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AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CHALLENGES OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SUCCESSFUL SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA

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Agenda Overview

Communication which is derived from the Latin **communicare which means to share or to make common**, has been acknowledged as the ineludible ingredient needed to grow and sustain any human enterprise, yet it is the most uncultivated asset in the management of any social system. It is on the basis of this assumptions that this study aimed at assessing the challenges of internal communication and its relationship to successful service delivery, with special focus on occupational health and safety.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- At the end of the presentation, attendees shall have:

- Learnt the specific factors hindering effective internal communication in relationship to health and safety management in modern organisations.

- Comprehended the factors and mechanisms for effective internal communication and how they contribute to efficient service delivery.

- Learnt how to enhance their respective communication skills

DEFINITION OF TERMS

- Antonio Hernández Mendo and Oscar Garay Plaza(2005) defined *communication* as a process of social interaction of a verbal or non-verbal nature, with intentionality of transmission and that can influence, with and without intention, in the behavior of the people who are in the coverage of said emission.

- According to Frank and Brownell, *internal communications* can be defined as transactions between individuals and groups in organizations at various levels and in different areas of specialization (Frank and Brownell, 1989 in: Dolphin, 2005).

- Others define *internal communications* as "all formal and informal communications taking place internally at all levels of an organization" (Kalla, 2005, p. 304), or "the full range of ways that people communicate with each other within the organization" (Orsini, 2000, p. 31).

- John Spacey defined Service delivery is the process of providing a service to customers or the internal clients of an organisation(John,2016)

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INTRODUCTION

- Internal communication is often described as a core process for organisations (Welch and Jackson, 2007) and one that should be on the agenda for all management strategic meetings (Barrett, 2002). Smith (2005) warns that companies "underestimate the power of internal communications at their peril" (p. 19).

- The inner core of branding is not only the outward appearance, but it also includes the internal communication processes that are connected with strategic planning, processes, people, structure, and rewards. Effective internal communication has traditionally been recognized as the lifeblood of every business. Firms all around the world have been attempting to develop innovative strategies to increase their growth, profitability, and competitiveness.

- The role of internal communications in this regard is "building and nourishing employee relations, establishing trust, providing timely and reliable information and thereby contributing to general motivation, particularly in times of change and stress" (Dolphin, 2005, p. 171).

IMPORTANCE OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Like a human being, a company has to have an internal communication mechanism, a "nervous system", to coordinate its actions.

— Bill Gates —

AZ QUOTES

The importance of
Internal Communications

happeo

Provides **clarity**

Company remains **competitive**

Keeps employees **up-to-date**

IC

Important for **staff engagement**

Builds **company culture**

Enables **feedback and discussion**

Objective of effective internal communication

- According to Spitzer and Swider (2003), effective internal communications should have three basic objectives (p. 70–71):

- 1.   Information that is communicated to the employee audience is understood and accepted by the audience with respect to the content, intent, relevance, as well as merit of the message;

- 2.   Goals of the communications with regard to motivating, directing, informing, or gaining the participation of the employee audience are achieved among the majority of employees;

- 3.   End result of an improved internal dialogue is achieving improvement in one or more of the core success components: sales, product quality, workforce per-formance and satisfaction, profitability. ultimately customer satisfaction and to the safety professional, a zero incident in the workplace.

 Internal communications practitioners need to understand people in organizations (Strauss and Hoffman, 2000). They should be able to gauge an organisation's communications climate (L'Etang, 2008) and analyse the cultural, political and relational dimensions present within their organisations (Conrad, 1994).

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

The factors will be divided into Micro, mezzo and macro.

Micro factors:

1. Employee (and every member's) communications competence is probably the most specific and substantial aspect of any human communications system that if developed, conditions the effectiveness of interpersonal communications and consequently decides the efficiency of major organizational processes. It manifests itself in an ability to choose appropriate and effective communications behavior in every situation and to achieve communication results; it implies knowledge, skills and motivation to communicate. Specifically in an organization, it heavily relies on adequate presentation, negotiation, rhetorical, linguistic, and information organization skills of an individual.

