Management of internal communication in companies; an attempt to model and implement a strategy from a quality approach perspective

JAOUĐ ZERRAD
Professor of Business Communication and psycho sociology at ENCG Settat, University Hassan I, Morocco

ABDELHAK BZIOUI
Professor of Business Communication at ENCG Settat, University Hassan I, Morocco

Abstract: The perception of the communication system should not be in contradiction with the new trends of behavioral improvement from the perspective of joint regulation (J.D. Reynaud; 1989) which constitutes a break with the resistance to change approach. Managerial thinking has evolved in the direction of greater stakeholder involvement, with increased attention given to internal communication. We are witnessing the emergence of new concepts such as project organization, participatory management, strategic approach, quality approach, management through communication, and so on.

Communication is becoming professional both structurally (management, service, and the like) and human in a perfect congruence which involves actors, objectives and internal environment.

Gradually, internal business communication has become an area open to new methods of evaluating the effectiveness and performance of the practices adopted on this subject. The quality of the internal communication strategy conditions work and work performance in depth. So, in the accomplishment of work, communication is linked to the concept of total quality. This article is a sketch of perception of internal communication in its new dimension; one that incorporates the strategic component of setting up the quality approach with a view to continuous improvement.

Keywords: Internal communication- Performance- quality- evaluation- instrumentation

Introduction

The relationship between communication and performance at work no longer needs to be demonstrated. It is expressed in terms of formal skills (mastery of professional writing such as memos, meeting reports, and so forth) and relational skills induced by interpersonal interactions within the organization. The evaluation of communication performance consists of ensuring that authorities, all statutes combined, fully contribute to the achievement of organizational objectives through the use of appropriate assessment tools.

In terms of internal communication, performance is satisfied with a technical and human procedural approach capable of making tangible changes in human behavior and the execution of tasks. It is therefore important to develop a benchmark for measuring effective communication against hierarchical standards (from the easiest to the most complex, for example) defining performance thresholds linked to a clearly defined progress objective. The crucial question is to know if those responsible for the quality approach applied to internal communication should be aware of the interest of integrating internal communication into the overall quality approach of the company, to consider pre-established benchmarks of technical and human skills. Or on the contrary, faced with the deficiency or absence of benchmarks, the company is forced to build others that are circumstantial and non-strategic, fundamentally linked to the issues depending on the expected results and the performance derived from them. It is a heuristic approach that every company can appropriate.

Communication should be managed by setting up a real corporate strategy in terms of internal communication based on rules and tools strictly linked to continuous improvement thanks to players who implement instruments adapted to different needs.
Gradually, the company's internal communication has become an area open to new methods of evaluating the effectiveness and performance of the practices adopted on this subject. "Management" of communication is based on two basic functions: evaluation and interpretation (Descelle Bowman, 1989). The raison d'être of a quality approach in terms of internal communication is not to get actors a job but a lasting performance by obtaining managed behaviors deemed positive in the sense of efficiency. Communication could be controlled by controlling certain tools of the quality approach. A "science" of communication would lead to a referential communication. Our ambition is to understand internal communication in its new dimension; one that incorporates the strategic evaluation and continuous improvement component. We will highlight the link between quality approach (symbol of innovation) and internal communication in the sense and practices inherent in the world of work. Our article is limited to an exploratory contribution on the subject.

1. Communication in the discourse on quality

Communication is at the heart of the issue of human resources management and organizational management. Any approach is questioned about the impact of communication on work performance. Companies are investing in a project to standardize communication practices inspired by ISO 9000 standards, 2000 applied to human resource management to subscribe to the harmony between individual behavior and organizational behavior. This harmony is satisfied with a technical or instrumental and psycho sociological procedural approach in order to obtain an efficient communication which is of reference integrated in the exercise of a performing collective and individual performance. Communication is a concept reified into a set of practices which are not limited to a static perception of the individual in his context of action but is also interested in the dynamic, evolving complexity which requires the adoption of methods of assessment adapted to new professional and psychosocial dimensions in a professional environment. The perception of communication system, as a set of managerial devices, should not be in contradiction with the new trends of behavioral improvement according to the perspective of joint regulation (J.D. Reynaud; 1989) which constitutes a break with the resistance-to-change approach. The function of communication flourished in companies during the 1980s. The return to strength of the role of communication in the company and thereby in the quality approach can be justified for two reasons:

- The place given to communication in the ISO version 2000 standards.

- The evolution and the performance of the company depend essentially on the processing of information: emission, diffusion, management, storage, and so on. We are faced with learning organizations that transmit knowledge. They capitalize on information and invest in it by exploiting it wisely. The interactive company must evaluate and then improve the exchanges for its optimal functioning.

