THE ART OF MANAGEMENT
LEADING THE MIX PROCESSES OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

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Abstract
Internal communication has become a formal discipline in modern organizations also due to its proven impact on performance. Today, in the era of digitation and deepening the use of AI tools in organizations, communication is becoming more available and more tailored to organizational audiences. As a result, the scope of communication and internal communication expand. Accordingly, organizations manage a mix of communication channels and tools and refine the definition of the line manager's role with internal communication.

At the same time, the expansion of internal communication can lead to overload and loss of focus, as well as challenge the management ability of leading internal communication. This article presents the findings from a qualitative study that constitutes the first stage of a PhD-level research entitled: "The Relationship between Internal Communication and the Strength of Employees' Engagement in Companies". This current study examines the internal communication processes based on data collected through interviews with 7 managers and 7 employees. The study has identified three core themes within internal communication processes: communication skills of line managers, corporate communication, managing multiple communication tools and channels.

Each theme illustrates a combination of key categories, i.e., knowledge and idea sharing, direct person-to-person communication. The study highlights the significant role of communication led by line managers, as 56.5% of interviewees used theme referring to their line manager when describing how they received the internal communication.

This article highlights the pivotal role of line managers' managerial communication skills in the delivery of internal communication and, expands knowledge about the required skills.
Keywords: *managing internal communication; communication led by line managers; managerial communication skills, digital communication channel.*
JEL Classification: M10; M12; M14; D83.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the digital age we live in, information is constantly being exchanged, including business issues, along with thoughts, emotions, and more (Pocztowski,

2018). The exchange of information is part of everyday business and is also becoming central and significant in the role of managers (Griffin, 2002).

According to Griffin (2002), managers communicate through a variety of channels and tools, including: meetings, correspondence, hallway conversations, work instructions, and more. These allow for both the transmission of messages and listening to information from employees (within the framework of dialogue).

Studies show that managers value communication as a means of conveying clear information (Ziek and Anderson, 2015). Organizational communication plays a critical role in the success of organizations because it influences managers' ability to connect employees to the organization and achieve its goals (Welch and Jackson, 2007).

This article presents part of the qualitative research, which constitutes the first stage of the methodology research for PhD level that deals with: "The relationship between internal communication led by line managers and the strength of employees' engagement in organizations". This current study deals with the categories that detail the communication skills of managers as they emerged in this qualitative study. Understanding that can help building a strategy for leveraging employees' engagement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1. Managers as communication leaders

Communication led by managers helps motivate employees, and this motivation is important in motivating them to achieve organizational goals (Timm and Peterson, 2000). Managers who connect employees to the broader organizational picture and vision create inspiration that motivates employees (Mishra *et al.,* 2014). However, the ability of managers to lead communication also depends on the manager's communication skills, communication style, and ability to listen and integrate different communication channels that are tailored to employees (Men *et al.,* 2020).

The issue is also reinforced in research that reviews the development of the manager's role and the presentation of his role as a communication leader that promotes employee engagement (Pugh and Dietz, 2008).

Comparison of managers' communication approaches (De Vries *et al.,* 2010), showed that managers who are capable of conveying information are also more likely to communicate with their employees, compared to managers who are more executive and task-oriented. As a communication leaders managers use diversity of communication tool i.e., newsletters, speeches, meeting (Patel and Das, 2021). Patel and Das, (2021) assert that when managers used an open and transparent dialog the level of employees' engagement promoted.

2.2. Employees' engagement

In a large study of employees in the UK (Engage for Success, 2025), it is found that the higher level of engagement, the more employees find satisfaction and intrinsic meaning in their work, and not just as a source of income. This contributes positively to their overall well-being and their motivation to act in favor of the organization's goals.

Digital communication interfaces, the use of advanced communication technologies, and also sharing information through 'cloud technologies' help managers lead continuous communication. This ability depends on the managers' abilities and their accessibility to technology (Kobis, 2015). Subsequently, the organization and managers need to adapt the communication channel to their abilities and for the benefit of an optimal interface with employees - for transferring information and collecting information from employees (Chalupa and Harris, 1998).

The importance of employee engagement has also increased in light of the positive relationship found between the level of engagement and reducing employee burnout at work (Schaufeli *et al.,* 2008) and, in addition, in light of the relationship found between engagement and the level of employee productivity (Gruman and Saks, 2011). Furthermore, a broad positive effect of the level of employee engagement to the organization has also been found on the person's good civic behavior (Lee *et al.,* 2014). It is interesting to note further that, current definitions of organizational engagement refer to an employee who is engage as an employee with high energy and enthusiasm to perform their tasks and work towards achieving the organization's goals (Chanana and Sangeeta, 2021).

2.3. Factors influencing the level of engagement

The literature points to a number of factors that influence the level of engagement. Researches pointed that internal communication has an important influence on employees' engagement (Karanges *et al.,* 2014). Welch (2011) pointed that internal communication can connect employees to the organization's values and involving them in organizational goals. Moreover Verčič and Vokić, (2017) assert that communication has an important role in leveraging employees' engagement.

From a deeper study of the world of internal communications, it emerges that the communication component led by line managers has a significant impact on employee engagement (Engage for Success, 2025). Further, it appears that the communication that a direct manager conveys has a significant impact on the engagement of his employees, and not only because of the role of managers as connectors between the organization and employees (Pugh and Dietz, 2008).

2.4. The use of qualitative research methodology

This current article presents findings from the first part of a qualitative study, that constitutes the first phase of a mixed methods doctoral research project. This study examines the question what processes and steps involved in internal communication.

