



ISSUES IN CORPORATE COMMUNICATION: AN ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Corporate communication is regarded as the broader term, encompassing both internal and external communication. Corporate communication is a set of activities involved in managing and orchestrating all internal and external communications aimed at creating favourable point of view among stakeholders on which the company depends. It is the messages issued by a corporate organization, body, or institute to its audiences, such as employees, media, channel partners and the general public. Organizations aim to communicate the same message to all its stakeholders, to transmit coherence, credibility and ethic. It is said that Effective communication is an important part of a successful business. Improper communication can dampen a company's opportunities for managing employees and increasing market share.

Keywords: Employees, communication, stakeholders

1. Introduction

The 21st century, scientific advancement and knowledge explosion rightly described as "Space Age" the needs of the world have grown at a tremendous pace. Communication-the vital necessity to run the day-to-day affairs of life as a whole, is no exception to the rule. As a corollary to progress in all spheres, diversification specialization and professionalism have come out high on agenda. Therefore, as each sphere of life has its own situation and each situation can yield expected result only when related jargon is used in its context appropriately, Communication has to be duly chiseled, shaped dressed and designed for the need, in purpose-serving fashion. In simple terms, communication is nothing but transaction of messages. A review of existing literature in the area of communication would probably take us back to Aristotle. But with the passage of time and understanding of the process of communication from time to time, mainly two theories emerged as the most relevant ones, namely, Co-operative Principle (HP. Once, 1975) and politeness Principle (G.N. Leach 1983). The Co-operative Principle can be stated as ("make your conversational contribution such as is required at the stage at which you are engaged". This principle also proposes four maxims for effective transport of messages or effective communications in conversation -quality, quantity, relation and manner. They can be summarized as; be truthful, be succinct, yet complete, be relevant and be clear and orderly. The Politeness Principle (VP.) maintains social equilibrium and friendly relations among interacted. In any well-organized interaction the functions of CP and PP are as follows-secure total support from the participants in realization of the goal of the exchange and ensure full cooperation from speaker and the hearer, even in instances where there is a conflict as a result of adherence to personal goals. Effective communication is essential for every Individual and more for a manager in MNC in particular.



2. Corporate communication meaning:

The term 'corporate communication' is increasingly being used in practice to describe the management function that is still referred to as 'public relations' in the body of knowledge (Groenewald 1998:58). 'Corporate communication' is preferred in this paper, the justification being that 'public relations' suffers from negative associations with the way it has been practised in the past (Ehling, in Grunig 1992). Furthermore, public relations is also seen by some as referring only to an organisation's external communication (Steyn 1999). In this paper, corporate communication is regarded as the broader term, encompassing both internal and external communication. Corporate communication is a set of activities involved in managing and orchestrating all internal and external communications aimed at creating favourable point of view among stakeholders on which the company depends. It is the messages issued by a corporate organization, body, or institute to its audiences, such as employees, media, channel partners and the general public. Organizations aim to communicate the same message to all its stakeholders, to transmit coherence, credibility and ethic. Corporate Communications help organizations explain their mission; combine its many visions and values into a cohesive message to stakeholders. The concept of corporate communication could be seen as an integrative communication structure linking stakeholders to the organization.

3. Importance of Corporate Communication

Corporate communication is the voice of an organization. It speaks internally, to employees, as well as externally, to suppliers, vendors, media, investors and other stakeholders. It speaks when things are going well in the corporation and when there is a crisis. As with all good and effective communication, it must be clear, consistent and controlled. Corporate communication plays a major role in creating and maintaining the business image of any corporate entity. It is an effective strategy to communicate the brand value and reputation to its customers, stakeholders and the target audience. There are many processes of corporate communication with which you can create the desired business impact. Many reasons mark the importance of corporate communication in today's business world.

To have a Better Rapport: Rapport building is the key motive of any corporate communication strategy; this can be internal and external, as well. When there is a constant **rapport with employees and customers**, the business image of the company will also get higher. It is for this reason many big companies like coco cola and IBM follow effective corporate communication strategies.

To Highlight the Performance: Nothing other than frequent communication like newsletters and posters can effectively **highlight the performances** of the company. This will again have a positive impact on the business image of the company.

To Advertise New Products & Services: Regular means of communication will help in easy reach of new products and services to the consumers. So, corporate



communication becomes highly essential for advertising new products and services of the company.