Managing communication quality means designing strategic plans that can create strong involvement of internal players and develop their motivation in order to foster a favorable social and professional climate based on listening to all authorities: internal and external customers. The ISO version 2000 standards integrate the communication dimension into its approach to quality. It stipulates that the company must master and manage the following aspects:

- The process approach by risk analysis at all levels of business operations

- Listening to customers: customers' needs and expectations are different. The company must, therefore, identify and classify the needs of each customer category using tools from the marketing process, namely: market surveys, poll, and satisfaction surveys. Listening to the client is not a task without follow-up. It is constantly evaluated, adjusted and improved by an ad hoc system.

- Quality is an approach that must be communicated to everyone. Any quality approach is based, in supporting its implementation as well as in its promotion, on an internal and external communication action: “The communication dimension of a quality project has two components:

  - Support for the process itself (pertaining to the introduction of a change in the pedagogy, adhesion, appropriation register);
  - The promotion of the process, either in progress, or more often - successfully completed (obtaining a
The challenge of the first component is the internal dimension because it aims to drive change thanks to all the value given to the human component of the business. The second part is more oriented towards the outside, because it meets the challenges of performance and competitiveness. Quality is only achieved through the stimulation of the involvement of all stakeholders, internal and external. It follows that the company must put in place a convincing communication policy. It is therefore essential to train the actors to make them aware of the importance of communication within the organization.

ISO9004-2 standards, as explained in: Managing and ensuring quality, stipulates that

"The personnel of service organization, especially those who deal directly with customers, must have acquired know-how and the necessary communication skills. They must be able to work in a team [...] Teamwork, such as quality improvement meetings, can be an effective way to improve communication between staff members and to foster a cooperative and participatory attitude in problem solving. All hierarchical levels must demonstrate communication skills within the service organization. The existence of an appropriate information system is an essential tool for good communication and for service delivery."

The quality of a “professional obligation” is systematically dependent on adherence to a communication strategy. The company must therefore think about it, at all levels and at all stages of the process.

The quality approach applied to communication should be part of a comprehensive strategy. The analysis of the strengths and obstacles to the development of the company should not neglect internal communication. Communication thus conceived will no longer be considered the result of an improbable formalization process. Among the communication methods recommended by the ISO9004-2 standards, we can cite: management briefings, information meetings, written information and technological means of information.

In addition, management is responsible for ensuring that responsibilities and authorities are clearly defined and communicated within the organization. All employees whose function affects quality must be made aware of and empowered in the missions that are theirs in this process. Responsibilities, delegations and authorizations are defined, identified and formulated in binding structures (organization chart, diagram, responsibility matrix, job directory, job description, etc.) The elements contributing to the definition and formulation of these responsibilities and authorities must be communicated in order to answer the following question: who does what in the case of a problem and crisis?

The ISO9000 standards recognize the predominant place of the management representative in communication. They assign it a supervisory and reporting role. A member of the management team is appointed by the management, and is vested with broad powers and prerogatives such as:

- Ensuring that the processes essential to the general management of the business are properly put in place. The aspects of the process to be checked are: documentation, compliance with established processes, internal communication: evaluation for improvement

- Check that awareness of customer requirements is ensured. The driving force is communication

- Establish links with external bodies by favoring inter-functional communication

Quality faces the erratic factors of management. Therefore, the quality management system supposes two axes of equal importance through which the quality approach achieves its goals: internal and external communication.

1LIBARET(Thierry). Le plan de communication, définir, organiser votre stratégie de communication, Paris, Dunod, 2003, P 201
In order to understand the objectives and requirements of the quality approach, the person in charge of the quality management system - or the quality engineer - must supervise the staff, and "design the quality activity as a series of interventions that need to be ensured here and there so that wherever they intervene, the company achieves the objectives it has set itself". Communication linked to quality can, therefore, be summarized in three essential points:

- A motivated and coherent communication policy with the quality policy and other policies
- Known quality objectives, understood, accepted and consistent with the other objectives
- Adequate means of action explained to all to guarantee adherence

In reality, the quality approach is above all a perspective of pragmatic and normative management of internal communication in the sense of practice aimed at acquiring, stimulating and regulating formal and informal communication skills among all the internal actors of the company. We offer a practical sheet of a communication strategy oriented toward continuous improvement in three phases:

1. Setting the strategic axes of the company which integrate internal communication. The objective is to delimit the context of action, its particularities and its different implications. For the company, the question is: what are our internal communication priorities? For each structure in the company (management-division-department or service), the needs and contents of the communication strategy to be implemented must be identified.
2. Determine and define the tools for implementing the internal communication strategy oriented toward quality approach
3. Determine the actors, internal and external, concerned by the implementation of the quality approach.