 2. Personal communications style of all organization members, determined by the communications strategy of a company and its values, results from the development of their communications competence parameters and serves the effectiveness of communications practices.

3. Relevant message or information perception and an adequate categorization of information as well as feedback allow effective interaction among communicators.

Micro factors cont.

4. Careful structuring and organizing of verbal messages allows fitting an appropriate format for any channel and means of organizational communications and its system.

5. Effective choice of either formal or informal communications networks with the participation of communicators from all hierarchical levels of an organization often determines the success of not only communications but other organizational processes as well.

6. Proficient and conscious use of a verbal, non-verbal kind(s) of communication, or both of them, determines interpersonal communications success, especially in sophisticated settings.

7. Relevant organizational communications means, employed by individual communicators, is a crucial factor at all organizational communications stages and in wider applications.

8. Identifying and overcoming personal communications barriers, for instance, differing values, perception peculiarities, attitudes, etc., or semantic, physical, socio-cultural obstacles, is a direct indication of effective communications in any company setting.

Mezzo factors that influence internal communication

1. Integration of the communications system and all its subsystems with the goals of the organization, as managers are those individuals who coordinate and control.

2. Leadership and management style (effective distribution and use of information, willingness to communicate, effective vertical communication with feedback and encouraging employee self-awareness), which directly fosters or inhibits communications, especially nurturing real-time communications as opposed to technology-mediated communications.

3. Successful selection of a relevant channel (written vs spoken vs technology-mediated) is of prime importance on all the levels of hierarchical communications among the management of the company; it directly facilitates successful reaching of company objectives.

4. Effective conflict management, that is, open exchange of information, tolerance, and empathy, relevant for all communications process participants, as a prerogative of the management.

5. Effective group communications [skills], such as relevant supply of information, effective listening, knowledgeable information analysis, efficient enquiry and synergy, which allow efficient horizontal communications flows in an organization.

Macro factors that influences internal communication

1. Organizational objectives, namely its mission statements valuing communications and communicators, as well as an overall communications strategy, constitute the baseline of communications in an organization.

2. Organizational communications values, for instance, openness of the system, providing and getting feedback, cooperation, valuing informal communications, openness to change, risk tolerance, learning and improvement essentially support the backbone of the company.

3. Strong communications ethics, manifesting itself as harmony between an organization's external and internal communications, positive affiliations with all interest groups, etiquette knowledge for employees and management also form a communications system background.

4. Identifying and overcoming organizational communications barriers (lack of motivation, information overload, competition, inadequate management style) may resolve large communications issues, sometimes challenging strategic twists in an organization

Source based on Blazenaite (2011)

APPLICATION OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN SAFETY MANAGEMENT

At the heart of positive safety culture is internal communication because according to Angelica(2007), It can improve knowledge and understanding that averts at-risk behavior and enhances safe work practices

Challenges of internal communication

Effective communication has become more and more important for the success of a company. It affects employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and the general public perception of a company. Because of this, it is important to identify the dangers of internal communication challenges to a company or organization. Below is a list of the major challenges of internal communication.

1. Lack of communication in general
2. Inadequate feedback
3. Barriers to communication

Challenges. Cont.

4. Orientation of New Employees

5. Balancing Internal and external new

6. A lack of mutual respect

PRACTICAL STEPS TO IMPROVE INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

1. Carry out an assessment on the state of your internal communication.

2. Identify your target audience and their communication competencies and needs.

3. Set a time bound internal communication goal for your organisation and define your desire outcome which must align with your organisation goals, vision and mission.

4. Come up with a communication plan and strategy

5. Implement your strategy and monitor for improvement.

CONCLUSION

 I will end with this quote by Tony Robbins. *" To effectively communicate, we must realise that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use that understanding as a guide to our communication with others"*.