

Communication and Human Resource Management and its Compliance with Culture

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Abstract—According to the conception of personnel management, human resource management requires efficient use of human resources. This is ensured by various activities directed towards the area of management. Among these activities there are for example the recruitment of employees, development, strengthening of relations, mutual inspiring, implementation of correct working processes and systems used by individuals or groups.

Keywords—Communication, company, customers, employees, human resource management, manager, organizational structure, personnel management, strategic management.

I. INTRODUCTION

PERSONNEL management deals with the development of human resources and performs the role of a multiplier of one of the inputs that the company needs to meet its goals.

The main purpose of human resource management therefore lies in the preparation of job descriptions and the establishment of working conditions suitable for the development of human resource potential. This is a kind of support which takes into consideration changes in corporate culture and philosophy and encourages colleagues to be more committed to company goals and strategies and to identify with company philosophy. Moreover, strong corporate culture and correctly defined strategy significantly contribute to integration, co-ordination and motivation of individual employees, their initiative and improvement of quality of work. It strengthens their loyalty and responsibility with respect to their company. It is not an easy task to set visions and goals that would match the goals and expectations of employees and meet the expectations of customers. Personnel management respects an approach in which market orientation starts and ends with people and employees can listen to market signals identify trends, wishes of customers as well as their dissatisfaction and complaints. For the information to reach the company management, it must be communicated. At the same time, the management must be willing and competent to listen to the information and requested changes and to interpret them. This requires a qualified employee accepting the corporate culture, i.e. correct decisions of personnel management.

II. GOALS AND METHODS

The goal of the survey is to describe the selected part of company reality from the point of view of communication,

which is an important area of economical and corporate reality, and to compare the findings with theories on efficient communication outlined in the publications analysed.

For the purposes of comparison and evaluation of theory and practice in the field of communication, a sociological survey has been carried out concentrating on communication between superiors and subordinates in companies operating in the Czech Republic.

The survey has been carried out according to the rules laid down and described in special publications and has observed the basic methodological principles and requirements for this type of survey. The technical literature provided important advice and a framework helping the author to refrain from distortions and inaccuracies. The survey utilised both qualitative and quantitative methods.

III. OUTCOMES AND DISCUSSION

A large portion of problems companies face is connected with the quality of human resources and efficient communication. Researches have revealed that an average employee exploits only 50 percent of his capacity and this figure can be either increased or decreased by motivation, targeted development and efficient communication. Management can expect maximum return on investment in human labour if it uses the human potential offered by employees, keeps all employees well informed and makes them participate in company goals and projects. Management bears a great deal of responsibility as their attitude to human resources reflects in their satisfaction and performance. Just like corporate culture, successful human resource management must cover all the employees of the company as each of them makes decisions that, in the final stage, determine the fulfilment of company goals. Various forms of co-operation between employees and groups encourage communication in a specific way. Just for illustration, it is possible mention several communication tools of personnel management, such as meetings, teamwork, quality teams, brainstorming. The objective of personnel management is to decide on a suitable form of the above presented tools, motivation, development and assessment that promote the efficiency of co-operation [8].

With regards to the fact that communication is not a purely inborn skill and ability, it is necessary to develop it. The theory of personnel management therefore uses a growth management model. New employees are the most open and

require positive approach. To achieve satisfaction with work, several requirements must be satisfied. First, the work must be adequate and demanding. The second and rather important requirement is its attractiveness. The third requirement is to create a pleasant and efficient communication climate. All three requirements are long-term in character and should be applied as soon as the employee joins the company. If employees are provided adequate and good-quality initial training, they are much more motivated to perform their work [1]. Simultaneously, they are more likely to stay with the company, are more productive and their activities contribute to the increase of the company turnover or profit. Regular training and education are key factors in improving performance, motivation, enthusiasm, and commitment. Despite that companies are reluctant to invest in their human resources. Briann Tracy supports this by stating that an average company spends 85 percent of its variable wage costs, but less than one percent on employee training although surveys have shown that quality training improves performance and return on investment in ratio 30:1. While the majority of companies focus on qualification management as regards the development of human resources, the course of current events increasingly requires knowledge management. Experts see the strategic perspective of company education and development in the maximum possible exploitation of human resource potential available in the company. This requires thorough development through regular training, workshops, common company events, regular and structured motivational experience, regular feedback and critical evaluation, responsibility awareness and jobsheet transparency. All the mentioned management tools are important areas significantly influencing in-company communication and are therefore dealt with by personnel management.