The quality approach is, therefore, conceived as a tool for business development. In this sense, it will have to be translated as a voluntary, non-imposed and binding approach whose only motivation is certification. It will make it possible to envisage solutions to behavioral and relational dysfunctions.

Indeed, a company in motion implies adjustments, a permanent review of the internal communication strategy adopted. This will allow the company to have a vision of the communication skills to be developed. The company will have to ask itself fundamental questions relating to:

- The modeling of the quality approach according to the perception of each company by asking the following questions: what is the quality approach oriented towards continuous improvement of the internal communication strategy? What is its place within the company? What is the implementation process and its limits?
- When and how often should we start the quality process in internal communication?
- What documents are used?

The quality approach in internal communication allows the company to acquire the means so that internal communication is a management tool in its own right: strategic intervention, means of supporting change in the company, social observation tool, support to the hierarchy in its mission of information and animation whatever the organization to which the internal communication structure is attached: General Management, Human Resources Department, or the Communication Department. Ultimately, the quality approach in internal communication has become an undisputed managerial requirement, reasoned and planned thanks to appropriate structures, especially with the emergence of new concepts associated with internal communication, in this case performance. Managers are therefore called upon to review their internal communication strategies, to constantly question themselves about the possibilities for improvement, encouragement and measurement of the relevance of the means adopted and the effectiveness of the structures put in place.

2. Evaluation methods in the quality process

---

3CROSBY B, La qualité c’est gratuit, Paris, Economica, 1996, P77
It is useful to distinguish quality tools into two categories:

- The complex tools used in the fields of engineering, logistics, statistics, by planning and method services, and the like. These tools were generally created at the beginning of the last century. Most of them are already included in the book by Joseph JURAN (1951) "Quality Control Handbook" McGraw-Hill Book Company. It is a guide bringing together the concepts, tools and approaches applicable to quality improvement.

- Simple tools to aid in reflection, analysis, method, usable by all audiences without special training. It is the JUSE (Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers) which will make the first systematic distribution in 1977, of 7 "all public" tools selected for the simplicity of their use. These tools have been called the "7M" (1-Pareto diagram, 2-cause-effect diagram, 3-stratification, 4-check-list, 5-histogram, 6-scatter diagram, 7-graph / control chart). Certain tools can be applied to the field of communication because of their accessibility. One wonders how much communication within the organization can benefit from it.

The management of a quality approach must be framed. The initiatory tool for this coaching is the Deming wheel, designed according to the stages of implementation of quality control. Also say: the PDCA (Plan - Do - Check - Act: design, implement, control, react) or the "quality wheel". This method was initialized by the qualiticians JURAN and SHEWART at the Bell Telephone in 1925. Deming, a statistician who had been an intern with SHEWART at that time, will discuss this tool in Japan in 1950 when he was responsible for giving a series of courses on statistics for two months. Deming's name remained attached to this tool. It was further developed and took the name of: Six Sigma Method. Born in the USA, this management method aims at permanent quality improvement. It is an improved version of the PDCA.

Michel Period⁴ proposed a table which retraces the course of quality in general but also applicable to the internal communication of the company:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>Is</th>
<th>Is not</th>
<th>DIFFERENCES/RANGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What? Product Service- procedures- Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who? Staff- Number- Team- Qualifications- Miscellaneous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where? Post- Service- Reception- Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How ?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table allows monitoring of quality as a global process which seeks to optimize the involvement of all factors and take into account all parameters: human, material, and environmental

2.1. Communication performance, an attempt to define

What is effective communication? Is there a benchmark for effective communication? Would effective communication be linked to a quality approach? Communicating effectively is doing it with a deliberately agreed

---

⁴ PERIGORD (Michel), Les parcours de la qualité, démarches et outils, Paris, AFNOR, gestion, 3ème édition, 1997
Method because the actors adhere to this influential communication process in a conscious manner, the manifestation of which resembles a game where you sometimes enjoy playing it and sometimes you face repulsion because of the conflicts it generates. However, no model for describing effective communication is complete and exhaustive. Each company constitutes its own model of representation of effective communication. The thinking and internal state associated with effective communication are contained in both the communication tool and the communication process integrated into an adequate quality approach.

The communication company; such is the ambition and the objective of an organization of communication in structures having well defined functions. The management system argues more for more autonomy for staff as much as supervision and monitoring. It argues for more openness in parallel with the formal conditioning required by the operation of the structures. New realities make the business system more complex. There is no room for improvisation otherwise it is the reign of unrest and thus of anarchy. Internal communication should therefore be thought of in terms of strategy inspired by a successful and appropriate quality approach. Internal communication integrates interpersonal communication (that of people to people), functional or operational relating to the transmission of messages within the framework of the functioning of services and units, as well as mass communication which is more open and intended for a very large number of people. Therefore the quality approach in internal communication must be developed according to a systemic approach so that we can take into account the different parameters of internal communication and the issues that influence it.