This phase was conducted using a qualitative research method designed to allow for the exploration of information and the collection of data that will contribute to understanding the field and preparing for the quantitative research phase. (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006). The research tool was an in-depth interview conducted based on a semi-structured interview outline (Creswell, 2009); the interviews were conducted using a digital interface in accordance with ethical guidelines (Creswell, 2009).

2.5. The research population

The population of this qualitative study includes 7 managers and 7 employees in business organizations with 150 employees or more. Half of them are women and half are men of a variety of ages, from the sectors of banking, finance, advanced industry and high-tech.

3. THE SAMPLING METHOD

The sample was a 'convenience sample'. The population was chosen from accessible target audience (Creswell, 2009). The interviewes that conducted based on semi-structured interview guide, that was formulated according to the outline desingned by Brinkman and Kavala (2015).

The interview guide was validated according to Cresswell (2009) method led by qualitative expert's opinion, as well as doing a pilot with 2 interviewers (see Table 1).

Table 1. The research design

Analysis method	The population of the research	The research design	The aim
Content analysis	7 Line Managers 7 Employees	Semi-structured interviews	To find what processes are involved in internal communication in organization

Source: the author

1.   4. HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses for the study were formulated based on an analysis of previous studies, and based on experience. This article focuses on one hypothesis dealing with managing processes that are involved in internal communication.

Hypothesis: Processes related to communication led by managers will receive a high weight among all the processes involved in internal communication.

5. THE ANALYSIS METHOD

The content collected in the interviews was analyzed and categorized into central themes (Shkedi, 2003). Within each theme, categories were defined that reflected recurring statements that corresponded to the category and reflected similar content.

6. ETIHICAL ASPECTS

In this qualitative study, an emphasis was placed on the ethics of conducting the research. In this framework, the objectives of the study were presented to the participants, the possibility of withdrawing from the study at any time was given, the information was kept anonymous, and each participant expressed their explicit consent to participate.

7. FINDINGS

The content analysis that emerged in this study presented 3 central themes that represent processes that are involved in internal communication in organizations:

- Communication skills of line managers
- Corporate communication
- Managing multiple communication tools and channels

The hypothesis confirmed - The communication process led by line managers is the process that has been repeated more times than the other communication processes involved in communication that takes place in organizations. In addition, the theme dealing with communication skills of managers was defined as a central process in internal communication.

The theme: communication skills of managers, includes 4 categories of issues, as presented in Table 2.
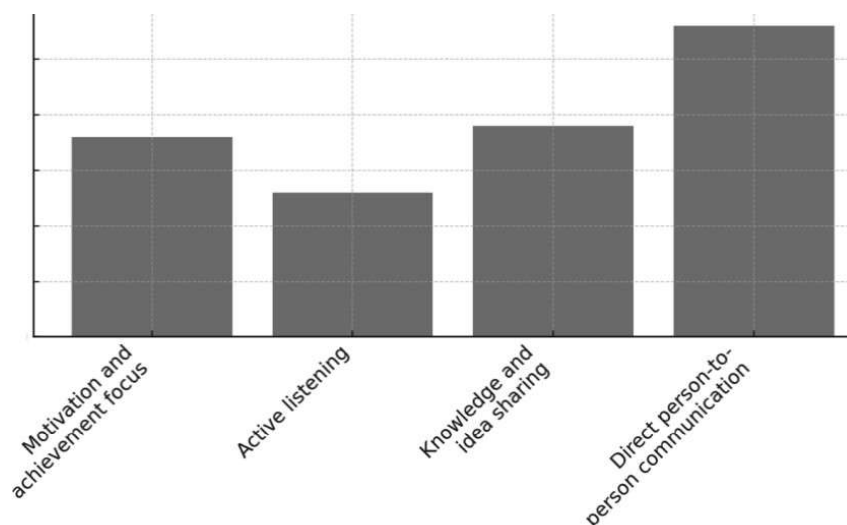
**Table 2. The theme: Communication skills
of line managers and the related categories**

The theme	The Categories	Quate as an evidence
communication skills of line managers	**Motivation and achievement focus**	*"It is important for me to receive encouragement and ongoing guidance from my manager" (P: Employee.7, 10.2024).*
	Active listening	*"I maintain a routine of listening to employees' opinions on the issue at hand." (P: Manager.2, 10.2024).*
	Knowledge and idea sharing	*"My manager shares knowledge" (P: Employee.1, 10.2024).*
	Direct person-to-person communication	*"My manager makes sure to hold face-to-face meetings for both sharing and listening" (p: Employee 3, 10.10.24)*

Source: the author

8. LINE MANAGERS LED MIX PROCESSES OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

One of the themes that emerged from the content analysis in this study is communication skills of managers, referring to a mix of 4 categories of managerial skills: Communication that motivate and achievement focus, Active listening, Knowledge and idea sharing, and Direct person-to-person communication. Within the overarching theme of communication skills of managers, the leading category identified was direct person-to-person communication, as presented in Figure 1.

Source: the author

Figure 1. The strength's level of the categories within the theme: communication skills of managers

Figure 1 presents that in the theme: communication skills of line managers, the category: 'direct person to person communication' led by line managers', emerge as the frequent process that emerge relate to communication skills of line managers.

9. DISCUTION AND CONCLUSIONS

This article relates to a part of qualitative research stage, which is a part of mix method research. This part based on interviews with 7 managers and 7 employees dealing with the processes that are involved in internal communication in organizations.

The finding presente 3 central themes that represent processes that are involved in internal communication in organizations: Communication skills of line managers, corporate communication, managing multiple communication tools and channels

From the finding, both employees and managers identified the process -direct person-to-person communication as the most common process involved in internal communication in general and, as the process that most often mentioned as related to the communication skills of managers.

This research phase motivates further future research regarding the skills required for managers as communication leaders.

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