher success rate of projects and expose at risk smaller amounts of money.

The organizations that want to improve their communication and achieve a high level of performance should consider the following strategies. It is necessary for a business to improve the communication because in this way it can reach a high level of performance through compliance with the following strategies:

- i. The elimination of communication disparities in the business area

The top level managers and projects coordinators should take measures to establish procedures for a more effective communication of strategy to all the employees. When the message will be clear and concise, the management enjoys the success. The businesses with a high degree of performance have the ability to optimize the results by directing frequently such information to working teams.

ii. The practice of standardized methods of communication and their use in a more efficient manner

In the graphs mentioned above it noticed that a management with a high performance has a probability of nearly three times higher than those with low levels of performance to use standardized practices having better results. A standardized form of practice management is represented by a formal communication plan which, although standardized, it should be adaptable and suitable for all the parts. The researches show that high-performance organizations use formal communication plans more frequently and more effectively, allowing them to operate successfully in a complex and competitive business climate.

iii. Adapting the level of communication focused on every part involved

Many managers have difficulties in communicating with all the stakeholders using the right level of clarity and particularization, and also the appropriate language. Managers with a high level of performance understand that different groups of stakeholders use different language and adapt agreeably their communication. And also they understand that all the groups must have a clear vision of the business.

6.DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION MANAGER'S COEFFICIENT

The coefficient of communication means the ability to see things others notice and understand what is in the mind of the people with which you communicate.

In the training I had with managers and leaders I found some communications patterns that refer to effective communication. At organizational level you must include the following elements:

- attention to detail nonverbal (here are all the position and gestures, and the ability to perceive them if you saw the person with whom you communicate);
- the ability to give examples;
- the ability to modify your tone (this creates excitement and makes the interlocutor to agree with what you say - without generating emotion, everything will be filtered rational);
- the rapid identification of blockages;
- eliminating assumptions that appear in your mind (99% of the time we make assumptions, and they are wrong - although we remember only 1% of those when I assumed correctly);
- the ability to ask questions correctly (most people are wrong about that and the discussion turns into a questioning of both parties);
- the ability to use analogies and metaphors (this method is considered to transmit information quickly and directly in subconscious of the person communicating).

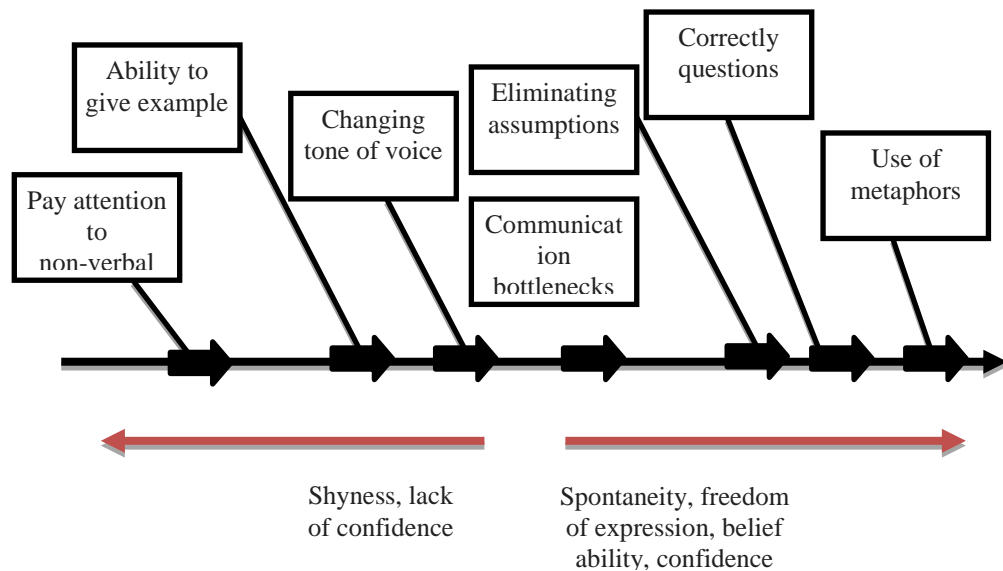


FIGURE 5: COMMUNICATION MANAGER'S COEFFICIENT

CONCLUSIONS

Most companies believe they can solve the problem of communication without personal communication skills to be highlighted and without organizational procedures. Lack of communication leads to alterations in several components of the company management.

Communication problems cannot be solved by email or phone. It takes a face to face communication (individual or by session) to understand exactly how all elements of communication manifest.

Regardless of the communication methods, that we decide to use it, we must be aware of: mutual respect, knowledge, skills, experience and clothes.

We must always be clear why we communicate, and communication style must suit the environment in which we work, internally and externally.

If we want performance, efficiency, increased productivity, we remain only to keep account of how we communicate, and how to create a positive and challenging atmosphere at work and many more that will come if we communicate openly and effectively with all members of the team.

In conclusion, for the effectively function of company, the management should encourage the informal and formal communication. If informal is encouraged, he can become a source of innovation for rise the profit, especially in times of organizational restructuring.

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