We propose the following integrative scheme which takes into account the most decisive aspects in a quality approach in internal communication:

Our integrative model will help the company to design the tools of the quality approach likely to create a behavioral frame of reference for employees. It is a behavioral frame of reference that results from a dynamic process that is both subjective and constantly in development and adjustment. It also takes on an emotional character because it is based on a subjective, not rational, conception of the elements which compose it.

Internal communication, thus structured, has therefore become a managerial necessity, which reveals the ambition to master the uncertainty situated in the strategic horizon. It is perhaps a question of the future of companies which is to be anticipated with all means together with the rational allocation of resources. The strategy of
establishing a quality approach in internal communication reflects the realization of the perception or representation made by communication managers of the strategic choices of the environment as well as the resources available to them. The managerial function of communication cannot be conceived apart from the exercise of the quality approach and the mobilization of both human and material devices which guarantee the continuity of the business, continuous improvement and thereby actively support the ambitions of all the players. The transition from the simple formality of a quality tool to a managerial necessity inscribes internal communication in formal processes supported by binding structures to better guide collective action over time. The reflection on the quality approach of internal communication in companies seems to abandon the approaches that directly arise from traditional mindsets. The operational mode, classic in its foundation, of management is systematically rejected by companies immediately convinced of its ineffectiveness and its inability to be efficient and to create optimal performance of employees in internal communication.

In the context of the applicability of the proposed integrative model; the more it meets in-house and non-standard requirements the more it is accepted by users; therefore, the more essential it is to guide, modify and reinforce the behaviors of individuals in the professional context.

The behavioral frame of reference is a measurement model to improve the degree of control of certain behaviors in different situations. The measurement of employee behaviors makes it possible to note the differences in order to decide on the objectives of continuous improvement. The behavioral frame of reference presupposes a personalization of the behaviors of the collaborators, their attitudes towards information, expression and their interpersonal relationships. In terms of quality, the manager designs a kind of "map of behavioral skills" oriented towards inflection of the actions of employees in the direction that is appropriate for improving their conduct. It is also a question of inquiring about the development of long-term partners so that the obsolescence of their communication skills, the redundancy of acquired behavior does not lead to demotivation, a loss of interest in human exchange and possibly loss of interest in communication in the professional world.

2.2. Evaluating communication in the quality process

2.2.1. Pareto analysis

It is a diagnostic tool that makes it possible to establish action plans with a view to making sound decisions. It is therefore a decision support tool to deal with the company's priorities. Pareto's analysis focuses on the qualitative aspect of the phenomenon to be observed. Attributes are assigned, as a measure, to the results obtained. Everything is written on a diagram designated by the same name; the Pareto chart. It "makes it possible to rank in order of importance and therefore by priority of intervention the type of incidents encountered during a period, throughout the production process". It situates all the actions to come in the medium term.

The quality control of communication within the company according to Pareto's analysis must follow the following steps:

- Establish observation records adapted to each phenomenon. It must contain precise information for a fixed period.

- Specify the method of drawing up the observation report for the themes to be studied. Decision-makers must therefore proportion the sheets of the observation reports on the phenomena and the themes to be observed. The frequency of surveys systematically depends on the strategic choice of the organization.

- Build the Pareto to allow better information processing. The Pareto leads to actions to be taken according to the realities observed in the company.

- Possibly build other Pareto to compare the conclusions made in the first. This makes it easy to design improvement or strengthening actions.

---

5 COLLIN (Lionel), VALIN (Gérard), Audit et contrôle interne, aspects financiers, opérationnels et stratégiques, Paris, Dalloz, 4ème édition, 1992, P 209
- Match the Pareto diagram with a complete legend for the need for classification and recourse in the event of an evaluation of the quality of the internal communication
- Detail the columns one by one in order to be able to follow the phenomenon in all its states and all its manifestations.