Personnel management covers the issues of internal communication in a very broad sense. Specialized literature describes several other areas and approaches mentioning communication in connection with companies. Most of them, however, analyse communication from a very narrow perspective of the internal events and neglect the overall impact of communication on the efficiency of a professional company or organisation.

Approaches to Communication Based on Personality Types

These approaches focus on personality typology and aim at determining differences in communication based on specifics of each personality. Each personality type requires a specific way of communication that influences the personality. Each personality type requires a specific way of communication that influences the personality's performance. The approaches generally apply to social life or deal with communication of superior managers, i.e. try to define the personality of the manager with respect to communication effectiveness. The theories mention a number of characteristics of a manager and typology is used as a tool facilitating managers to utilise their communication and leadership skills.

Successful communication is based on qualities a good manager should possess:

Tactfulness – this is connected with one of typical human characteristics and needs – the feeling of importance and usefulness. If a superior shows interest in his subordinates and co-operates with them, his subordinates will be more open in terms of communication and co-operation.

Constructiveness – one of the preconditions of good and open communication is the trust of subordinates in their manager's ability to clearly define tasks, responsibility, the extent of responsibility and standards to be achieved. Otherwise, it is difficult for employees to offer or receive any feedback since they do not understand what is generally recognised as being correct. It is based on a structured communication process which ensures that no redundant information is communicated, or, on the contrary, no key information is omitted.

Freedom to perform – another prerequisites and a guarantee of better communication is the freedom which the superior gives to his subordinates with respect to the performance of the assigned task. Success requires freedom. Freedom is a key motivator for accepting and conveying information. This simultaneously means to delegate responsibility for the quality of performance of the whole task and decision-making powers. Superiors must provide all colleagues with clear information regarding the level of freedom they are granted with respect to the entrusted tasks.

Responsibility awareness – the following should be communicated: loyalty, responsibility, authority, performance measures, support, trust and expectations.

Good general knowledge - to manage activities and decisions, it is necessary to know who the information and facts are designed for and where they can be obtained. The theory of management through exceptions explains this rule in more detail. It is based on the principle of communication restricted to exceptions, deviations, differences, discrepancies and exceptional successes or failures.

Positive self-perception – the building of positive self-confidence is based on the management of relationships. It recommends communication of positive self-respect and the feeling of importance. People need to know how their work is evaluated. It is important for the manager to dedicate enough time to his subordinates to explain all the critical points, to give instructions and arrange details, to pardon unimportant problems and distinguish them from crucial matters. Positive self-perception is closely connected with growth management. For their development, employees require a number of impulses, such as freedom, control, feedback, respect, friendly atmosphere and positive trust. Many barriers are created only based on the incorrect assumption that the employee is not able to perform the given duty or assignment.

With respect to the above said, it is imperative to realise the key aspect of company development, which is the so-called stable system of communication expectations. This means expected and predictable communication behaviour which is the cornerstone of a communication system. Furthermore, the

approach based on expectations is very important since people, as many surveys show, tend to do what they are expected to do.

The theories place a focus on management, but lack analyses of characteristics and recommendations for sales personnel, representatives and other company staff that are in contact with customers and therefore determine, to large extent, the success of the company. A company representative can only master efficient and suitable way of communication with business partners if he, as an expert, acquires certain preset skills and qualities. Even in these theoretical approaches we can recognise certain one-sidedness that should be overcome in the future. To provide a complete picture of current theories dealing with communication, we should also mention a theoretical approach based on performance.

Strategic Management and Communication

Many companies still fail to define an appropriate and realistic strategy or goal understandable to all company segments and comprehensively adapted to suit their roles on their journey to the common goal. In a number of companies, management teams do not communicate the goals and employees, not being acquainted with them, cannot implement the strategy efficiently and in full.

The performance of goals is determined by corporate culture, human resource management and functional support systems. The outcomes are also influenced by the communication system, controlling and suitable organisational structure. The fulfilment of goals is based on the ability to respect and adapt to current conditions and the environment, provided there is a clear and shared company strategy. Other important factors include the quality of human labour relations, permitting to build on well-functioning company structure, company systems and processes helping the company to carry out its activities.