Helps to increase the sale: To increase the sales, a company requires a salesman who is a good communicator, who can sell products, convey company's ethos and also outlines the values of company to people who will not only buy the products but will become company loyalist. Thus, communication helps to increase sales.

Helps in retaining the client: A company executive must have necessary skills to deal with the customers. This helps in retaining the clients as customers are business lifelines and their concern is very important for the organization to succeed.

Helps to implement strategies: With the help of effective communication organizations can implement strategies. This builds employment commitment toward the organization, and they feel the sense of sharing of responsibility and capabilities.

Helps in corporate branding: Communication has always been the core of the corporate world. Communication between people and company is the core element of a good corporate reputation. Many companies invest millions in strategies, which aim to reinvest their profile in important ways.

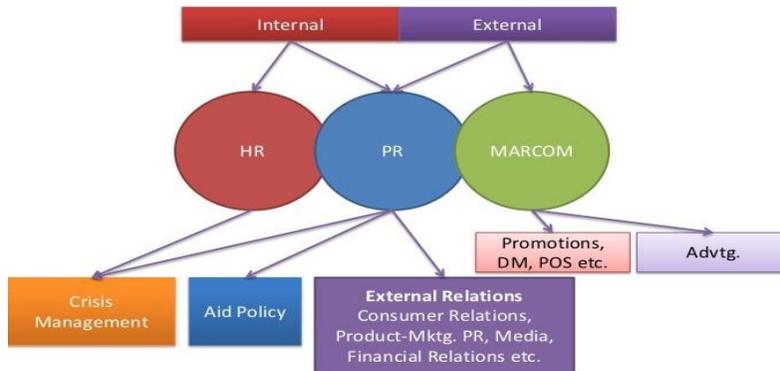
Helps to develop global competence: Communication helps to develop an understanding of other regions, lifestyles and culture of all around the world. This helps in overcoming the cross-cultural barriers during the conduct of business.

Helps in crisis management: To handle the economic crisis is the worst. Each person associated with the company needs information and reassurance with proper communication, thus employees can become the strength of the organization. The stockholders should be communicated properly so they do not indulge in panic and sell off their shares.





4. Forms of corporate communication: There are many varying aspects of corporate communications, and they can all affect or contribute to an organization's reputation.



Internal Functions of Corporate Communications

A common aspect of internal corporate communications is employee relations -- ensuring accurate and consistent communication with employees. This communication can be both formal and informal. The employee handbook, memoranda and employee reviews are examples of formal communications; personal or ad hoc conversations would be informal communications. Regular and well-executed employee communications is particularly critical during tumultuous times for an organization to ease anxieties, boost morale and inhibit inaccurate information that may trickle outside the organization.

External Functions of Corporate Communications

Corporate communications serve several audiences and purposes external to the organization. Companies need to communicate effectively to the media, so they engage public or media relations professionals. If organizations need to liaise with government agencies or if they lobby, they need government relations experts. Public companies need to employ investor relations specialists. Some companies may have specific individuals to handle relations in the community, such as charitable or volunteer works.

Media Communication:

- Fundamental element of managing brand's reputation
- Media coverage creates more credibility than only advertising
- Mostly used to increase product name recognition, establish a brand identity and to align with the target segment
- different tactics for different audience





Crisis Communications

Crisis communications is a facet of corporate communications that deserves special attention. Companies and high-profile individuals can find that one crisis and how it is handled can forever alter their corporate path. It could be a product failure, employee injuries, an executive firing or mass layoff, a natural disaster that affects a corporate facility or just an unsubstantiated rumor. Every organization needs to have a crisis team on which to call. Particularly with current social media, proactive planning is essential to the overall health of corporate communications.

5. Problems in Corporate Communication: Effective communication is an important part of a successful business. Improper communication can dampen a company's opportunities for managing employees and increasing market share.

Communicator: **The first problem with corporate communication is the communicator. If he does not understand his audience or presents a confusing message, the communication is lost on the listeners.**

1. Communication Method

Two types of communication methods are used in business: push and pull. The push method relies on management to push messages down the communication channels, while the pull method requires employees to use a communication channel to retrieve corporate messages.

Communication Channels: Several communication channels exist in the corporate workplace. Email, telephone, memos and bulletin boards are communication channels. Using the incorrect communication channel will delay the message and lessen the response time of employees.