The observation record sheet from which the Pareto diagram is derived is not standard. Each company designs the tool and the headings which are likely to achieve the expected objective. It will then start reflecting on improvements in the future. For example, we offer the following observation sheets adapted to internal communication within the company:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>October (weeks)</th>
<th>November (weeks)</th>
<th>December (weeks)</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(between individuals who are not part of the same group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intra-group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-service</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-branch</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The calculation is made according to the frequency of conflicts within the company. The totals collected make it possible to envisage the actions to be carried out and the priorities for intervention. As we have already specified, this statement can be supplemented by another which is corollary to it. It is a question of detailing each column according to the interest that the phenomenon presents for the company. The result of this work would be the sheet below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>People concerned</th>
<th>Name of the observer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The quality manager could complete the following sheets:
Sheet 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manifested behaviors</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Possessed</th>
<th>Deviations</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dynamism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiasm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sheet 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of personality</th>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Possessed</th>
<th>Variations</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-confidence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sens of responsibility</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moral Values</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Similar statement sheets can be drawn up whenever there is a need in this area. It is therefore necessary to provide for a frequency of design of these detailed sheets in order to speed up the quality process in human relations within the company. The Pareto diagram will be developed following the conclusions drawn from the survey sheets. Each phenomenon will be given attributes to qualify conflicts and numerical measures to determine their frequency.

2.2.2. Cause-effect method:

It is an analysis method whose objective is to visualize the causes of a phenomenon that occurs within the company. It consists of identifying the causes of a problem in relation to a previously defined effect. These are
"hypotheses" - using JURAN terminology - that would explain the origins of a problem. To implement this method, several techniques are possible including Pareto analysis and brainstorming. This method is the work of the group, the purpose of which is to:

"1- Structure a message
2- know a general problem that needs to be remedied
3- visualize a situation in order to reveal key points

Applied to group problem solving, it enables to:
- identify all the possible causes of the effect of a problem
- choose which causes to prioritize”

2.2.3. The correlation diagram

The correlation diagram best corresponds to the analysis of communication because it is a communication tool and can deal with a communication question, in particular the lack of exchange between staff, interpersonal conflicts, the effectiveness of communication channels. Communication… The tree structure of this diagram makes it possible to assimilate it to a reasoned and reflected mental map, less spontaneous than that which one conceives for a general item.

The correlation diagram is a useful tool if you want to deepen and detail the causes identified by looking for the probable relationships between two causes of a problem. The reports are noted by attributes in particular: positive strong, negative strong, positive weak, negative weak or a total absence of relation. For us, this diagram can be retained because it offers more information than that collected in the cause-effect diagram.

In conclusion, the quality tools that we have presented above can possibly be used in the incessant quest for total quality in internal communication in the company. Despite their uncertain and fluctuating nature, social relationships within the organization easily lend themselves to qualitative observation. The decision-maker is thus assisted in his task by these methods of daily management. In other words, it is a corrective approach whose objective is the recovery of the failing situations so that once treated, the problem does not occur anymore.

2.3. New quality tools

In addition, intervening on existing problems is not the only option or the sole concern for the quality approach. Indeed, the quality specialists have planned new tools from a more preventive perspective. They therefore answered a crucial question that decision-makers ask themselves: can we prevent the problem from occurring? The answer is optimistic because it is affirmative. To prepare for the future, we are assisted by the following tools that Michel Prigord summarizes as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify / clarify a situation, a problem</th>
<th>Verbal data</th>
<th>Figures data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationship diagram</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affinity diagram</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digging / Searching for causes, means, solution</td>
<td>Treediagram</td>
<td>Main component analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matrix diagram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diagram of alternatives</td>
<td>Specialist tool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arrow diagram</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Team work tool</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare / Plan a project, an event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Les parcours de la qualité, édition Gestion, p 136

The new tools can be applied to achieve strategic objectives that are part of the total quality approach. They propose a multidimensional approach to the situations studied in order to proactively control the anomalies that are likely to occur, to render quality a concern of all, to accept and drive change, and finally to develop a

forecasting strategy by preparing the future in all the fields of action of the company and including the field of communication. The new tools are listed according to their strategic and managerial characteristics. The roles assigned to them depend on the problem and the situation.

The new tools are intended to generate quality within the company. Therefore, they must be used judiciously by decision-makers so as to advance the quality system, create consistency in the actions to be carried out. We believe that we can adapt the tools according to the situation. The relationship diagram is best suited to develop an internal communication plan, analyze the problems encountered by working groups, promote team work, and encourage communication between departments and departments.

2.3.1. The relationship diagram:

The relationship diagram tackles more complex problems and attempts to detect causal relationships between facts in a dysfunctional situation. "The relationship diagram makes it possible to identify all the parameters of the subject treated, to reveal the most influential factors, and to determine on which fundamental points to rely". The search for causal relationships supposes that the relationship diagram is rather interested in the logical relations uniting several factors. The symbol chosen to bring out the consequence-cause-relationships is:—and>. Graphically, it is represented as follows:

The problem for which we are searching one or more solutions is placed either at the center of the map or at the end of the sheet. It is a question of attaching to it all the possible causes in order to come out with an adapted and applicable solution. The arrows translate all the causal relationships of the factors linked to the problem addressed. However, only the key factors should be retained. The relationship diagram is established in three phases called sessions organized in twelve steps.