IV. CONCLUSION

The research has revealed a decline in transparency of communication in the direction up the company hierarchy. This supports the opinion of experts who assume that higher managerial posts are associated with higher demands. The examined companies lacked efficient vertical communication and the expected required functions, as characterised in theories, were not valid. The research has shown that downward vertical communication predominates in these companies, in particular in the areas of communication with customers and suppliers or task assignment (see table no.1 and 2 and fig. no. 1). The opinion that downward vertical communication can stimulate employee commitment and subsequently improve customer service cannot be, with respect to the sociological survey, fully accepted. Commitment to and focus on customers on the part of employees providing services must be convincing and natural. The research has confirmed that it is much more effective to

build on freedom and motivation of employees. Employees who are in contact with customers have to be able to explain why they do that particular activity and why they use that particular approach. If a company wants its employees to communicate with their colleagues and customers effectively, it must create appropriate conditions and by means of systematic development and suitable human resource management tools encourage motivation and employee communication.

TABLE I
ENSURING COMMUNICATION WITH CUSTOMERS

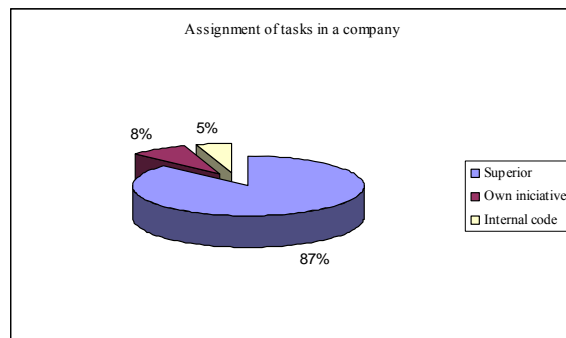
Communication with customers is ensured by	Respondents' answers (in %)
Management	51
Sales personnel	18
Marketing	31
Answers in total	100

Source: Own research

TABLE II
DEPARTMENTS ENSURING COMMUNICATION WITH SUPPLIERS

Communication with suppliers is ensured by the following departments:	Respondents' answers (in %)
Management	32
Sales Department	23
Accounting Department	31
Customer Service teams	8
Warehouse	5
Other departments	1
Answers in total	100

Source: Own research



Source: Own research

Fig.1 Assignment of tasks in the company

Companies with a horizontal structure are the most likely to experience problems between closely co-operating departments. The survey carried out selected the following departments as "problematic": sales, marketing, finance and customer service. Among others, respondents pointed out the lack of teamwork between individual departments and the non-fulfilment or neglecting of work duties. The majority of companies use clearly defined information flows only in connection with financial matters. Just a small number of employees is well informed and knows who to refer to (see fig no.3). On the contrary, if no clear solution procedures are defined, a vast majority of employees deal with work problems either on their own or with the help of their colleagues. Passive forwarding of information in companies is quite common and in some cases information is conveyed to

wrong recipients.

This means that if an employee needs some information, he has to make a request since it was not communicated to him in time or in the correct form. At the same time, it is not uncommon that an employee who comes across some important facts and or information that might be beneficial to the company does not know who they should be communicated to and how. The findings have confirmed other survey results related to inter-departmental communication and problem-solving situations. The departments characterised the conveyed information as incomplete, not always in time and delivered upon reminder. In many cases it was provided at the last moment. The above said proves that the absence of project and process management in current companies is a substantial drawback. Similarly, companies fail to define rules of a functional communication system that would be sufficiently transparent, simple and handled and respected by all company employees. It is very difficult to ensure efficiency and quality of information communicated. However, unless there is a system and prescribed communication procedures, it is hard to implement changes in conditions or activities as they are not measurable and it is impossible to determine whether or not they are efficient and of required quality.

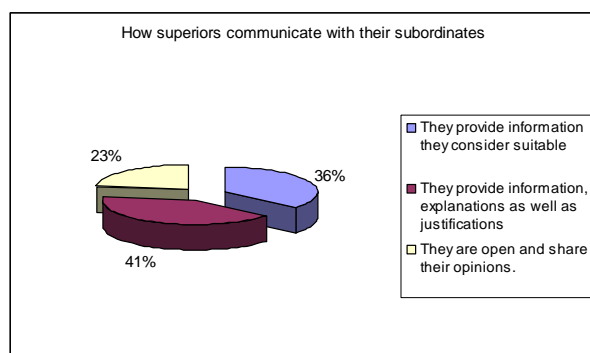
TABLE III
SHARING OF INFORMATION

Sharing of information	Frequency (%)
Employees know who they should communicate information to	43

Source: Own research

In some of the respondents' answers, a major part of responsibility for communication is attributed to management, which supports the findings on high degree of power centralisation and the directive style of management.