External Noise: Corporate communication must be delivered through communication noise, which is anything that can change the intent of the original message. Communicators must avoid preconceived notions or confusing environments when sending messages.

Audience Size: An important part of communication is understanding the audience receiving the communication. Using technical terms or an informal tone can create distracting messages for the audience, delaying the expected results of the communication.

2. Ways to Improve Internal Communications

Once a company has accepted the mandate that a strategic internal communication plan should be put in place, the question arises as to how to facilitate it in terms of the communication mechanisms used. The organization has to be a place where open communication is accepted and encouraged. Key leaders need to feel comfortable with and model communication up and down the ranks of the organization. Clear definitions of what needs to be communicated and by whom - not everything needs to be communicated with everyone. Guidelines about what and how information gets passed should be developed. No matter how well-intentioned



an organization may be, communication will be stifled if the necessary mechanisms to facilitate information sharing are lacking. With that in mind, here are some ideas for creating systems that promote and strengthen internal communication.

1. **Company Email Newsletter:** An email newsletter is an ideal medium for keeping employees up to date on what's taking place within the company. Include client testimonials, employee success stories, information about new products and/or services being offered, and updates on company news and events.
2. **Corporate Intranet:** Creating an intranet site offers several advantages. It provides a place to house resources needed by employees or documents for internal use. It also promotes team collaboration within work groups and can improve communication, especially when employees are allowed to comment on updates. Many companies have begun to use intranets that resemble social networks such as Facebook or LinkedIn and that include tools for real-time communication.
3. **Small Group Meetings:** As helpful as technology tools can be, nothing beats face-to-face communication for getting things done, particularly when it's facilitated in a small group environment. Small groups foster interpersonal bonding and provide less formal settings where employees can feel free to speak their minds.
4. **Suggestion Boxes:** As old-fashioned as it may sound, suggestion boxes enable employees to raise concerns and issues anonymously and without fear of recrimination.
5. **Posters/Monitors:** Posters are an excellent way to present information to employees. A modern alternative is to use TV or video monitors, which can be updated in real-time. Put them in areas of high visibility within an office, factory or workplace, such as the cafeteria or meeting rooms.
6. **Crisis Communication Tools:** No greater need exists for effective internal communications than when a crisis occurs. A tool that facilitates real-time, synchronous communication is ideal so that employees can be apprised of and updated on the situation with immediacy.
7. **Employee Orientation and Training:** The best time to train employees on a company's internal communication practices and procedures is during new staff orientation. It's also important to set aside times to train existing employees, as well.
8. **Employee Ambassadors:** Include employees when developing your internal communications plan in order to ensure their buy-in. Also, create an "ambassador" program for employees who will act as your company's eyes and ears on the ground. Train them on internal communications, seek their feedback, and actively involve them in testing new communication procedures.



9. **Management "Back to the Floor" Program:** In order to avoid the Ivory Tower Syndrome, expose management to employees at all levels. One of the best ways is to get leaders back on the floor where they work alongside front line employees. A series of brown bag lunches or round table discussions with employees can also be helpful.
10. **Employee Feedback:** Solicit employee feedback as often as possible. This promotes a sense camaraderie, which can pay off in terms of increased productivity, loyalty and sense of well-being. You may be amazed at how the simple act of listening to employees will engender their support.
11. **Social Gatherings:** Just as important as having official communication protocols and procedures in place are opportunities or social gatherings, both during and outside of work. This might include employee picnics, holiday and birthday celebrations, and special outings.
12. **Employee Recognition:** Everyone likes to be valued, not just for their contribution to the company, but for who they are as individuals. Implement a plan to recognize employees and express your appreciation.

7. Conclusion

The 21st century, scientific advancement and knowledge explosion rightly described as “Space Age” the needs of the world have grown at a tremendous pace. Communication-the vital necessity to run the day-to-day affairs of life as a whole, is no exception to the rule. As a corollary to progress in all spheres, diversification specialization and professionalism have come out high on agenda. Therefore, as each sphere of life has its own situation and each situation can yield expected result only when related jargon is used in its context appropriately, Communication has to be duly chiseled, shaped dressed and designed for the need, in purpose-serving fashion. Clear definitions of what needs to be communicated and by whom - not everything needs to be communicated with everyone. Guidelines about what and how information gets passed should be developed.

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