The first session follows almost the same process of the affinity diagram session. First we clearly define the problem, we write it down on the Kraft sheet while framing it. Then, the facilitator solicits the main causes from the participants. The procedure is developed in the direction of seeking cause / effect relationships in order to identify the determining factors of the problem. Causality is represented by arrows. The factors identified must be further explored by answering the question “why” for each influencing factor. Finally, when we judge that the diagram is complete, we give it its story (date, place and names of the participants), and we prepare for the next session by formulating questions that emphasize especially the responsibilities. The points which follow require

more investigation alongside specifying the date and place of the next session.

The second session is an opportunity to adjust by capitalizing on all the corrections that participants make to the diagram developed in the first session. The facilitator can even redo the diagram to note the new elements brought during this session. The objective is to ensure the optimal clarification of the situation treated. The diagram will be validated and awarded by the participants after consensus has been reached on the causes selected. The facilitator’s task is to highlight the key factors that undoubtedly have an impact on the problem analyzed and plan actions to be taken. The second session ends with the preparation of the third and last session.

The third session allows us to think in terms of quality control by examining the results of the actions undertaken. Participants are therefore able to raise the level of quality in working relationships by studying problems and thereby anticipating other relationship dysfunctions that may arise. The relationship diagram must be designed to deal with human problems - especially interpersonal communication - in an emergency because they are constantly renewed.

It will be a good idea to show how the relationship diagram can be used to diagnose the actual causes of a problem related to interpersonal relationships in organizations.

2.3.2. Application:

Theme: Communication is everyone's business, promoting the involvement of all employees in the communication process.

Conclusion: Plan modes of regulation and practice integration techniques. To prevent these malfunctions, almost everything has to be negotiated. The imperatives of quality require the participation of all actors around common objectives.

Date:
Location:
Name of participants:

---

Finally, we reiterate that quality diagrams are tools for improvement. The diagram is a set of a preventive tool
against the various dysfunctions which would have reached the human relationships within the organization. It is a system that optimizes staff performance. Quality diagrams should not be tools perceived as a fashionable fact, or a means of certification.

They are to be appreciated as a business strategy in search of staff involvement. The quality approach applied to the company's internal communication is an interpersonal, unifying and interactive approach rather than impersonal and limited to the one who designs it. It cannot free itself from human components and values such as aspiration, thirst for communication, commitment and responsibility. Moreover, this is the reason why the quality approach is implemented through exchange opportunities which multiply interaction opportunities. However, the diagrams are not supposed to translate a pure and simple quantifying work (number of conflicts, frequency of meetings in the corridor, number of informal groups, number of written messages disseminated, and the like), because all they can offer are data. The effectiveness of this quality approach tool applied to internal communication is increasingly measured by its ability to overcome communication obstacles and to unite staff around one or more common objectives by speaking the same language. Once freed from "non-communication", staff will be more profitable and more likely to be in direct contact with others within the company. It will no longer be a question of measuring the number of hours that staff spend working, but the evaluation will focus on their productivity.

To apply one of the diagrams experienced above, you have to look at it from different angles to conduct and monitor interpersonal relationships and offer the climate that satisfies everyone. Quality diagrams are not only means within the organization; they constitute a mode of organization understood as a strategy of the company.

3. Evaluation of the performance of internal communication, a guarantee of continuous improvement

Evaluating the performance of internal communication involves verifying the degree of compliance of the strategy with a pre-established communication framework in a systemic approach insofar as it is necessary:

- Focus on two-way interactions and relationships: horizontal and vertical
- The development of a situation approach in order to detect communication requirements and standards
- Diagnose new communication needs (communicate feedback on work done, for example)
- Adopt a systemic approach to the evaluation of effective communication by measuring the related dimensions for the manager as well as for the employees: personal dimension, managerial dimension and the institutional dimension of internal communication. The diagram below summarizes the performance indicators relating to these dimensions:
Evaluating internal communication means ensuring that the actors achieve the objectives that are assigned to an internal communication strategy. It is a process integrated into the overall strategy of the company whose objective of results is to encourage partners to deploy more efforts in terms of communication behaviors.

Communication performance with a view to continuous improvement is part of representations linked to mental patterns and models⁸. The cognitive framework of performance influences the way in which this concept is concretized when it is associated with internal communication. The scheme chosen simplifies the individual communication process for both the manager and the employee.