According to the outcomes of the survey, the personality of the manager has a significant influence on the subordinate and his will to discuss problems with his superior. A more detailed investigation confirmed and specified the factors causing distrust (see fig. no. 2). Professional skills of the superior are what the employees trust most. Problems arising from relationships with superiors are often associated with trust in maintaining confidentiality and in fair treatment.



Source: Own research

Fig. 2 How superiors communicate with their subordinates

The research has revealed that communication with superiors can be considered efficient if at least half of the employees confirm that their superiors provide not only information, but also explanations and justifications and that their superiors listen and show real interest. Otherwise, the manager's personality is a real threat to efficient communication. The research has demonstrated that efficient communication requires a suitable rather than dominant manager. Therefore the manager's personality and management style have a significant impact on the satisfaction and performance of employees.

Moreover, the research has revealed that employees know their tasks clearly communicated by their superiors - lower managers, however, do not have enough freedom and powers to perform these tasks. The above said also implies that employees are not acquainted with goals which are less understandable and rather focus on clearly explained and communicated tasks. Employees do discuss their problems with managers, but fail to discuss and evaluate their results and task performance. This also means that employees lack the evaluation of their performance and feedback. Without continuous development of skills and knowledge, managers tend to adopt a directive approach to subordinates and apply it, however, often ineffectively. The majority of recommendations designed for managers regarded communication improvement, understanding of personal situation, ability to listen and provision of necessary information. Furthermore, the companies do not possess a manager's profile which serves as a reference communication model of managerial behaviour and conduct and deals in more detail with personality typology and typical behaviour in common activities.

TABLE IV
HOW EMPLOYEES DEAL WITH WORK PROBLEMS

Employees deal with work problems as follows:	Answers in %
They try to solve the problem themselves	16
They ask their colleagues and superiors and try to solve it together	38
Superiors communicate in time what is to be done	14
They ask a colleague for help	24
They learn it from company rumours	8
Answers in total	100

Source: Own research

Successful and efficient communication can be ensured by a manager who is a personality, possesses excellent professional knowledge and skills and enjoys the confidence of his employees (support, impartiality and confidentiality). If, at the same time, the manager utilises a clearly defined profile and work rules, responsibilities and powers, then his team may work efficiently and independently. On the contrary, if managers are given a high level of freedom, there is a higher likelihood of occurrence of conflicts which the manager is unable to solve or if solved, the solution has an adverse effect on company results and employee satisfaction.

The examined companies did not possess managers' profiles. The profile and rules requirements, however, are not

restricted to managers, but apply also to other employees who are in contact with customers and use a certain style of communication. Like in the case of managers, their efficiency is determined by their abilities to communicate, control, plan and check results. With respect to the above said and the importance of sale, future surveys should concentrate on deeper analysis of effective communication in relation to personality types and management style of managers as well as other positions.

The research has not fully confirmed the principle of direct proportion between the extent of communication and effectiveness of co-operation among departments and employees. The co-operation is also dependent on the structure of the company and the systems it uses. According to the survey, communication in the direction up the company hierarchy becomes less transparent, information is forwarded passively, there are no measurable functional communication system rules that could be handled and recognised by company employees. Commitment and focus on customers does not result from vertical communication alone. The research has also demonstrated that efficient communication is dependent on a suitable manager with an appropriate profile rather than a dominant personality. The personality of the manager and management style can contribute to the satisfaction of employees and improve their performance. If a company wants its employees to communicate effectively, it must create appropriate conditions, by means of systematic development and suitable human resource management tools encourage motivation and employee communication, and set rules for the described company systems or standards, the observance of which it checks.

A major part of competitive advantage of the company lies in quality and efficient communication. The improvement of the efficiency of human resources and their ability to communicate in suitable corporate culture should therefore become one of the key priorities of companies.

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