The power that the director confers on his communication, for example, aims to control the facts, people, place, time, means, results and intentions, he subscribes to his mission of influence. The manager directs the communication process because the indication and clarification of quality communication subscribes to his mission of influence. It directs or indicates explicitly or implicitly the mode of integration among employees and inscribes it in power relations. For it to be effective, the manager's communication must include the frame of reference of his interlocutors.

The manager assesses the people he addresses as well as their needs so that his communication is effective and convincing. Although evaluations are given from the start by statutory or hierarchical systems: freely consented submission. The manager mainly uses modal operators (auxiliaries of influence) in order to punctuate his communication and give it a high-performance character whose variable determining its effectiveness is the objective assigned to it.

For it to be effective, the manager's communication starts from a present state to a desired state at two different levels; a surface level located in the denotation and a depth level located in the interpretation. Communication performance is possible when the two levels are harmoniously articulated. A communication of power in the professional context supposes a better knowledge of the rules of the relational game between managers and collaborators. A set of mental and behavioral factors comes into play in order to produce this effective communication. The hypothesis that we have advanced asserts itself, the leader influences with method, he tends to professionalize his communication to make it efficient and combine communication and relationship in its two aspects, static and dynamic.

⁸Cf Beck, 1967 ; Horowitz, 1988 ; Stein, 1992)
Communication in the quality approach presupposes the acquisition of a repertoire of basic behaviors and enriching it by transposing it into new behavior patterns. It is maintaining the balance between the objectives chosen for effective internal communication.

The modeling of behaviors and skills in interpersonal communication in order to achieve performance should start from the observation that a distinction must be made between acquiring a repertoire of basic labeled behaviors and enriching a personal repertoire by transposing it into new behavioral patterns inherent in the context in which it manifests. This leads us to distinguish between accomplishment and acquisition in terms of adapted performance, development, knowledge, skills, and behaviors. It is a preparation project for the evolution of internal communication in order to stay in a dynamic of digging for skills at four levels which jointly touch on knowledge, know-how, know-how to be and knowledge to become. The objective is to sharpen skills that are both specific and versatile, including the following ones:

- **Managerial** (team dynamics, intercultural management, negotiation, internal communication audit, and so on)
- **Instrumental** (mastery of language, professional writing, and so forth)
- **Personality** and interpersonal relationships, (stress management, NLP and the like)
- **Marketing** (Customer relations, sales techniques, to name but a few)

Adopting the quality approach in internal communication and adapting it assumes that management is committed to a continuous process of socio-technical instrumentation, the aim of which is to provide employees with control tools that guarantee the evolution and adaptation of the staff affected by the internal communication strategy. Indeed, the quality approach in internal communication will only succeed if the company:

- sees it as a business development and decision support tool.
- adapts staff to the requirements of a behavioral benchmark in socio-technical internal communication.
- aims for continuous improvement.
- produces and maintains skills for performance.
- aims and works for the professionalization of skills.

Applying the quality approach to communication means anchoring communication habits in the professional and personal daily lives of employees, introducing predictability of behaviors, and building the models of thought and behavior taught and designed by managers in the communication strategy developed. It is intended to facilitate adaptations to the various intra or extra business changes and to facilitate the management of individuals according to a double convenience: that of the actors and that of the organization. The quality approach integrates internal communication into a system; the organizational system which benefits the subsystems: departments, services, among others. The systemic vision adopted finds its bases in De Rosnay's definition which stipulates that *"the system is a set of elements in dynamic interaction, organized according to a goal"*.

The quality approach in internal communication, therefore, contributes to the enrichment and construction of new exchange contexts and to the development of skills in terms of mastering human and professional communication with a predefined progression objective. The company, thus, engages in internal communication plans established on the basis of observed and referenced needs which can be the subject of a structured and structuring learning.

**Conclusion**

The new definition of the management universe manages to focus on the values that it produces and that it will have to manage. Internal communication is now the subject of particular attention to new management trends. Any instigation at this level plunges us into impressive discoveries: the theoretical knowledge in internal communication management designed to fulfill and perform certain technical tasks begins to be enriched by the possibilities that these same theories offer to the company. Indeed, any company must have qualified personnel, recognized in its technical skills and its communication skills which define it as an individual actor and creator of value and not as a simple auxiliary to production. Indeed, the management of internal communication is no longer fortuitous and does not take place on a daily basis.

---

basis, it should take into account the various contingent factors whose impact on staff performance, on human relationships must be measured under two fundamental dimensions: interpersonal and professional. The absence of this control which falls to the structures causes the loss of the system and consequently of internal communication as an essential component of said system. Any quality approach applied to internal communication within the organization is carried out either with a curative or preventive objective. In both cases the managerial dimension of interpersonal and professional communication is essential in order to master potential developments, to create the conditions necessary for continuous improvement

We believe that the adoption of the quality approach in internal communication is not a final decision to be made but a managerial "culturalism" to be integrated into the overall strategy of the company. It is particularly dynamic, creating efficiency, circulating information upward and downward, and maintaining hierarchical relationships when the manager’s priority is communication.

Most of the performance obtained comes from work on the quality of communication, which will require time and energy. If we are far from mastering the quality approach to human communication, it is because we do not have the conviction that it is a stakeholder in the work of the manager. The attempt to understand the dysfunctions of interpersonal communication in organizations should not be based only on assumptions. The quality approach should lead to certainties likely to generate actions applicable to the situations analyzed, to go beyond ignored aspects such as conflicts. It sends out recognizable signals - recognizable inside the company - indicating that there is something that deserves special attention. It is the direct consequence of a shock that breaks continuity.

The quality approach when applied wisely leads to change. Its main ambition is to maintain a stable and secure process to produce quality-performance in human relationships within the company. It brings transformations in terms of approaches and methods of evaluating interpersonal communication. It will be able to deal with fundamental problems such as beliefs and values by observing their concrete achievements in the form of visible and analyzable behaviors. The quality approach will increasingly aim to improve the quality of life of staff in a company as much as other professional skills.

We must therefore learn to use the quality tools - diagrams and dashboards - and adapt to the new subsequent tasks. It is not only a question of producing a tool but the challenge is to make it meaningful in the workplace. This is the essential role of the quality approach.

Admittedly, practices are oriented by concepts without the latter being fixed. A permanent interaction must exist between the practices of a given company and these concepts. With the development of the concept of quality, new tools proliferate and it is not always easy to make a wise choice. Rather than using the latest fashionable tool, it is important to choose one that makes it possible to achieve effective improvements while systematizing the ways of doing things. And if any activity planned for the purpose of performing a task in a systematic way can be considered as a quality tool, a good tool makes it possible to perform this task according to a very precise objective and in an optimal way.

A quality approach can have the secondary effect of freezing the modes of organizing communication if we consider the droop connoted by the behavioral frame of reference. We must therefore avoid excessive formalism and leave room for innovation and creativity, both individual and collective. Finally, we must not forget that quality derives its value from the diversity of the actions adopted and the solutions proposed. This diversity gives the quality approach in internal communication of the company its entire dimension as an approach of cultural and mindset change.

Bibliography

AUVINET (J.M), La communication interne au cœur du management, Paris, édition d'Organisation, 1990
FERNANDEZ (A), Les nouveaux tableaux de bord des managers, Paris, édition d'Organisation, 2003
CROSBY (B), La qualité c’est gratuit, Paris, Economica, 1996
DETRIE (PH), La communication interne au service du management, Paris
HERMEL (PH), Qualité et management stratégique, Paris, édition d’Organisation, 1989
HERMEL (PH), Qualité et management stratégique, Paris, édition d’Organisation, 1989
LYONNET (P), Les outils de la qualité, Paris, Collection Tec&Doc, 1991
PERIGORD (M), Les parcours de la qualité, démarches et outils, Paris, AFNOR, Gestion, 3ème édition, 1997
SHIBA (SH), TQM: 4 révolutions du management, Manuel d’apprentissage
GRAHAM (A), et de mise en œuvre du management par la qualité
WALDEN (D) totale, Paris, DUNOD, édition 2003

Article

« Gérer et assurer la qualité » Cité par IGALENS, in : Repenser la GRH,

« Gérer et assurer la qualité » Cité par IGALENS, in : Repenser la GRH,


Reference:

1. AUVINET (J.M), 1990, La communication interne au cœur du management, Paris, édition d’Organisation
2. CROSBY (B), 1996, La qualité c’est gratuit, Paris, Economica
3. D’ALMEIDA (N), LIBAERT (T), 2018, La communication interne des entreprises, Paris, DUNOD
4. DETRIE (PH), MISLIN-BROYEZ (C), 2001, La communication interne au service du management, Paris, Edition Liaisons
5. FERNANDEZ (A), 2003, Les nouveaux tableaux de bord des managers, Paris, édition d’Organisation
6. FLORENCE (G), GILLET (G), BERNARD (S), 2020, La boîte à outils de la qualité, DUNOD, 4ème édition
7. HERMEL (PH), 1989, Qualité et management stratégique, Paris, édition d’Organisation
8. HOSOTANI (K), 1994, Les 20 lois de la qualité, Paris, DUNOD, Traduit de l’américain par Monique Sperry
11. PERIGORD (M), 1997, Les parcours de la qualité, démarches et outils, Paris, AFNOR, Gestion, 3ème édition